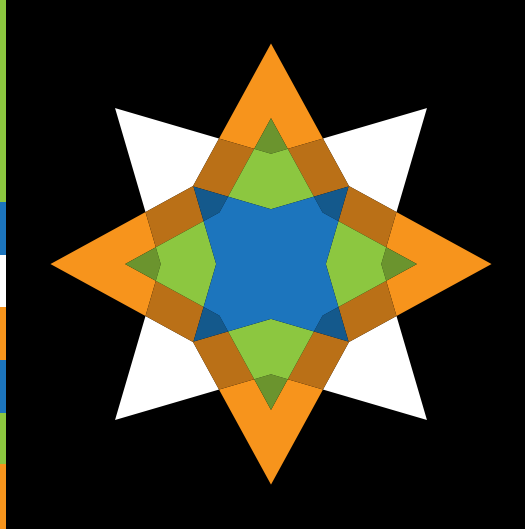


Social Inclusion

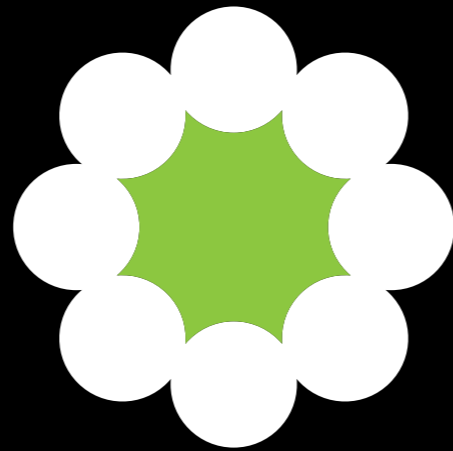
Access to Justice

Enhanced Community Safety



OUR VISION

*A safe,
connected and
just community.*



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

In keeping with the spirit of Reconciliation, Northside Connect acknowledges the Turrbal/Jagera or Yuggera Peoples as the traditional owners of the land on which Northside Connect is located.

We wish to pay respects to the Elders, past, present and emerging, and recognise those whose ongoing effort to protect and promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture will leave a lasting legacy for future all.

OUR MISSION

*To be a leader in
building and fostering
the capacity of our
community to be
inclusive, safe and
connected.*



OUR VALUES

Inclusion

We believe that inclusive and connected communities foster meaningful relationships and social networks and reinforce people's right to self-determination.

Safety

We uphold people's rights to enjoy places and spaces that are culturally safe, welcoming and respectful of diversity and difference.

Justice

We believe that access to social, legal, environmental and economic justice is a basic human right for all.

We achieve this through leadership, collaboration & facilitating access to resources, support & information.



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I think some people look at writing forewords or contributions to things like annual reports as a little tedious or frustrating. After all, it means reflecting on a whole 12 months. A lot of people (me included) find it difficult to remember what happened yesterday, let alone months ago!

That said, I find this task a rewarding one, because it compels me to think about what Northside Connect has done, and how we have grown.

As always, and probably more than ever, the one thing which always leaps out at me about Northside Connect is the quality of its people. That's the staff, the volunteers, and my colleagues on the management committee. The commitment to shared outcomes and providing essential services to the people of Nundah and surrounds never waivers, even when resources are tight, and demands are intense. I always value that level of commitment and have particularly valued it this past year, as we have seen more and more requests from clients for help. Needless to say, times are tough for many of us, with not a lot of light at the end of the tunnel.

Under Sharon's leadership, Northside Connect has become an organisation that can quickly adapt to rapidly changing environmental and other factors. A lot is changing, be it politically, socially and economically. More than ever, Northside Connect cannot afford to rest on its laurels. I'm glad to report that we have definitely not done so this past year.

Speaking of change, this past year has seen some significant people changes at Northside Connect. We farewelled Eugene and Lisa, two of our longest-serving people who have been great servants of the organisation and its clients. While sad to see them both go, I know that they are moving on to new chapters of their lives that they have well and truly earned. Their contribution will not be forgotten. We will also be saying farewell to our management committee members Stephanie and Wendy, both of whom have made great contributions and who I have personally appreciated having onboard for their sound advice.

One thing that will not change, as we look ahead, will be our engagement with and commitment to our local community. Being at the Nundah Festival recently really drove the point home that Northside Connect is very much a part of its surrounds. It would seem a very different (and very empty) world without us where we are on Station Street and doing what we are doing. That means we will continue to work with local businesses, groups and elected members to advocate for the best outcomes for our clients and service delivery.

There is much more to reflect upon – our successes in funding and grants proposals, for example, and the quality and reputation of our programs for another – although for now, I'd like to focus on one point of reflection in particular: we are still here, thriving, delivering and working together to ensure we keep doing so. For me, that's the best outcome of all for a community services organisation like Northside Connect.

Thank you to all who are part of it.

Yours sincerely

Chris Irons
President



ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF FUNDING

Northside Connect Inc (NCI) would like to acknowledge funding from the following sources:

The Nundah Neighbourhood Centre Program receives funding from the Queensland Department of Treaty, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Communities and the Arts

The Brisbane North Community Legal Service is funded by Federal and State Government, distributed by the Attorney General of Qld under the National Partnership Agreement.

The Domestic Violence Program is funded through Women's Safety and Violence Prevention, Department of Justice and Attorney General of Qld.

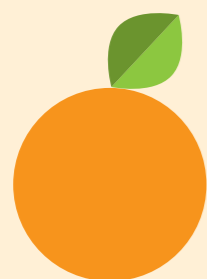
NCI also receive additional assistance through one off grants from Government and philanthropic sources and generous donations from community members, local businesses and other organisations.

We would also like to acknowledge and thank our local members, Councillor Adam Allan, Northgate Ward, Leanne Linard, State Member for Nudgee and Anika Wells, Federal Member for Lilley. At Northside Connect we are very fortunate to have passionate, committed local members who recognise the value of the work we do at Northside Connect and have given us their support over the year in serving our local community.

THANK YOU

Thank you to Maïke Hale who continues to give us her time and design skills to the creative development of the Annual Report.

Maïke enjoys wearing different professional "hats" as a Social Worker, Educator, Learning and Graphic Designer with over 25 years' experience in the Australian and Global Human Service Sector. Maïke has enjoyed a long-term relationship with Northside Connect, designing the annual reports, and also supporting human service and social work students undertaking their placements at the organisation.



OUR PEOPLE



MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

President - Chris Irons

A long-serving member of the Northside Connect Management Committee, Chris uses his experience of over two decades in Queensland's Public Sector in carrying out his role as President. He holds the unique distinction of having been Queensland's Commissioner for Body Corporate and Community Management for over 5 years. That is the only role of its type in the world. As Director and Founder of the strata consultancy firm Strata Solve, Chris provides strategic advice to clients to develop practical solutions to strata problems, focusing on dispute prevention, dispute resolution utilising mediation, and effective communication. He is a well-known media commentator on strata issues.

Chris has an Honours degree in Communications and has held senior roles in Queensland's public sector in diverse policy areas including liquor, gaming, community services and fair trading. Complementing his work with Strata Solve, Chris is also a sessional tutor at the Queensland University of Technology in the Faculty of Engineering subject 'Negotiation and Conflict Resolution'.

In addition to his role with Northside Connect, Chris is a Board Member of the Owners Corporation Network, a not-for-profit body which advocates for the interests of lot owners in strata schemes Australia-wide. He is also an avid supporter of the Brisbane Lions.

Treasurer – Wendy Clark

Wendy Clark has lived in and around Nundah since the 90s and joined the Management Committee as Treasurer in 2018. Wendy holds a Bachelor Degree in Management – Accounting and has worked in small to medium businesses in administration and finance for over 25 years as well as running her own bookkeeping service. Wendy's current role is working for a global software company managing administration staff and accountants in 9 countries.

ORDINARY MEMBERS

Patricia McArthur

Patricia retired after spending her career working for the Queensland Courts, Office of State Coroner, Department of Justice and Attorney General and Victim Assist Queensland. Patricia is an active volunteer with the Northside Connect offering her assistance with administrative support, event management and fundraising activities. Patricia has been on the Management Committee since 2011.

Michael Power

Michael Power joined the Committee of Northside Connect at the end of 2016. Michael's experience as a social worker for over 26 years, including management and operational positions, in the areas of child protection, family law, family support, mental health and victims of crime contributes to the broader work of the committee. Michael is committed to supporting the creativity and contribution of the centre as part of the fabric of the local community.

Stephanie Ewert

Stephanie has been a solicitor for over 22 years, working in law firms and community legal centres. She is now Principal Lawyer and Director of her own firm, Whippet Legal. Stephanie is passionate about community organisations and grateful for the opportunity to contribute as a member of the Management Committee.

Jessica Cameron

A local Northgate resident, Jessica joined the management committee in late 2020. Jessica holds a Bachelor's degree in Business, Human Resources and a Post Graduate Certificate in Information Technology alongside a diverse career across travel, transport and mining sectors. A passionate volunteer in a variety of previous roles, Jessica enjoys interacting and contributing to the local community.

Olivia Keppel

Olivia has a Bachelor of Social Work and has experience working in Intensive Family Support and the Domestic and Family Violence Sector. Olivia has previously facilitated community programs with Northside Connect and is looking forward to continuing her support as a member of the committee.

STAFF



The Northside Connect staff team bring substantial experience and skills in a range of disciplines including Legal, Social Work and Human Services, Finance and Not for Profit Administration. The staff of the NCI work collaboratively across all programs to ensure the delivery of services that are innovative and responsive to the needs of the local community.

Sharon Gingell - Coordinator

Sharon Gingell has been the Coordinator of Northside Connect since March 2012. She has 32 years' experience in the Community Sector and has experience working in homelessness, family support, domestic violence and mental health. As the Coordinator, Sharon is responsible for the day to day operation, management and development of Northside Connect Inc programs and activities

Justine Silverthorne – Principal Solicitor

(commenced October 2023)

Justine was admitted as a solicitor in 2007 and has worked in both private practice and the community legal sector. Justine is also an accredited Family Dispute Resolution Practitioner and has worked as a mediator helping separated parties come to agreements about property and parenting matters. Justine has been on the management committee for Community Legal Centres Queensland, has significant experience working in the community legal space and feels passionately about the community having access to justice and services.

