



THE NEIGHBOURHOODS PROJECT

"You don't have to be best friends, But, are you good neighbours?"

RUKI's *The Neighbourhoods Project* slogan recognises that, when disaster strikes it is frequently our neighbours who provide us with the urgent support we need. Often well before emergency services can reach us and then, well after they have gone.

"Neighbours knowing neighbours is shown to be the single most important contributor to a successful response and recovery." Melanie Bloor. RUKI President

'The Neighbourhoods Project' is focused on supporting 12 neighbourhood groups across the Uki district to strengthen their connections and capacity to support each other.

WHY ARE WE DOING THIS?

The first and most important reason is that a community formed through kindness is a wonderful place to live.

We believe this will help to further strengthen our neighbourhoods so we can become more connected in good times and bad, and be better prepared and confident to look after ourselves in times of need.

- * Be better prepared for when disaster strikes
- * Help each other during disasters
- * Get our needs met as we recover

Basically, we hope to become a better prepared and resilient community, well equipped and confident to look after ourselves.

THIS MANUAL

The proposed strategies, approaches and tools included in this manual have been informed by the results of a consultative process undertaken through a series of 12 'neighbourhood gatherings' held at the beginning of The Neighbourhoods Project, in early 2023. (See [#1.Neighbourhood Gathering Process attached](#))

While the 'system' outlined in this manual has been informed by the community, it is still up to each neighbourhood to decide if and how they want to apply the strategies, approaches and tools. Similarly, how much involvement each household in a neighbourhood has, is up to the household.



We recognise the sovereignty of each neighbourhood. As such, neighbourhood groups are encouraged to use their discretion in how they apply the information provided in this manual. Each neighbourhood may choose to adapt or develop their own approach to building neighbourhood connection and capacity. We support this.

“Resilient Uki is not enforcing this suggested system. Rather, we present the following as an offering that may assist you to become an active agent of connection and kindness amongst your neighbours.” Melanie Bloor, RUKI President

OUR APPROACH

Our approach is based on a ‘neighbourhoods system’.

The neighbourhood system is not unique to RUKI. It is also promoted by the Red Cross through their Community Resilience Teams (CRT) approach. Our intention is to expand upon and add value to the RedCross CRT system (not replace it), previously initiated in just a few neighbourhoods within the Uki District.

We are also interested in working in with the existing SES Community Action Team (CAT) system.

The Uki district is divided into 12 ‘neighbourhoods groups’. As of July 2023, they are:

1. Doon Doon, Midginbil, Commissioners Creek
2. Mount Burrell
3. Byrrill Creek
4. Kunghur, Kunghur Creek, Terragon
5. Uki to Terragon
6. Uki Village
7. Rowlands and Chowan Creek Rds
8. Smiths Creek Rd
9. Meadow Pl
10. Braeside Dr, Bonnydoon Rd, Toon Pl and Kyogle Rd
11. Dum Dum
12. Mt Warning Rd

We encourage each neighbourhood to have a minimum of two neighbourhood leaders, because things are much more enjoyable and easier when done with someone else. Some neighbourhoods may choose to have a leadership team. The leaders support the development of the neighbourhood and connect through to the central RUKI HQ.

Some people may not be comfortable with the term leader, as it has connotations of someone 'being in charge'. However, there are different styles of leadership and in this case we are talking about a leadership role that supports, encourages and coordinates. (see the [Neighbourhood Leader role description on page 6](#))

In order to build the connections within and the capacity of each neighbourhood, we recognise the need to strengthen smaller sections of each neighbourhood. We call these 'pods'. In some cases these 'pods' become isolated islands during flooding/ fires and only have each other to rely on until access opens again and/ or power returns.

We suggest that pods be made up of approximately 10 – 12 households/ properties, as this number maximises the likelihood of both, a diverse range of skills and resources, and of effective cooperation. In some cases, it may need to be less or more depending on the geography of an area.

We also suggest that each pod has leader/s. Again, having two means that if one leader is unavailable, then the 2nd leader can step in. The pod leader/s support the development of their pod (see [the Pod Leader role description on page 9](#))

While some neighbourhoods may not choose to break into pods with allocated pod leaders, it is vital to not lose sight of the need to facilitate connection, trust and shared wisdom in geographically close groupings. As it is most important to enable a system that ensures no-one goes unsupported at a time of need and this system has the capacity to ensure that occurs.