Lauren Everett – Generalist Solicitor

(commenced March 2024)

Lauren was admitted as a solicitor in 2010 and has been fortunate to have had a variety of professional experiences, having worked at Legal Aid and the Central Queensland Community Legal Centre, including in criminal defence, appeals, generalist advice and administration. At NCI, much of Lauren's work is in family, criminal, and minor civil law areas including Neighbourhood Disputes and consumer

law issues. Lauren looks forward to continuing to be part of the Northside Connect Team, dedicated to the provision of inclusive services, and working responsively to community needs.

Yolandi Beer – Principal Solicitor

(resigned September 2023)

Yolandi commenced in the role of Family Law Solicitor in February 2019 at Northside Connect. Yolandi completed her law degree in 2013 and went on to complete her Graduate Diploma in Practical Legal Training in 2014 and has a wide range of experience in Family Law, Domestic Violence and Will and Estates matters. In addition to being the Family Law Solicitor Yolandi was in the Principal Solicitor role from July 2021 to September 2023.

Eugene White – Generalist Solicitor

(retired February 2024)

Eugene has been a Solicitor with the BNCLS since 2008 including undertaking generalist advice work and community legal education, he held the role of Principal Solicitor from 2008 until July 2021. He was admitted as a Solicitor in 1980 and has practiced primarily in Brisbane and in generalist private practice litigation with various periods interstate and in corporate, public and community practice.

Cindy Philip – Generalist Solicitor

(contract end - February 2024)

Cindy's career first began in nursing 25 years ago, returning to complete a law degree as a mature age student. Cindy first started with Northside Connect as a volunteer with our Wednesday Evening Legal Service, transitioning into paid employment with the daytime service in 2022. Cindy was employed as a Generalist Solicitor, providing advice, information and referral on a range of legal issues including civil, Family Law and domestic violence until February 2024.

Lisa Berlin – Senior Domestic Violence Counsellor

(retired August 2024)

Lisa has enjoyed a long career with the Northside Connect, commencing employment with the organisation shortly after receiving incorporation and funding. Lisa is highly regarded for her expertise in domestic and family violence and is responsible for the development and delivery of a number of domestic violence programs including the Journey's Program and the Facilitator Training Program. The Social Worker provides individual and group programs and services through a centre based, counselling focused model of service delivery.

Hannah Sanson – Domestic Violence Counsellor

Hannah commenced in her role as a Domestic Violence Counsellor in January 2023, after Northside Connect secured funding for the Domestic Violence Program from the Department of Justice and Attorney General at the beginning of 2023. In her role she provides individual counselling, co-facilitates the Journeys group and facilitator training alongside Lisa, and engages with the NAADV and NSAAN to collaborate on projects throughout the year. Hannah has a Master of Social Work at QUT and completed her first student placement here at Northside Connect under the supervision of Lisa in 2017. Hannah has experience as a hospital social worker, volunteering for Friends with Dignity's sanctuary support service for people impacted by domestic violence, and she has worked and volunteered with young people in out of home care.

Siobhan Gibbs – Community Engagement Worker

(resigned January 2024)

Siobhan first came to Northside Connect as a placement student in 2017 then returned in this position in July 2022 to support the neighbourhood centre to restart its regular programs and activities, and since the successful acquisition of Domestic Violence program funding, has been able to be employed permanently part time in the role. Siobhan supported the ongoing community lunch and food relief programs, playgroup, art group, sewing group, English Language classes as well as supporting community members to create and run new programs and assisting anyone who presents at the centre needing additional support.

Peita O'Loughlin – Community Engagement Worker

(commenced February 2024)

Peita came to Northside Connect with seven years' experience working in advocacy, project work, and stakeholder engagement in not-for-profit and government settings. Currently studying a Master of Social Work, Peita has an academic background in the arts and cross-cultural studies. She has stepped into the Community Engagement position and continued NCI's support of volunteers and community members via the centre drop-in services, food relief and group programs, and support of placement students, and has begun to put her own personal stamp on the role.

Fatima Boorooni – Finance Worker

Fatima started working at Northside Connect in July 2022 and has a Diploma of Accounting and over 6 years' experience in accounting. Fatima is responsible for all of the accounting responsibilities of NCI including account payable, receivable, payroll, reports, budgeting, Auditing etc. Fatima is really enjoying working in a community service role and has significant background experience working with non-profit organisations. She is a multi-cultural, bilingual woman, an efficient employee and supportive team member.

Kamal Kaur – Legal Services Administrator & Volunteer Coordinator

Kamal started at the position of Legal Service Administrator in February 2022. Kamal has an overseas law degree and completed her Master of Laws degree from Victoria Law School (Melbourne). She has over eight years of experience working in the Community Legal sector and government sector. Kamal's role is to provide legal admin support to the Legal Service and manage and coordinate a team of volunteer lawyers and law students. Kamal has a strong interest in social justice and helping the community.

Jo Money – Intake and Reception Worker

As the Intake and Reception Worker at Northside Connect, Jo is first point of contact for clients and community members seeking assistance including information and referral, legal assistance, domestic violence support and information about our programs and activities. Jo has worked as both a volunteer and paid staff since joining the organisation in 2012 and was previously in the role of Legal Administrator for 6 years.





FAREWELL TO EUGENE

Until now retiring, for fifteen years - a little more and a little less - I have worked and resided in Nundah; engaged as a lawyer at Northside Connect; but also contributing as part of the local community with Nundah Now Inc, the Noonga Reconciliation Group plus other associations, including as a loyal luncher at the Norths Devils Leagues Club.

Always sticking to my mantra “thinking globally, acting locally”, I have focused on “justice” - at the “macro” level campaigning for human rights; but on the day to day “micro” level, assisting clients with their immediate problems: “Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home ... the neighbourhood .. the school or college ..the factory, farm or office Such are the places where every man, woman and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination. Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere.” [Eleanor Roosevelt 1958]

Practically, on the big picture, I attended the 2017 World Conference of the International Bar Association in Sydney [especially sessions on human rights and access to justice]; but locally, for over a decade I acted as the Nundah community Santa. My time at Northside Connect was morally satisfying, intellectually stimulating, professionally challenging, politically engaging and socially pleasant. This reinforced my consciousness of gratitude and the moral obligation to “give back” which I gave direct effect to by my community legal education work with students and direct mentoring.

But one never “does it alone” and I record my appreciation for the support of the Northside Connect family: past and present staff; legal service and neighbourhood centre volunteers; social work, human services and legal placement students and Management Committee members. These were diverse in race, ethnicity, religion, politics, gender, sexuality and personality - but what all had in common was core shared values.

I have enjoyed my many local connections in the Nundah community, including political representative, Leanne Linard and Adam Allan, but also many “behind the scenes”, often, volunteer, contributors. It has been a privilege to serve my local community and broader society and what I wrote almost 24 years ago in my “Lawyer’s Weekly” essay remains apposite: “...I have no regrets about becoming a solicitor knowing that I have helped many individuals,...and contributed my legal skills to the community at large.”

For most of my fifteen years at Northside Connect, I was the only male employee. Thus, whatever I did, my top acknowledged attribute was always putting the toilet seat down!

I leave Northside Connect and the entire Nundah community with fond memories and my best wishes for what will be an exciting, if challenging, future.

Eugene White



FAREWELL TO LISA

After 31 years I bid my farewell to Northside Connect, aka Nundah Neighbourhood Centre, aka Nundah Community Centre. I have been here for all the iterations – the name changes, building changes, changes of staff and management committee; from a staff team of 4 to 9.

Without hesitation, the current staff team and management committee are by far the best and my favourite combination over my years of employment here – so skilled, diverse, hardworking and fun – an absolute pleasure to be working alongside all of you. People sometimes marvel at how long I have worked in one place as if I’ve done something amazing. My perspective is from a different angle – I believe I have been incredibly fortunate to be in a job that has provided me with 31 years of growth as a social worker, a counsellor, a group worker, a project worker, a DFV worker, a colleague, a human. Thirty-one years ago job descriptions and accountability looked a bit different and that allowed me to advantageously create the job that I wanted – which I did!

I cannot possibly list all the activities, projects and pieces of work I’ve been part of, in addition to the mainstays of counselling and journeys, but I will list some of the highlights that come to mind. These are not in any particular order, except for the first one:

- **Number one** – specific DFV funding (thanks to Sharon’s hard and unwavering efforts) and the hiring of Hannah, our second DFV worker!!
- The Injustice of Intimacy Podcast Series working alongside Sharon and many women with lived experience and essential working party members, and the fantastic launches.
- The Group Facilitator Training for Working with Women who have Experienced DFV – I have run 7 of these experiential trainings since the 2020 development of the program.
- Barbie Fundraiser in 2023 – so much pink!!
- Being part of the Northside Alliance Against Domestic Violence (NAADV) formed in February 2000 to organize activities for Domestic Violence Prevention Week. All of the people from a diverse range of organizations I’ve worked with in NAADV space and the projects – too many to mention all but a few biggies that come to mind were:
- The origin of the Journeys women’s group (over 24 years at present) – beginning in 2000 - an outcome of an active and innovative NAADV membership working to fill gaps in DFV services on the north side of Brisbane.
- Safety Cards from 2001 and updated cards every 2 years since! The Safety Card initiative by NAADV have been copied and recreated for many parts of Qld.
- May 2003 - Music CD project – Your Story Through Song which created the ‘Don’t Ignore This’ CD and was launched in May 2003 at Zillmere PCYC.
- The play – ‘The Hoods’ written by Angela Batzien, and directed by Leticia Caceras, and performed as part of the 2005 NAADV Domestic & Family Violence Prevention Week activity at Zillmere PCYC followed by a panel discussion.
- Northside Sexual Assault Action Network (NSAAN) and all of the workers who have been part of this space since its inception in 2012 and all the Sexual Violence Awareness Month projects working with victim/survivors. Some standouts include:
- The Start by Believing project and launch developed by victim/survivors.
- The two book projects – all developed by victim/survivors and the amazing launches.
- Being part of RTN with two amazing NC students on placement.
- Supervising Social Work students on placement at NC – their creative energy, enthusiasm, and dedication made it a reciprocal learning process. Many of these students have continued to work in the DFV space and some of them have continued their connection with NC (a special shout out to Olivia and Hannah).
- Early in my NC career (1993), the of ‘volunteer legal service coordinator’ was handed to me. It was a monthly evening service headed by a steering committee of myself and some law students. I handed it over (that’s the highlight part) some years later when it was still all voluntary and operating on a weekly basis.
- And a huge call out and thank you to all the women I’ve worked with over the 31 years, who have allowed me into their lives as they work towards recovery from DFV. It has truly been a privileged space to sit alongside and be a small part of their recovery.

Lisa Berlin

STUDENTS

At Northside Connect we aim to create an environment that fosters and encourages students to grow, build their confidence and develop new skills essential to their future careers. In return students contribute a lot to the work of Northside Connect, taking on a leadership role in various projects, helping to plan and run events, assisting with programs such as food relief and Journeys and developing resources for the community.

Thank you to our students for 2023 - 24, we wish you all the best with your career in the community services sector.

Neighbourhood Centre Students

Second Semester 2023 Jack Harvey (Master of Social Work) Final Placement and Gugu Ncube (Bachelor of Social Work) First Placement

First Semester 2024 Rebecca Patterson (Bachelor of Social Work) Final Placement

Legal Service Students

1. Annie- Jean Kemp
2. Christina Mckay
3. Anya Wadham
4. Savannah Trafford
5. Sophie Robertson
6. Irene Elza Soji
7. Edward Griffin
8. Angus McDonald
9. Calissa Leyden
10. Ariana Housley
11. Bek Kluske
12. Calum Douglass
13. Jessica De Luca
14. Anita Antony
15. Luke Roberts
16. William Cook
17. Elise Williamson



NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE VOLUNTEERS

Front Desk/Administration:

- Jennifer, Trish, Teagan and Rachel

Food Relief and Community Lunch:

- Chris, Diane, Linda, Peter, Julia, Censina, Pat and Nick on boxes

Emergency Relief

- Auorora, Ian and Glynis

Community Lunch/Events DJ:

- Leo

Playgroup:

- Cathy and Hannah

English as a Second Language Classes:

- Deb, Damian, Jean, Kimberly, Margaret, Marian, Nook and Nerina

Community Garden:

- David

Maintenance

- Jeff

Sewing Group

- Pauline, Robyn, Nancy, Shirely and Trish

Art Group

- Gwyneth



VOLUNTEER PROFILES

David, Community Garden Volunteer

The Nundah Community Garden has been a part of the Centre for over 20 years. The garden is designed to provide fresh vegetables for the local community and has progressed to include providing garden fresh green vegetables to the kitchen where meals are provided to those in need. The garden is also a meeting place for those visiting the Centre and has storm water storage access and a lock up shed for the safe storage of garden tools. The garden is maintained by volunteers with David Curtis (sometimes called David Gardener) currently filling this role with some welcome help from others. David has been maintaining the garden on an ongoing basis since 2022.

David (83) and his wife Narelle have 4 children and 8 grandchildren. Most of the family live in Brisbane, but two of the children and grandchildren reside in Victoria. David retired in 2016 but enjoyed maintaining the garden and house they lived in for over 42 years in Boondall. David and Narelle moved from the family home (which had too many stairs), to a seniors residential in Nundah, which suits them much more for this stage of their lives.

As David is now in a unit in Nundah, volunteering at the Nundah Community Garden allows him to continue to fulfill his love of gardening. Under David's care, the garden has flourished, and a lot of produce is grown and harvested for the local community and community lunch.



Robyn Rizzo, Sewing Group Volunteer

Robyn is one of many volunteers that help at our sewing group and has been volunteering her services for over a decade. When Robyn was asked why she keeps coming to the group, this is what she said-

"I like the people, the friendship with the other volunteers, women who have found us who we have helped over the years. I also enjoy seeing all the lovely things that people make many wonderful things, helping out and giving advice where I can. Over the years, I have been given many beautiful pieces of material that are donated to the Centre and have used these to make quilts which are donated for women who are homeless or escaping domestic violence. I love that nothing goes to waste, every scrap of material is useful.

I don't know any other place like this, a place that brings people from all walks of life together to make and create."

Goodbye...

We also said goodbye to the following volunteers who chose to move on, some after volunteering with us for many years and one who sadly passed away this year.

- Sewing Group – Shirley James, Trish
- English Language Classes - Kimberly, Nerina, Margaret
- Administration – Jenny
- Community Lunch – Siew, Claudia, Leo



Shirley James, Sewing Group Volunteer

The Northside Connect family was very sad to lose our dear friend and colleague, Shirley James who volunteered with the sewing group for many years. Shirley was a bright and colourful presence at sewing, always well-coordinated and turned out. Her background in artistry, dressmaking and theatre costumes was incredibly appreciated and we were constantly impressed with her attention to detail and skill level.

Shirley always went above and beyond to help others and the Centre, making many items of clothes for attendees at the group and events like the Nundah Festival and Christmas Craft Fair.

Shirley is dearly missed by all.



Wednesday Evening Legal Service Volunteers

We send a heartfelt appreciation and thanks to all the BNCLS dedicated volunteers - acknowledged individually here on this page - for their vital contribution, giving their time freely often after a long day of work or study. Our volunteers come with a wealth of expertise in different areas of law -without them we would not have a Wednesday night service! Our volunteers' advice retain their overall high quality and we have a robust system in place for reviewing and collaborating where required.

As with every year, we provide a comprehensive induction; plus NCI host an end of year function for all volunteers, staff and Management Committee, combined with the AGM to say thanks.

Sadly, we say goodbye to some of our longstanding legal volunteers due to work, personal and family commitments: Lauren Gracie, Aaron Ball and Teena Maguire - we sincerely thank them for offering their time to assist our community.

List of Legal Volunteers

(July 2023 – June 2024)

Lawyers-

1. Amahlia Riley
2. Ciara Furlong
3. Rachael Elaurant
4. Brittany Graham
5. Kent Fawke
6. Manjo Oyson
7. Emma Lewis
8. Belinda Hughes
9. Clancy Robba

10. Alice Elliot
11. Jackson Haswell
12. Liam Spargo
13. Michael Logan
14. Christina Simmondis
15. Sarah Lindsay
16. Natalie Corica
17. Sam Cooper
18. Lauren Gracie
19. Franco Ciottarello
20. Chris McGill
21. Ellen Brown
22. Teena Maguire
23. Aaron Ball





The Domestic Violence Program Receives Recurrent Funding!

This year we received the news that the Domestic Violence Program has secured funding until 2030. Being able to guarantee employment for staff and continued services for women who are victim/survivors of domestic and family violence for the next 6 years has been a game changer.

Thank you to the State Government and the Attorney General Yvette D'ath for recognising the need for services such as ours and taking steps to ensure women have continued access to essential supports and programs.



Celebrating our Volunteers & their Achievements

Post Covid, 2023 – 24 was our first real opportunity to grow our volunteer program through inviting new community members to come and volunteer. At NCI, celebrating all our volunteers is a highlight of the year.

So, in November we held a Volunteer Dinner and invited volunteers from across all our programs to join us so we could thank them for their contribution to our community. Although we got rained out and had to move from the Laneway into the community room last minute it was a great night with lots of catch ups and some new connections made. Also thank you to Adam Allan, Cr for Northgate for a grant which assisted in covering the costs of the dinner.



Development of the 2024 - 2029 Strategic Plan

In 2023-24 we came to the end of our current Strategic Planning Cycle. With a grant from the Lord Mayors Better Suburbs Grants, we engaged Shannon Gibbs from Tenaxiti, who facilitated the development of a new Strategic Plan to take us through till 2029. Northside Connect is very proud to present our 2024 to 2029 Strategic Goals

Our Strategic Goals

As part of our commitment to advancing Northside Connect's mission and vision, we have identified four strategic goals. These goals will guide our efforts over the next three to five years, ensuring we remain focused on key areas that are vital to our community's well-being and our organisation's growth.

1. **Connected to Community** - We cultivate deep connections with our community through inclusive and responsive programs and initiatives.
2. **Collaborative and Dynamic Workforce** - We foster a cohesive and dynamic workplace culture, prioritising professional development and well-being.
3. **Committed to Service Excellence** - We deliver high-quality, inclusive services that respond proactively to community needs.
4. **Creative and Adaptive Responses** - We are innovative and adaptive, promoting an environment of continuous improvement and responsiveness.





Christmas at NCI

At NCI, Christmas is a time when we focus on making this time the best we can for the people who connect with us all year and who may struggle due to isolation, lack of resources or other factors. We are very lucky to have a community around us that also wants to give and to help in any way they can. This year we were overwhelmed with offers to help wrap presents, donations of toys for children of all ages, gifts for the women in our DV program and food to see families through the Christmas period and school holidays.

We held our annual Christmas party in December, where attendees enjoyed a Christmas lunch with all the trimmings, children's entertainment and a visit from Santa with toys for the children. At the end of the party everyone went home with a Christmas food hamper.

NCI would like to thank everyone who contributed and special thanks go to:

- The Lord Mayors Charitable Trust for funds and toys
- Deswik who collected and wrapped 100 presents for children and also donated gifts for our DV Program
- Bridgeman Baptist Church who donated 80 Christmas Hampers
- OzHarvest for coordinating the Retail First Food Drive
- Rotary Club of Nundah, C&K Childcare, Connected Inc, BOQ Hamilton, Yoga on the Inside and Penola Casa Day Care for donations of food, toys and gifts.