ACTIVATION PLAN

At each of the 11 neighbourhood gatherings involving 330 people from Mount Burrell to Mount Warning Rd and each neighbourhood in between, everyone had a chance to discuss the 2022 floods; identify current risks and needs; come up with ideas for strengthening the neighbourhoods and vote on proposed strategies and ideas for training.

Not surprisingly the priorities were similar across all 11 neighbourhoods, which resulted in a [#2. Neighbourhood Activation Plan](#) (see below). This provides a strategic framework for leaders to engage with and activate their neighbourhood.



Activating Our Neighbourhood



- 1 GET MAPPED** • Mapping our neighbourhoods to identify pods, properties, hubs, assembly points, fire trails, points of flooding, helicopter landing pads etc
- 2 GATHER INFORMATION** • Gathering useful information from all neighbours who wish to participate and storing it securely with access for Neighbourhood and Pod leaders only.
- 3 FUN & FRIENDSHIP** • Social gatherings to strengthen connections and build a sense of community and cooperation.
- 4 CONNECT UP** • Ways for neighbours to communicate with each other when we have power, phone reception and internet.
- 5 THAT'S A BIG 10-4** • A comprehensive radio network that supports effective communication when all else fails.
- 6 LET'S SHARE** • Neighbours sharing skills and equipment with each other especially during a crisis. June
- 7 HEAD CHECK** • An agreed way for neighbours to check on neighbours during disasters.
- 8 HELPING HANDS** • Neighbours working together to help each other out when needed

Page 1 of 2..... KEEP READING

Skills development and capacity building workshops were also identified and prioritised

Get Skilled

Building our capacity as individuals and neighbourhoods to support ourselves and each other in times of disaster



Workshops coming to your street/ neighbourhood soon...

- Radio handling
- Get Prepared – developing a flood & storm and fire plan for your household
- Skill Share Sessions (neighbours sharing skills with neighbours)



Workshops coming to Uki that you can join in...

- First Aid Skills
- Using and Maintaining a Chainsaw Safely
- Healing Trauma
- Resilient First Aid
- Fundraising



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ROLE DESCRIPTIONS

Informed by these priorities and frameworks, role descriptions have been developed for neighbourhood and pod leaders.

Again, these role descriptions are only guides and while they define an approach with linked tools, info sheets and resources, neighbourhood and pod leaders are encouraged to adapt them to suit their pod/ neighbourhood needs and their available time and capacity as leaders.

The role descriptions will overview suggested tasks and provide links to documents that provide relevant detail as to how to go about that task.

Neighbourhood Leader Role Description

Overview

The Neighbourhood Leader:

- provides support and coordination to the pods and pod leaders in their neighbourhood
- acts as a central point of contact for those pod leaders
- disseminates information and organises activities at the neighbourhood level that support connection, resilience and kindness
- facilitates information, skill and resource-sharing throughout their neighbourhood and with the other neighbourhood leaders.