COMMUNITY COLLABORATIONS



Long Table Dinner

In collaboration with Nundah Now Inc, we held our annual Long Table Dinner raising funds for Northside Connect programs. The theme was Christmas in July and the event was a huge success, with raffles on offer, music and amazing food courtesy of Compassion 4 Community.

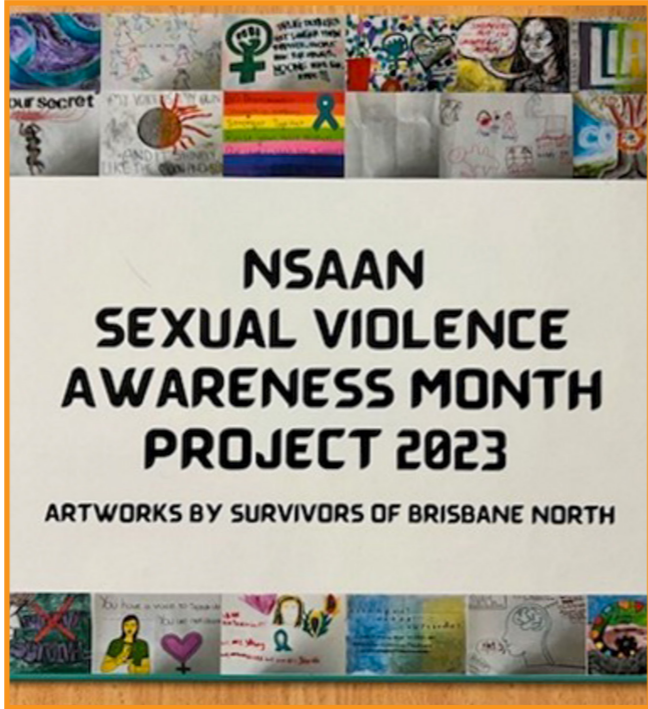


Sexual Violence Awareness Month

As a member of Northside Sexual Assault Action Network (NSAAN), staff and students held an event in October 2023, launching a booklet of artwork from a series of workshops held by NSAAN members. The artwork was also digitized and shown as part of a video at a QSAN event in Parliament House during SVAM on 11 October.

There were over 60 people in attendance at the launch including many women with lived experience of sexual violence as well as workers connected with NSAAN and the project. Seven speakers including women with lived experience shared personal stories and experiences, poetry, live music and a call to action for Reclaim The Night 2024. Minister Leanne Linnard also attended and spoke about sexual violence and the current changes to legislation.

Afterwards participants walked together, with a SVAM banner created on the night, to the train station and into the underpass to 'reclaim' spaces that are often deemed unsafe for women to walk through on their own at night. Laminated posters of the artworks had been placed in the Nundah Train Station Underpass earlier in the evening (with full permission and support from QR). The evening was moving and powerful and demonstrated a beautiful show of support and cohesion from all participants at the event.



Throughout the year NCI collaborated on several events with other services and organisations. These events were held to raise funds, bring awareness to a specific community issue or educate and inform others.

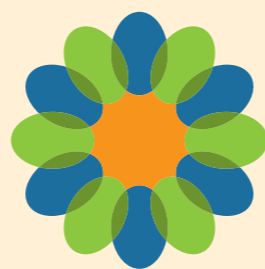
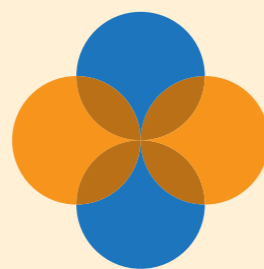
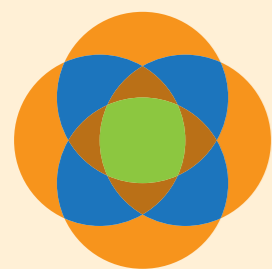
Domestic & Family Violence Prevention Month

Northside Alliance Against Domestic Violence (NAADV), which NCI is a member invited schools from the north side of Brisbane to attend the 'Brisbane North School DFV Recognise, Respond, Refer Expo and Forum'. The Expo took place at Northgate Hall on the 30th May 2024 with approximately 60 people in attendance. The event was emceed by Hannah from NCI and included six speakers from a diverse range of organisations that work with families/children and/or young people, and one woman who spoke of her lived experience with children and schools when going through DFV. The event aimed to increase the knowledge and resources for school staff about the impact of DFV and referral pathways when engaging with children/families effected by DFV. There were 21 stall holders from different community organisations that engage with children, young people and families available for school staff to liaise with after the speakers. The feedback from attendees was very positive and included suggestions that this event be held more frequently in more locations and at a larger venue.

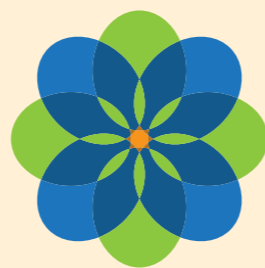
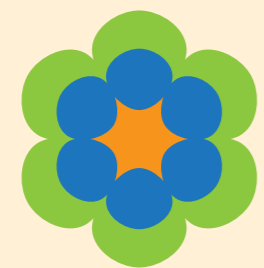
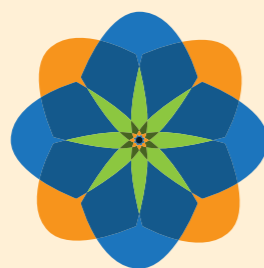
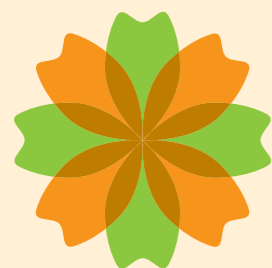
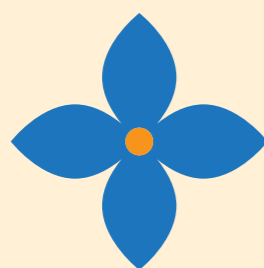
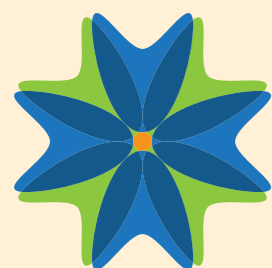
Sorry Day

Northside Connect is a member of the Management Committee and Sorry Day Working Party of Noonga Reconciliation Group. On Friday the 26th May, Noonga Reconciliation Group held their annual Sorry Day gathering at the Stolen Generations Memorial Site in Kalinga Park, Woolloowin. Each year Noonga is joined by local schools, kindy's, Community Leaders, Elders and other community organisation who come together to remember the Stolen Generations through personal tributes, songs, dance and sharing stories.





NUNDAH NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE



SOCIAL INCLUSION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Northside Connect has a strong focus on social inclusion and community engagement, with a dedicated Community Engagement Worker supporting volunteers in the delivery of a range of programs and activities. Our regular group activities have included:

- **Community Garden** – Thanks to a dedicated cohort of volunteers as well as participants from Community Living Association; Skilling Workers for Qld program; the community garden has thrived producing some amazing produce which was used for community lunch and shared with our local community.
- **English as a Second Language classes** - Conversational English Classes were held twice a week on a Monday and Thursday morning, throughout the year. These classes were open to anyone in the community wanting to improve their English conversation skills, with two ability levels offered.
- **Community Lunch** – Tuesday is always a hive of activity at the Centre, with community lunch being a key activity on the day. Our volunteers arrive early to plan a delicious meal utilising food donated by OzHarvest and by lunchtime, the back garden is full of community members chatting and sharing food together.
- **Sewing Group** – Every Wednesday, the sewing group met to share skills and knowledge and help each other to make a range of items including clothes, linen items, Christmas decorations, bags and much more. All materials and resources for sewing groups are donated by our local community.
- **Playgroup** – Playgroup ran weekly on a Wednesday during school term with families who have children under 5 years old attending and enjoying a range of child friendly activities with a focus on having fun and making friends.
- **Art Group** – Held on a Wednesday afternoon during term, volunteer facilitator, Gwyn who has a background in fine art has encouraged participants to let their creative side flourish. We have had some lovely art works made and the camaraderie of everyone supporting and encouraging has been lovely to see.

Events

Homelessness Week

National Homelessness Week, August 5 – 11, seeks to raise awareness of Australia's homelessness situation and grow community and government support to end homelessness in Australia. At Northside Connect, we are joining others across the country to raise Nundah's awareness of homelessness. We designed posters, infographics and art installations to help educate the community about homelessness in Australia. Bringing light to a community that often gets overlooked in the system. Furthermore, during homelessness week and the month of August, Northside Connect sought donations to put towards our blanket and food drive. These donations will help support people currently experiencing food insecurity, homelessness and any one in need of warmth from the cold weather.

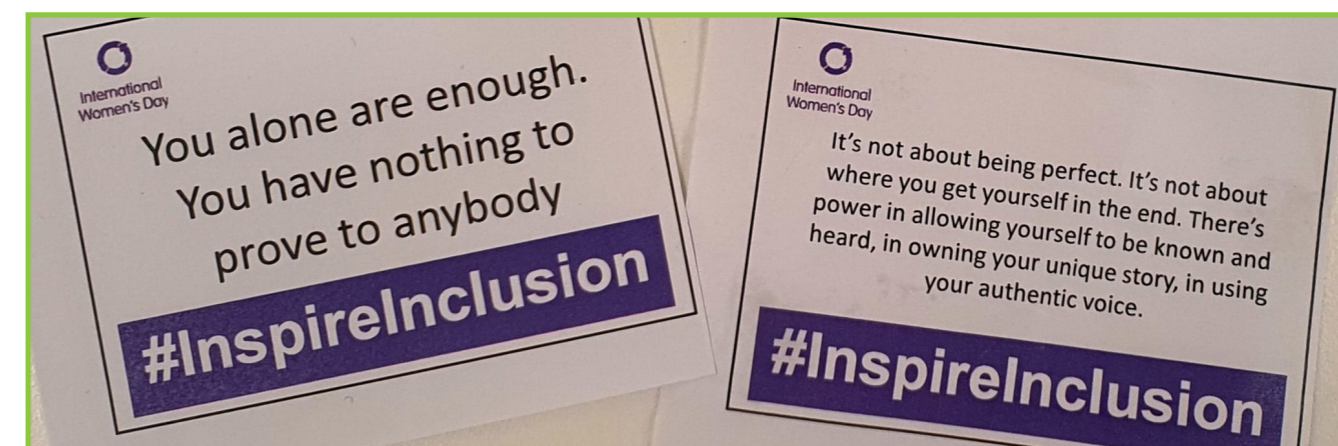
Mental Health Week

In October we celebrated Queensland Mental Health Week at the centre with an incredible mini-expo morning. Featuring a talk from Di, the Lived Experience Representative from Safe Spaces, an ink blotting workshop from our artist Gwentyth, a dance class from Rebel Lyons: Performance Artist from Common People Dance Project and finishing off with a delicious lunch provided by Nando's Clayfield.

Nundah Street Festival

Northside Connect participated in the yearly Nundah Street Festival, a fun and successful event showcasing local businesses, services, food and artists. Alongside our NCI raffle and centre information stall, our carpark was host to:

- NCI fundraising blow-up bouncy slide (a big hit with children attending the festival)
- The Noonga Reconciliation Committee stall
- Boomerang Bags stall
- NCI Sewing Group volunteer's stall



Events (continued)

Child Protection Week

In support of Queensland Child Protection Week, our two placement students, Jack and Gugu, along with staff and volunteers, set up an information stall on child safety and provided a shady spot for kids and their parents/carers to sit down and do some craft together. The project was popular, offering quiet reprieve from the heat and bustle of the festival. Approximately 200 birds were coloured, painted and decorated.

International Women’s Day

Social Work placement student, Rebecca, with the support of Community Engagement Worker, Peita, organised an IWD event at the Centre on 6th March. The event attracted approximately 26 attendees, including the Sewing Group cohort, several Play Group families, Gwenyth from the Art Group, as well as a journalist from local Brisbane magazine the Village News (who came to interview centre staff and volunteers, and stayed for games and cake!) Attendees played IWD Bingo, and Rebecca and Peita gave out prizes handmade by the Sewing Group volunteers. The centre provided catering, and the Sewing Group ladies also donated homemade cakes. Children who attended made paper “Crowns for Queens,” and donated second hand clothes were available for free. By all accounts – there was much positive feedback on the day – the event was very successful and centre Group regulars requested more events like this throughout the year.



PROFILE OF A COMMUNITY MEMBER: PHILLIP CLEMENT

Born in 1962 in Brisbane in the old Royal Women’s Hospital, Phil grew up very street wise. He recounts he was a ward of the state for 10 years until he was 16.

At 16, Phil began driving road trains – big haulage trucks pulling four full-sized trailers – from Emerald in Central Queensland to Darwin and back every week. Phil continued driving all over Australia until he was 51, when he had a stroke.

In 1990 Phil broke his back – 5 tonnes of steel hit him when accidentally dropped from a crane! He weathered a heart attack in 2012, didn’t feel it, and the stroke followed a week later. This spelled instant retirement. In 2017 he was diagnosed with diabetes (Phil says he has found a local Nundah physio who is very good – can recommend!)

Phil began volunteering in 2016, while he was still in hospital recovering from the stroke – his job was to pick up rubbish on the hospital grounds – he didn’t leave one single scrap of paper or cigarette butt on the ground! Around this time, he also began volunteering for the Royal Flying Doctors Service, which had flown him from Cairns to Adelaide after the stroke.

Moving back to Brisbane in 2019, Phil volunteered at various places, and he moved into Nundah at the start of 2024... and walked through the doors of Northside Connect.

Philip may not be running marathons, using a large walking stick to get around – this, he hand-made himself out of paperbark timber, and for Phil the meaning for this tree is “family means strength” – but at Northside Connect, he provides the vital service of social assistance. He welcomes and engages with our Tuesday Food Relief regulars and attendees, ready with a smile and always up for a good yarn, working to make sure everyone feels included. Phil enjoys coming down on Tuesdays to show support for the service and connect with the local community, and we’re very glad to have him on the team.



CREATING SAFE AND WELCOMING SPACES

Drop in

The Centre continued to offer emotional support and practical assistance through front space, including access to computers and internet to access information, seek employment and connect with friends and family, free phone access, tea, coffee and something to eat and assistance with completing forms, photocopying, scanning and printing.

Information and referral

Our Information and referral services continue to be in high demand. Each day staff, volunteers and students respond to requests for assistance from individuals or colleagues on a range of issues including legal advice, emergency relief, housing assistance, domestic and family violence support and assistance, family and parenting support as well as inquiries about the programs and activities run at the Centre.

Emergency relief

Over the 12 months, the Centre has continued to assist people in need of emergency relief with food, toiletries, blankets and linen and other essential items. This program relies on a small amount of funding from the Department of Communities which is topped up with donations and support of other services, including food rescue services, businesses, groups and local community members. These supporters have included:

- Oz Harvest who collect and deliver hundreds of kilos of donated food to us
- St Vincent De Paul whose volunteers provide emergency relief vouchers and assistance from the Centre twice a week
- Share the Dignity who provided a Pink Box which provides sanitary items for free to women
- JJ Richards for providing a recycling bin to dispose of all the boxes from food delivery
- Brumbies Bakery Nundah for our weekly bread collection
- Community Community Canteen who supply frozen meals on a fortnightly basis
- Nundah Village Shopping Centre who have a donation cage at the Centre for the community to drop food off
- Our local community who have fundraised for us, donated money, food, clothes, blankets, linen, small household items and much more in order to make a difference in the lives of our most vulnerable community members.

Collaborating with our community

Throughout the year the Neighbourhood Centre program collaborated with a number of other services and organisations to deliver programs and activities that are responsive and meet the need of the community. As a Neighbourhood Centre we can often be the hub of the community facilitating connection and collaboration. We highly value our relationships with others and especially want to acknowledge the contribution and support of the following services.

- Quihn
- Northside Alliance of Neighbourhood Centres
- Boomerang Bags
- Street Smart
- Brisbane City Council Community Development Team
- Nundah Community Coop




IMPACT SNAPSHOT 2023/24

Nundah Neighbourhood Centre


Provided \$869,491 in community value in 2023/24

This community value equates to \$3.14 for every \$1 of Queensland Government Neighbourhood Centre funding or \$248.43 for every 1 hour the Neighbourhood Centre was in use.


This includes the value of:




Improved quality of life through social connection
\$274,573




Volunteer contributions
\$320,208



Emergency relief provided
\$210,510

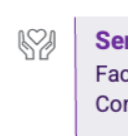


Services provided
\$64,200




Emergency relief value includes:

Food and groceries	\$204,510
Clothing and Personal Care	\$6,000



Services value includes:

Facilities use or hire	\$26,400
Community lunch, frozen, other meals	\$36,000

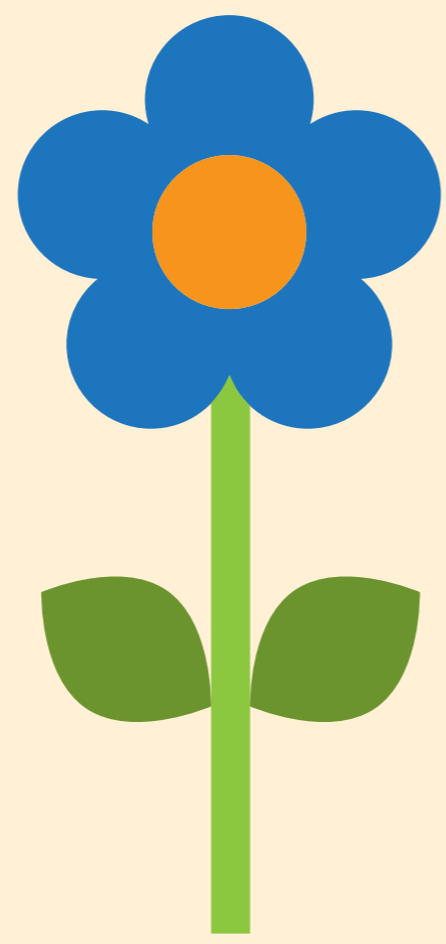


Employment

In 2023/4 Nundah Neighbourhood Centre provided 7.0 full time equivalent positions including 6.4 direct and 0.6 indirect positions.

These values are produced by Neighbourhood Centres Queensland based on data provided by Nundah Neighbourhood Centre in the 2023 Neighbourhood Centre Survey. Only a limited range of activities where a determinable valuation method exists are included. Data was collected from the Second Quarter of 2023.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAM



The Domestic Violence service funding has been a game changer for Northside Connect allowing NC to double the capacity of DFV counselling services to women on the Northside of Brisbane. NC hired Hannah Sanson as the second DFV worker and her experience and knowledge of DFV and counselling as well as her familiarity with NC and the Journeys program and the DFV and Sexual Assault networks saw her transition seamlessly into the role. Over the past financial year, the DV Program has expanded exponentially.

Phases Program

PHASES Program (Personal Health And Self Esteem Strategies) has rolled out which includes the Trauma Sensitive Movement (TSM) program and the DFV Art Therapy Group Program. It also included a two-week Mindful Weaving program.

Like the Journeys program, free child minding on site at NC is available for all PHASES programs, opening it up to women with young children.