Neighbourhood Leader Tasks	Support documents
<p>• Pod leaders > Each pod has 1 – 2 active pod leaders.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit 1 – 2 pod leaders for each pod. • Consult with them on the pod boundaries. • Brief them on their role. • Encourage pod leaders to participate in capacity building activities as available. • Provide ongoing support and encouragement to your pod leaders. • Host pod leader meetings and facilitate: connection, idea generation, experience sharing, motivation. 	<p>#3. Pod leader role description</p>
<p>• Mapping > All pod leaders have detailed maps of their pod.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Familiarise yourself with your neighbourhood and define the pod boundaries. • Provide boundaries to the map coordinator, who will then provide you with detailed pod maps. • Input relevant information onto the maps e.g. which households: have completed the survey (S); have UHF radios (R) etc. • Distribute maps to pod leaders. • Oversee possible boundary changes over time. 	<p>#4. Maps doc</p>
<p>• Surveys > Survey information is securely stored and accessed by the appropriate people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share relevant, previously collected survey information with appropriate pod leaders. • Encourage pod leaders to fill the survey gaps through doorknocking, etc. • Once pod leaders have collected, documented and shared newly collected survey info. with you, store it centrally and securely. • Only provide access to relevant pod leaders and co neighbourhood leader. 	<p>#5. Surveys doc #6. Survey note doc #7. Neighbours survey #8. Data spreadsheet</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications > All consenting neighbourhood residents receive neighbourhood communications • Set up and moderate a neighbourhood level communications system i.e. email group and online forum (WhatsApp/ FB) • You might have 2 online forums i.e. 1 for day to day content and 1 for emergency only content. • Include the households who have given their contact information and consent through the survey. • Share relevant information as it becomes available. 	<p>#9. Communicating</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Radios > A functioning UHF radio network is in place. • Liaise with the pod leaders to identify and help fill any gaps in the network. • Liaise with your neighbourhood radio hub coordinator around the execution of radio test sessions, training and practice. • Liaise with the HQ Radio coordinator and the neighbourhood radio hub coordinator to trouble shoot any problems with the effective running of the network. 	<p>#10. Radios</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social activities > Connection, trust and kindness flourish. • Ensure occasional neighbourhood wide social activities such as a potluck picnic, a games day, a Christmas party etc. • Organise them yourself or enrol a social activities team or motivate others to make it happen. • You can borrow equipment from the Library of Stuff. 	<p>#11. Events doc #12. Library of Stuff doc</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get Prepared > Neighbourhood residents are participating in 'Get Prepared' activities • Attend 'Get Prepared' training yourself, to be informed. • Encourage pod leaders to attend 'Get Prepared' training (or watch the training video) • Support pod leaders to hold 'Get Prepared' pod sessions • Liaise with RUKI to ensure pod leaders have the relevant 'Get Prepared' materials. 	<p>Get Prepared kits (to be found on the RUKI website resources page)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing resources > Residents are safely accessing and sharing needed expertise + equipment. • Facilitate resource sharing within your neighbourhood and between neighbourhoods if necessary. • Be familiar with who has what expertise and equipment across the neighbourhood. Arrange your data spreadsheet to support this. • Link people with needs to people with the resources at 	<p>#13. Let's Share doc</p>

<p><i>critical times (in liaison with pod leaders.)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ensure privacy, security and not over burdening particular community members who happen to be well resourced.</i> 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check in > There is a check in system in place across the neighbourhood to ensure timely assistance during disasters. • <i>Support pod leaders to develop a pod system for checking in with each household during times of emergency.</i> • <i>Facilitate a test run across the neighbourhood.</i> • <i>Where necessary, assist pod leaders to initiate the check in system during times of disaster.</i> 	<p>#14. Checkins doc</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills share sessions > Neighbours share skills with neighbours. • <i>Source local people through the survey or a call out who are happy to share a skill that is relevant to disaster resilience e.g. maintaining a generator, pickling veggies, listening with compassion, food security + more.</i> • <i>Plan a schedule of Neighbourhood 'Skills Share' activities. Maybe a number of events across the year.</i> • <i>Event plan and promote them.</i> 	<p># 15. Skill Share Sessions doc</p>

Desirable qualifications, experience, values and qualities

- *Be able to do the above duties or delegate or share responsibility for doing them.*
- *Allow things to happen. Be careful not to be a gatekeeper, doing only those things you are comfortable with. Others may be interested in things you are not.*
- *Care about the wellbeing of your neighbourhood and be willing to take action to support and foster that wellbeing.*
- *Lead collaboratively and non-intrusively, fostering co-empowerment, agency and inclusion.*
- *Be especially mindful and considerate of those households or individuals who are vulnerable, isolated, marginalised or at risk, e.g. small children, frail elderly, sick or with chronic health conditions, mental health issues, diverse abilities, etc.*
- *Respect people's privacy.*
- *Understand that to lead means to serve.*
- *Know how to care for yourself first, before going to care for others.*
- *Do no harm.*

Pod Leader Role Description

Overview

The Pod Leader:

- provides support and coordination to the households in their designated area
- acts as a central point of contact for those households
- disseminates information and organises activities that support connection, resilience and kindness
- facilitates information, skill and resource-sharing throughout their pod