Trauma Sensitive Movement Program

Trauma Sensitive Movement Program:

- Trauma Sensitive Yoga (TSY) was changed to a Movement Group (TSM – Trauma Sensitive Movement) specifically designed for victim/survivors of trauma from DFV and Sexual Violence.
- TSM is a collaboration between NC, Immigrant Women's Support Service (IWSS) and BRISCC and commenced in February 2024. Two facilitators attend every week, one from IWSS and the trauma sensitive yoga practitioner from the previous TSY group at NC. This model allows for a more trauma informed practice where one worker can "teach" while the other worker participates and is available to assist with any additional support needs that may arise. An afternoon tea is provided for participants to attend after the movement class. This has helped foster connections amongst the women, many of whom are otherwise quite isolated.
- The TSM working party meets quarterly to ensure the program runs smoothly. The equipment and storage space has been updated and improved. Some of the costs for equipment and morning tea are shared amongst the collaborative partners.
- The program is evaluated by participants each term. One of the anonymous feedback questions asks women if they feel different at the end of the class than they did at the beginning. All the women responded with a resounding 5 on the scale of 1-5. Some of the comments included:
 - 'I feel more relaxation in my muscles and body'
 - 'I feel more at peace'
 - 'The possibility of making my own choices are amazing'
 - 'Very calm – after arriving anxious. I love it.'
 - 'More relaxed, open and safe.'
 - 'I feel better in myself and doing what feels good for my body.'

DFV Art Therapy Group Program

DFV Art Therapy Group Program:

- This program is offered to women who have previously completed the Journeys Women's Group Program at NC. It will continue to be offered in the opposite terms to Journeys allowing for a smooth transition from Journeys to Art Therapy.
- Rebekah Wall is an Art Therapist who also has experience working with DFV victim/survivors. Rebekah facilitated two 6-week art therapy group programs at NC over the past year.
- The anecdotal feedback in conversation with several of the women individually has been amazing both in terms of the benefits of the therapeutic art program and tapping into their senses of creativity and their connections and sense of safety with the other women.
- It has also been an important space for women to continue to connect and feel safe after they've completed the Journeys program.
- The feedback was exceptional and too much to include here but one woman summed it up in the following:

'Thank you for creating such a comfortable and vibrant safe space for us all. There is a sense of magic for me, when I could speak so freely about some exceptionally traumatic and painful experiences, knowing that I was truly being heard. Knowing that some of the horrors the other woman have also faced, made it feel like it wasn't too much of a burden and we could all hold space for one another. The empathy that's magic. The connection of woman together. Also magic in my eyes. I felt a connection much deeper than I presumed I would have with the other woman, thanks to Bek. I found joy in something to look forward to each week that was just for me, outside of motherhood and general responsibilities. I have found some profound healing and ability to process old wounds with the deep compassion from the group. As well as knowing I am being seen and heard and my inner child could create with sear abandonment and without pressure to be anything in particular.'



Mindfulness Weaving Workshop

This was facilitated by Angela, a worker from Windana Women's Refuge and held on the 23 Feb and 30 Feb. This was only able to run for 2 weeks due to some scheduling challenges. In total 5 women attended and the feedback from the women was extremely positive and all wished it had run for more sessions.



Barbie Movie Fundraiser

The Barracks on the 1st September 2023. The Barbie Fundraising event was a great pink success! Approximately \$1600 raised after expenses. The proceeds went towards helping women and children involved in the DFV Program. All profits were distributed, in the form of Westfield gift cards, to the women who attend the counselling services at NC. These were provided to the women at the end of the year as a holiday gift for the women and their families during particularly challenging economic times.



Journey Women's Groups

Oct-Nov 2023 Journeys program was facilitated by both NC DV Program workers and our social worker student, Gugu.

Feb-March 2024 Journeys program was facilitated by both NC DV Program workers and a DFV Specialist from Act For Kids – Kerry O'Donnell. Four of the participants were women referred from Act for Kids the others were from a diverse range of services, including NC counselling clients.

Journeys Full Day Art Activity was held on the 1st December. Eight women from the Journeys group attended this activity – the feedback was exceptional from all participants who left with a framed painting of an owl that each of them created using water colour and other mediums.

The Journeys full day DV Art activity following the Feb/ March 2024 program was held on the 19th April and was facilitated by Rebekah Wall. Six women attended the program and in addition to individual pieces of art the group created a group piece.

Social Work Student on Placement

In second semester 2023 the DV Program workers supervised Gugu from QUT who had her final social work placement at Northside Connect. Gugu helped facilitate one of the Journeys group programs, helped organize the Barbie movie fundraiser and assisted with the SVAM workshop and event.



NAADV (Northside Alliance Against Domestic Violence)

The NAADV 'Orange The World' (the UN sanctioned 25 days of activism to end violence against women and girls). On 7th December 2023 NAADV had a stall at Chermside Shopping Centre, a community awareness event to inform the public about Orange The World and provide information about DFV. Hannah attended the stall at this event.

Group Facilitator Training for Working with Women Who have Experienced DFV(GFT)

From 17 May 2024 – 21 June 2024 the DV Program workers co-facilitated the 6-week experiential group facilitator training for ten workers. The program is run as a simulation of a group occurring once a week for 2 and ½ hours over 6 weeks. All participants pair up with one other participant to co-facilitate an hour session on a given topic pertinent to facilitating groups with women who have experienced DFV. Participants gain experience developing group activities with another worker and implementing them with the rest of the participants. Some written comments/feedback from this group:

- 'The experiential aspect of learning in this group was so valuable.'
- 'I have truly loved it. Have already and will continue to recommend.'
- 'Really enjoyed the cognitive experience of a 'parallel process'.'
- 'It's been an amazing way to learn – different learning styles all accounted for and not just a boring class of theory.'
- 'Absolutely fantastic training – huge potential for learning and growth as a group facilitator.'
- 'I have grown in confidence as a result of this training.'
- 'Being a co-facilitator was the most important part even if it was the scariest.'

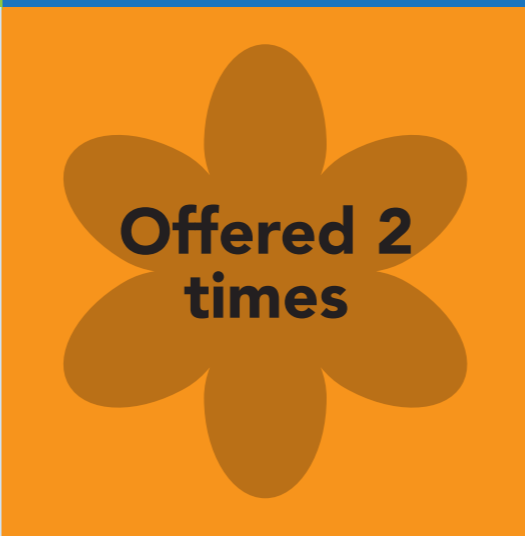


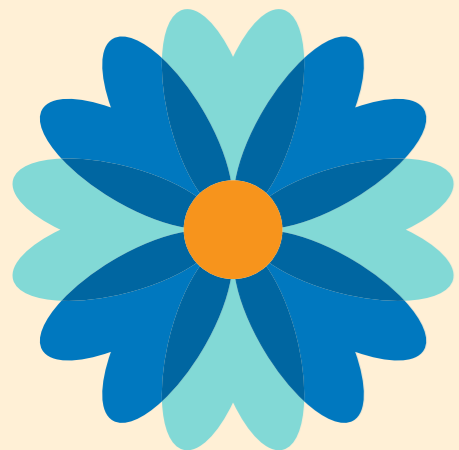


OUR IMPACT

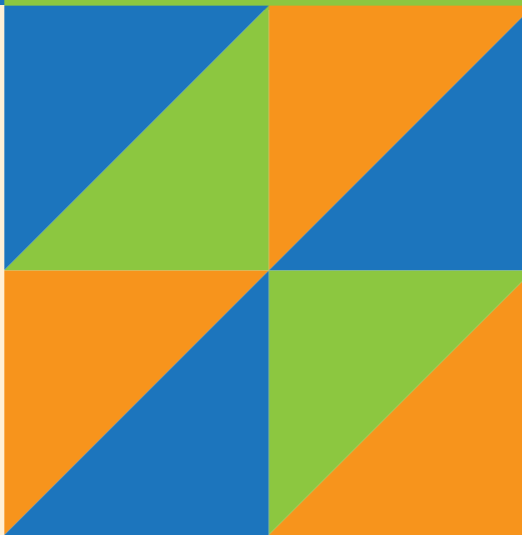
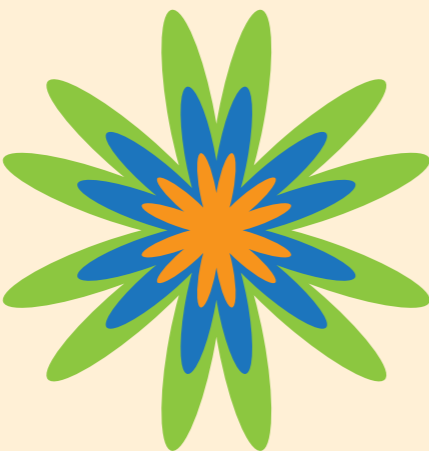


OUR IMPACT





BRISBANE NORTH COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE



What We Do

The Brisbane North Community Legal Service (BNCLS) continues to provide much needed free legal advice, information and referrals for not only the local Nundah area but also to the broader Brisbane and Moreton Bay communities. On occasion we may also assist with minor legal tasks, such as drafting legal documents, where time and skill permits. BNCLS is not a representation service, and we do not take carriage of matters.

The BNCLS is a nationally accredited community legal service - we are committed to providing high-quality legal advice, access to justice and to holistically supporting our clients. We work closely with the other programs in the organisation to provide a wraparound service for our clients and we are actively engaged with stakeholders in our community to ensure we have a strong referral pathway when we cannot assist.

How We Help

People seeking legal advice may book day appointments (either F2F or telephone) with a solicitor via our reception. Alternatively, clients can book in for our Wednesday evening (5.45pm – 7.45pm) telephone legal advice clinic. Those appointments are generally for 20 – 30 minutes with one of our volunteer solicitors. We can assist clients in a range of legal matters, including family law issues, domestic and family violence, minor civil matters and criminal law advice.