Tasks	Support documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map > Be familiar with your pod • Get acquainted with the households in your designated area by checking out the map boundaries of your pod. • Find out from the neighbourhood leader, which households have already completed the neighbourhoods survey and which households have indicated they are not interested in being contacted. 	#4. Maps doc
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reach out > Introduce yourself to each household in your pod. • Make your initial contact in a way that's comfortable for you; it could be a letterbox drop with info about RUKI and the Neighbourhoods Project; it could be door knocking, with a preceding note in the letterbox; it could be an invitation to a meet-n-greet or just having a chat when you run into them at the shops. Alternatively, it could be with or through someone else from the pod. Find what works for you and do it at your own pace . • Reach out to your neighbourhood coordinator if you are feeling uncomfortable or encounter any difficulties. • Be aware when new people move into your pod. Provide them with the Welcome to Uki document. You might like to provide some additional information that is specific to your neighbourhood. 	#16 RUKI flier doc #17 Welcome to Uki
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey > Invite your neighbours to complete the survey • Ask if they have heard of RUKI and the N'hoods Project. If not, explain what it's about – how the purpose is to build support and safety networks so we can keep an eye out for each other in the event of a flood, fire or other emergency. This includes communication like an email group, WhatsApp group and radio network. Explain how these work and offer to join them up there and then if possible. • Ask if they would like to complete the 'neighbourhood survey' 	#5. Surveys #18 Door knocking script #19. Contacts list doc #6. Survey note doc #7. Neighbours Survey

<p>if they haven't already done so, and do it with them. Leaving the survey to be filled in later involves a return visit. It's much easier to get it "done and dusted" if that feels ok to everyone. Explain that the info will be securely stored and that it enables identification of their needs and resources, as well as being able to communicate with them via email and/or WhatsApp at the neighbourhood and pod level.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Store > Securely store survey data • Input data into a secure spreadsheet • Pass survey information to the neighbourhood leader to be stored centrally and to ensure pod members are included in the neighbourhood communications system. • Update the neighbourhood leader as new data is gathered. 	<p>#5. Surveys doc #8. Data spread sheet</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate > Set up a comms system within your pod • Set up and manage a pod-level communications system with the households who have given you their contact information and consent within the pod. • Share relevant information as it becomes available. • Consider if this is appropriate & needed, as many may feel that being on a neighbourhood wide thread will be enough. 	<p>#9. Communicating</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Radios > Inform the pod households of the UHF radio system • Explain; who has it; how and under what circumstances it can be accessed. • Work together with your neighbourhood Radio Coordinator and neighbourhood leader to arrange testing/ practice/ training. 	<p>#10. Radios</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social connection > Create opportunities • Organise social activities that support connection, resilience and kindness such as pot luck dinners, games days etc • These may be pod specific or part of a larger neighbourhood gathering. • You might need to borrow some equipment from the Library of Stuff e.g. a gazebo, some lights. 	<p>#11. Events doc #12. Library Of Stuff doc</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Get Prepared' > Deliver to your pod • Participate in the training events • Deliver 'Get Prepared for Floods & Storms' and 'Get Prepared for Fires' sessions for the households in your pod. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get Prepared kits (on the RUKI website resources page)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing resources > Facilitate the safe accessing and sharing of expertise + equipment. • Facilitate resource sharing within your pod and between pods if necessary. • Be familiar with who has what expertise and equipment across 	<p>#13. Let's Share doc</p>

<p><i>the pod. Arrange your data spreadsheet to support this.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Link people with need to people with the resources at critical times (in liaison with the neighbourhood leader.)</i> • <i>Ensure privacy, security and not over burdening particular community members who happen to be well resourced.</i> 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check in > There is a check in system in place across the neighbourhood to ensure timely assistance during disasters. • <i>Develop a pod system for checking in with each household during times of emergency.</i> • <i>Facilitate a test run across the pod.</i> • <i>Initiate the check in system during times of disaster.</i> 	<p>#14. Check in doc</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills share sessions > Neighbours share skills with neighbours. • <i>Source local people; through the survey or a call out; who are happy to share a skill that is relevant to disaster resilience e.g. maintaining a generator, pickling veggies, listening with compassion, bush tucker + more.</i> • <i>Plan a schedule of Neighbourhood 'Skills Share' activities. Maybe a number of events across the year.</i> • <i>Event plan and promote them</i> 	<p>#15. Skill Share Sessions doc</p>