Client Feedback

“Professional and straight to the point”

*“Thank you so much for your help today.
It is very much appreciated”*

“Thank you so much”

“Great lawyer that answered my questions in an efficient and clear manner. Your service has been invaluable for the average person as every other law firm wants an upfront payment of more than \$500 before they even ask your name...”

“I’m very grateful for the help I received”

“Thanks so much for the advice and information given”

“Was very helpful...”

“We appreciate all the advice you have provided via our telephone appointment and today’s email. We have shared what is essentially required with our supports and referees. Thank you for supporting us. We now understand there is a high demand for community legal advice and very limited services to address the needs of so many”



Case Study

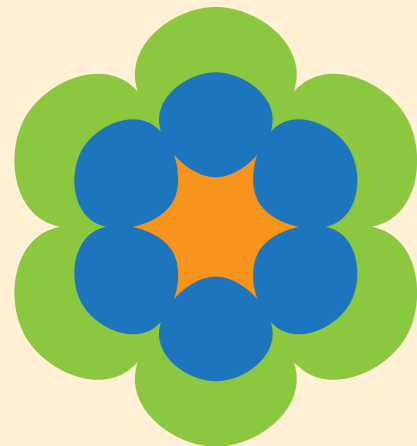
Megan* sought legal advice and assistance from our service to apply for a Divorce. The client was unable to afford legal representation and did not have access to technology, nor the confidence to complete an application online (which is now mandatory).

Complicating the matter is that the client is the Aggrieved in a comprehensive Domestic Violence Order where her spouse is named as the Respondent. The client was very nervous about the process and concerned about the reaction of the Respondent to the Application.

However, she explained the finalization of the Divorce was an essential step in her healing and she was determined to complete same. We assisted the client in a practical manner by setting up the Commonwealth Portal (where you file documents online) and helping her to complete the Application. We explained the requirements for a Divorce, the process and advised on whether she was required to attend the hearing. We gave detailed legal advice on the options for service and assisted the client in preparing and completing the required Affidavits to prove service once effected. We also referred the client to appropriate support services and discussed safety planning.

This assistance meant the Divorce was granted at the first hearing, reducing the client's stress and lessening further risk to her wellbeing and safety and enabling the client to advance in her healing journey.

*deidentified



Case Study

Tom*, an older disabled migrant man grappling with mental health, mobility, and fine motor issues, sought guidance during an in-person general advice session regarding a consumer dispute. Specifically, he had aimed to purchase a new mobile phone to stay connected with his family abroad, attend doctor's appointments, and to access the internet.

However, he unknowingly purchased a second-hand phone devoid of essentials like a charging cable, instructions, or packaging. The phone failed to connect to Wi-Fi reliably or make consistent calls, these limitations were undisclosed by the seller. We provided legal assistance, focusing on consumer rights, guarantees, and potential remedies.

Providing a template letter of demand and referring him to relevant bodies such as the Office of Fair Trading and ACCC, we equipped him with the tools needed to address the situation. Additionally, we imparted guidance on navigating QCAT proceedings, including fee structures, potential fee reductions. Throughout the session, the client's confidence visibly grew, reflecting the empowerment gained from understanding his rights and avenues for recourse. Moreover, we ensured he was aware of practical support available through our office, such as assistance with photocopying costs and the availability of the centre's phone for communications.

Thanks to our assistance, the client not only gained practical knowledge of initiating proceedings but also felt supported throughout the process, enabling him to assert his rights effectively.

*deidentified

OUR IMPACT

Case Study

*Simone sought our legal assistance after separating from her husband, while still living under the same roof. Simone was experiencing financial hardship and described her relationship with her husband as toxic, containing characteristics of coercion and control. The husband was digitally monitoring the client including the installation of cameras through the home. She described incidents of verbal abuse, financial abuse, manipulation, and threats by her spouse to take away her pet.

We assisted Simone by providing direction on how to obtain a Domestic and Family Violence Protection Order, along with the elements required for making the order and the options available to both parties including consequences and outcomes possible.

We assisted her in understanding how property settlement works, including information about full and frank disclosure requirements making the client aware of avenues to obtain financial information the husband is keeping hidden and the types of legal agreements that can be made, along with initiating court proceedings, when appropriate.

We were able to provide referrals for Legal Aid and information about emergency relocation payments, staying safe under the same roof in the short term including safety planning. We were able to provide some limited details for a bill to amendments to Family Law Act, expected to come in effect later next year, relating to domestic violence in property settlement and including provisions about companion animals (otherwise known as pets), that may potentially be of assistance. Because of this assistance, Simone was aware of her legal rights and had more information on options available to her to keep safe

* deidentified

OUR IMPACT



Case Study

*Paul attended our office seeking legal assistance about the traumatic and sudden loss of his adult son. Paul was dealing with his own grief and also took on board the care of his grandchild. He was unsure of what his next steps were regarding navigating the coroner's office, the care of his grandchild or how to handle his son's estate (who had passed away without a Will).

With his consent, we directly contacted a free service that could help him liaise with the coroner's office easing his stress in this regard. We also gave Paul advice about family law and estate matters and assisted him practically by helping him draft appropriate paperwork.

By the time Paul had his third appointment, he was visibly less stressed and had more confidence in tackling each matter as it arose with our assistance as required.

* deidentified



Community Legal Education

BNCLS provides free legal education to the community (CLE). We enjoy presenting on numerous topics and we welcome enquiries from the public. This year, our CLE team welcomed Kamal Kaur as a presenter.

- Presentations conducted include -
- Broken to Brilliance (Family Law Property Settlements)
 - Enforcing QCAT's Decisions
 - Domestic and Family Violence in the workplace
 - Consumer Rights

- The feedback we receive indicates these sessions were -
- Excellently presented
 - Easy to understand
 - The topic of law was presented in a user-friendly way
 - Suitable time was given to discuss the topic

We continue to receive more enquiries from different organisations, and we see this as a potential area for growth in the future.



Community Legal Education

We continue to partner with HWL Ebsworth lawyers as part of their secondment program. The program offers an opportunity for law graduates to assist a community legal service with their day-to-day operations and is an invaluable opportunity for new law graduates to learn how the community sector operates but also is of great assistance to us to support service delivery.

- We thank the following secondees for their assistance in the last financial year:-
- Ryan Hayes
 - Carter Mauro
 - Emily Honor
 - Lauren Perry
 - Ruby King

Their support to our legal service in both administrative duties and client management has been invaluable and much appreciated.

HWL Ebsworth - Secondee Program

During our three-month secondments to Northside Connect (Brisbane North Community Legal Service), we were all able to immerse ourselves in an environment focused on serving the community.

Our primary responsibilities during secondment included attending client meetings, conducting legal research, booking legal appointments, and reviewing and drafting legal advice. The most impactful part of our secondment experience was during our attendance at client meetings, where we obtained valuable insights into various community issues, including domestic and family violence, elder abuse, discrimination, homelessness, unfair employment dismissals, and civil disputes. Knowing that the work we were doing was going towards assisting the disadvantaged within our community played an enormous part in our enjoyment of secondment.

We all agreed that our time at Northside Connect has been invaluable for our professional development. The mentorship and guidance we received from the solicitors and social workers at Northside Connect was unparalleled and we are very thankful to them for providing us with this opportunity.

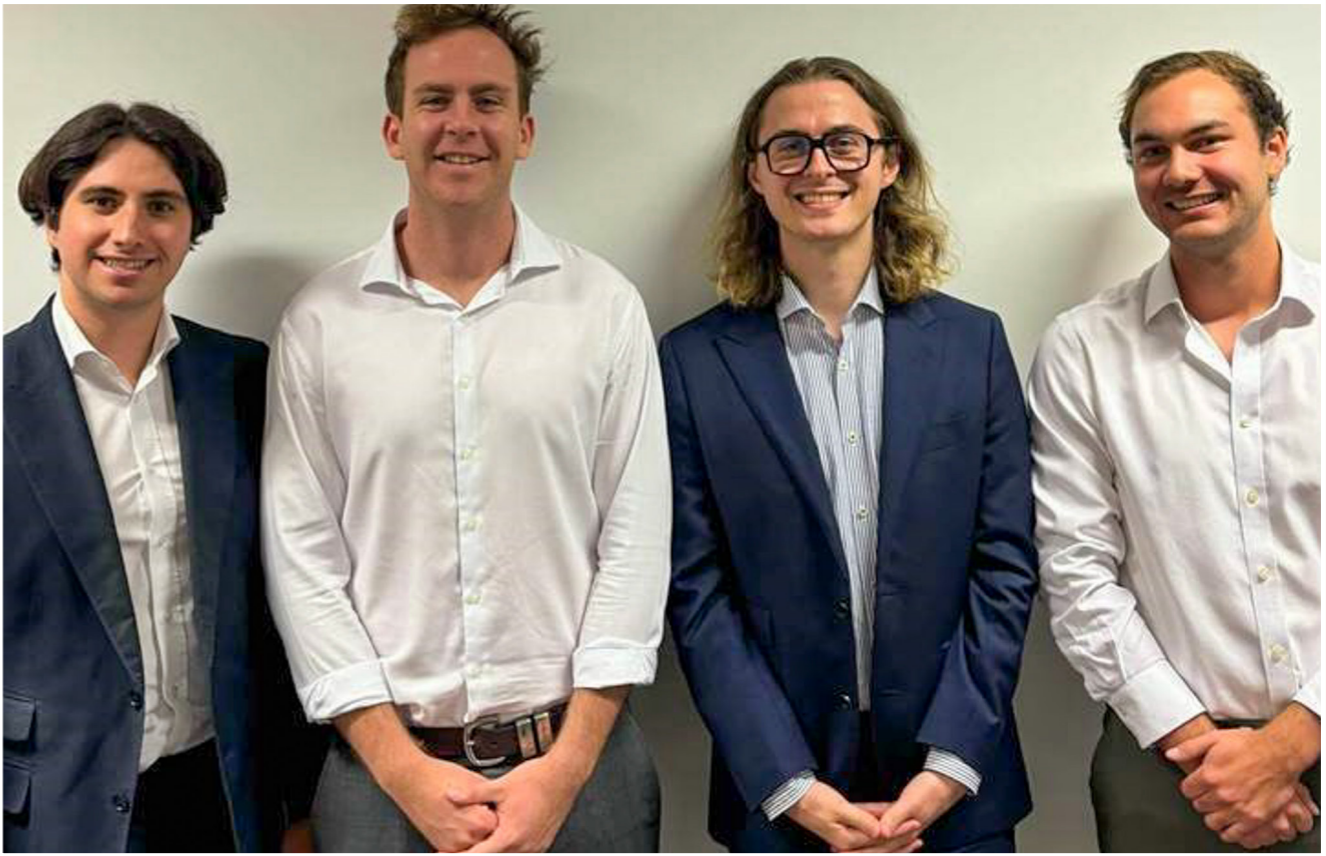
Opportunities

Eugene White who has been with BNCLS for many years officially retired in 2024. We will miss Eugene and wish him all the best in his retirement.

There are now two new staff members, Justine Silverthorne the Principal Solicitor who began in October 2023 and Lauren Everett our new Generalist Solicitor who began in March 2024. Consequently, there have been some changes to service delivery (i.e. types of matters, improving our e-filing and cross-checking system), but these have managed well with a solid team and strong management.

BNCLS were also informed that the client management database all community legal centres use will be defunded by June 2025. This is quite a challenge for a small service (i.e. lack of IT knowledge, time and funding) but we are meeting that challenge by thorough research on appropriate systems and costs and by collaborating with the sector. We aim to have a new system in place by early 2025.

In addition, the substantial increase in the cost of living, property prices, rent, limited housing and the consequent rise in homelessness has impacted the type of matters and the clients we see. We are committed to legal upskilling where possible, providing a holistic service to clients and fostering strong referral pathways for practical assistance and support for our clients to weather these impacts.





983
Legal Advice
Sessions

48
Discreet Legal
Task Work

5756
Referrals

2597
Valuable Information
to the Community



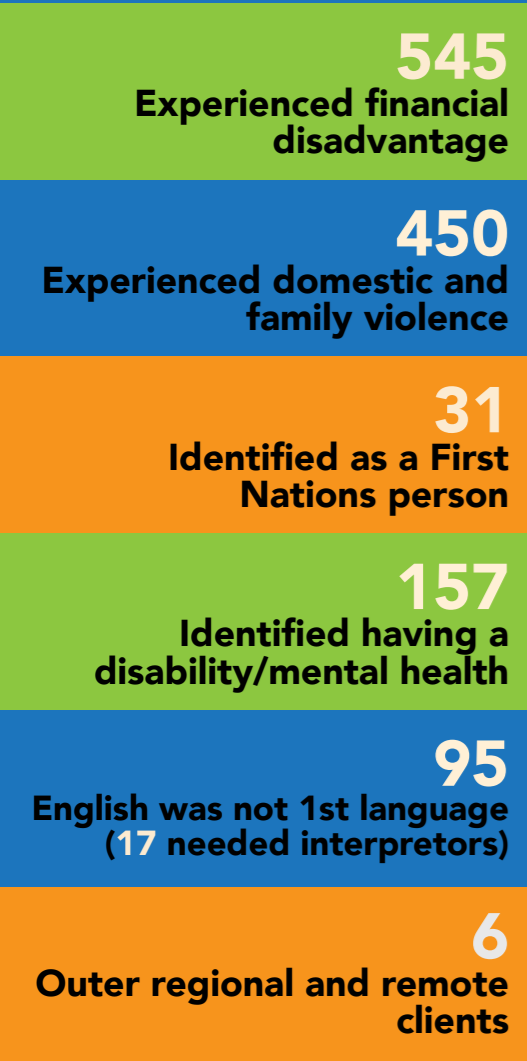
32
24 yrs and under

159
Ages 25-34

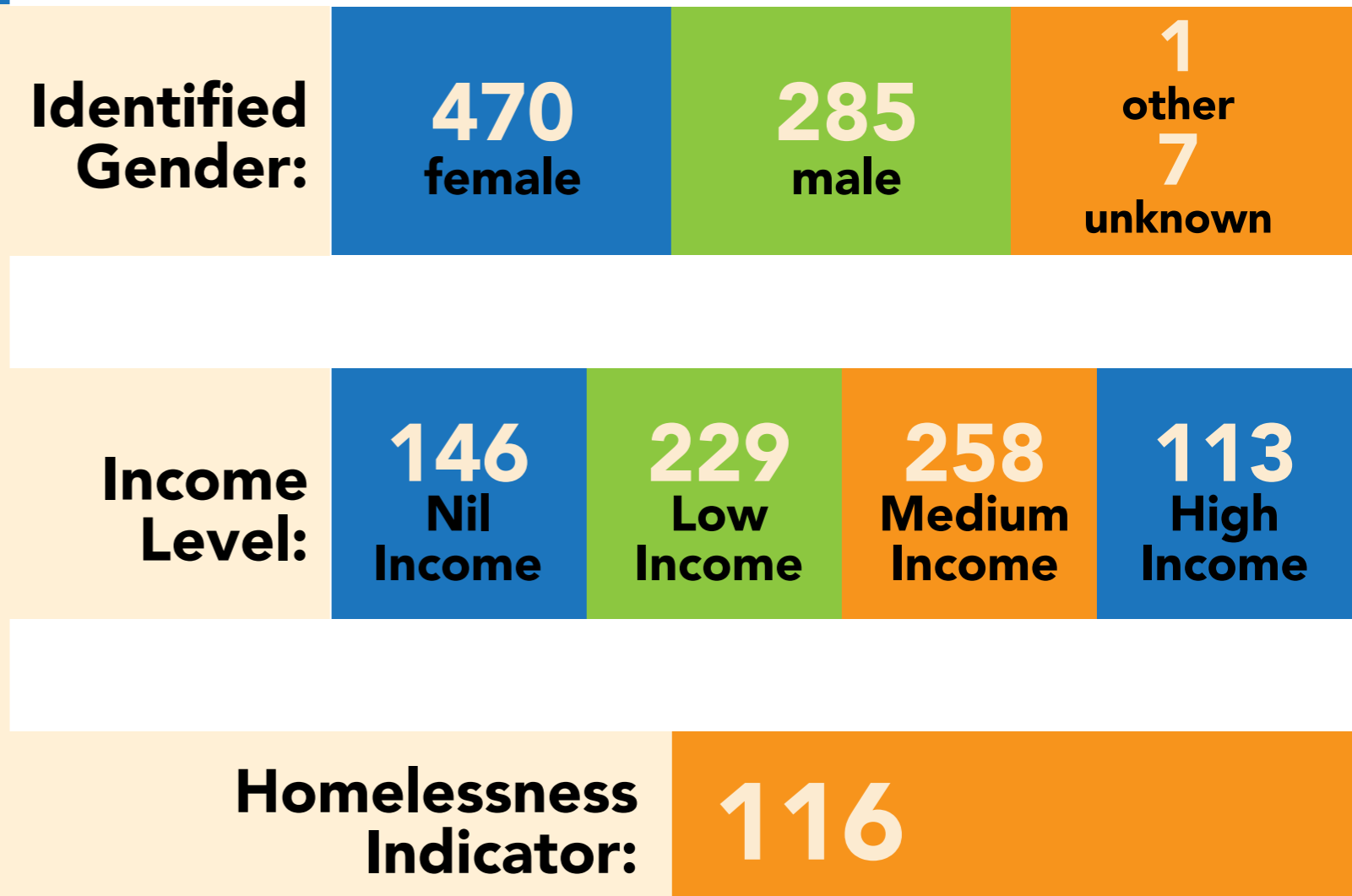
285
Ages 36-49

186
Ages 50-64

OUR IMPACT



OUR IMPACT



FINANCIAL REPORT OF THE TREASURER

YEAR ENDING 30 JUNE 2024

I have great pleasure in submitting the Audited Financial Report for Northside Connect for the year ending 30th June 2024. Our auditor, Arabon Audit & Assurance, has prepared the Incorporation's Financials for 2024 and in the opinion of the auditors the Financials are a true and correct record of Northside Connect's performance and they comply with the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission (ACNC) obligations.

I note for the interest of our members of Northside Connect income for the 2023/24 year consisted of the following:

- Legal Aid Queensland: \$314,366
- Department of Justice and Attorney-General: \$199,800
- Department of Communities, Housing & Digital Economy : \$10,000
- Department of Communities, Disability Service & Seniors: \$292,610
- Brisbane City Council: \$9,090
- Non – Grant related Revenue: \$9,636

Total income for the year amounted to \$906,102, with expenses amounting to \$ 906,102 resulting with unexpended income of \$52,000 available for FY 25. We maintained budget and have a healthy cashflow moving into the new financial year.

The Domestic Violence Program secured recurrent funding for the next 6 years giving security of income and continued service delivery for this program. Cashflow boosted by cash donations was up 5% and BCC initiative for Better Suburb Community Support Grant. I will note our Room Hire has been down on the previous year so there is capacity for improvement of our self-generated income .

Day to day running expenses of \$79,925 were kept to budget. Improvements to the centre in previous years has kept the cost of maintenance of physical assets low, but increases in our major expenses including Insurance, software/ IT expenses and utilities continue to grow.

I believe that the organisation has and will continue to have a strong financial platform from which it can operate to provide the essential services required by our community.

I would like finish by acknowledging the staff and volunteers at the Northside Connect for all their hard work and continued dedication.

Wendy Clark
Treasurer

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF SPONSORS, DONORS & SUPPORTERS

THANK YOU TO:

- \$500.00 from CBA Bank
- \$250.00 from Grill'd Pty Ltd
- \$2,180.00 from Gray's Celebratory Dinner
- \$24,190.00 from Deswik
- \$1165.00 from Julie's IWD fundraising event
- \$2000.00 from Share The Love, Nundah Shopping Centre