

ANNUAL REPORT 2025



OUR VISION

A safe, connected and just community.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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 and facilitating access to resources, support and information.

THANK YOU

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

ACKNOWLEDGMENT 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.

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 State Government through Neighbourhood Centre Initiative Funding.
- The Domestic Violence Program receives funding from the Queensland State Government through Women's Safety and Violence Prevention Funding.
- The Brisbane North Community Legal Service is funded by Federal and State Government, distributed by the Queensland State Government under the National Legal Assistance Partnership Agreement.

NCI also receive additional assistance through one off grants from Federal, State and Local 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.

PRESIDENTS REPORT

Never let it be said that Northside Connect’s people don’t make an impact...

Only very recently we had the sight of former Northside Connect volunteer, and now Federal Minister, Annika Wells, at the United Nations as part of an Australian delegation. It’s a long way from Nundah to New York and yet it’s a (good) reminder of how our people and connections make Northside Connect the organisation it is.

And that’s really important, because reflecting on the last twelve months, it would be easy to dwell on the sustained pressure felt across our community. The rising cost of living continues to challenge many of our clients, and the demand for essential services—from emergency relief to access to justice—remains intense. It is in this environment, however, that the true value of Northside Connect and the dedication of its people shine brightest.

The core of our success, year after year, lies with our extraordinary staff, dedicated volunteers, and my colleagues on the Management Committee. They embody the commitment to our shared outcomes of Social Inclusion, Access to Justice, and Enhanced Community Safety, ensuring we do not just meet increasing demand, but adapt and respond with genuine care.

We have had some big achievements throughout the past 12 months.

A very tangible highlight was the renovation of our front space. It is a much better space to engage with, and assist, our clients, who in turn benefit from a more dignified and welcoming space. Anyone who has ever done a renovation knows how much work is involved, so this is no small achievement.

During 2024-25, NCI was the recipient of uplift funding from the State Government. This has enabled us to support, incentivise and reward our staff, focusing on their wellbeing and development in a way that we have not been able to in the past.

We also saw an increase in our funding for domestic and family violence service delivery, and in really pleasing news, a five-year contract for our legal services. The certainty and assurance these outcomes give NCI cannot be underestimated.

We continue to maintain a strong presence in our local community, engaging with our elected representatives and the local community to make clear NCI is a significant contributor to the social fabric of Nundah and surrounds.

NCI is a significant contributor to the social fabric of Nundah and surrounds. In the past 12 months NCI has faced the challenge of transitioning from the remarkable expertise and input of some of our long-standing employees in Eugene and Lisa. While they are irreplaceable, I am glad to see how Justine and the entire NCI team are taking things forward.

Writing this foreword is a bittersweet experience for me. As pleased as I am to see NCI thriving as it is, there is sadness as this is also my last foreword as President: after several years at the helm, it’s time for me to pass the baton onto a fresh pair of eyes and in the careful, capable hands of our Management Committee. I have been lucky to be part of such a committed team of people. I especially want to single out Sharon. Sharon has patiently answered my many questions with grace and good humour, and continues to be an exceptional leader for our organisation through some challenging times and experiences. NCI is so fortunate to have her insight and expertise at the helm as we move into future that will no doubt give us even more of those challenges. A good thing, then, that NCI is resilient and robust.

Long may it continue!

Chris Irons
Outgoing President



This year we bid farewell to our President, Chris Irons, whose departure will be deeply felt. Chris has served on the NCI Board for over seven years, bringing a wealth of experience, insight, and leadership that has been instrumental to our organisation’s success.

During his tenure, NCI has experienced remarkable growth and faced increasing responsibilities. Chris has navigated these changes with skill - demonstrating exceptional leadership while consistently offering support to our team. His understanding of our work, purpose and values has enabled us to maintain our professionalism and continue delivering on our mission.

We extend our most heartfelt thanks to Chris. We are profoundly grateful for the time, energy, and passion he has devoted to our organisation.

THANK YOU!

OUR PEOPLE



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.

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 – HUI RU MCKINNON

Ru joined the Committee of Northside Connect as the Treasurer at the end of 2024. Ru has been a volunteer and on Management Committees for various non-for-profit organisation throughout her career. As a Certified Practicing Accountants of Australia for over 10 years, Ru is looking to contribute her skills and knowledge to the organisation.

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.

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.



MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

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CATHY BAKER

Cathy Baker is a seasoned communications professional with extensive executive-level experience leading communication teams across ministerial offices, community associations, and not-for-profits. She brings expertise in strategic planning, marketing and public relations, media campaigns, digital strategy and large-scale event coordination. She is passionate about social justice and has led campaigns advocating for community legal sector funding, protecting children from harm, and shaping the government's response to the youth justice crisis. A proud Nundah local, she looks forward to contributing her skills and experience as a member of the Northside Connect Management Committee.

AARON BALL

Aaron is the Principal Solicitor of Shorestone Legal. Aaron's public service career spanned some 25 years, holding various roles with independent statutory authorities, and both Commonwealth and State government departments, providing expertise in areas of statutory compliance, civil and criminal investigation, and prosecutions. Aaron then moved to private practice as a solicitor in 2016 and now practises predominately in the areas of family law, wills and estates, and civil litigation.

Throughout his career Aaron has volunteered his time for various community organisations and causes. Aaron has been involved with Northside Connect since 2017, previously volunteering with the Wednesday Evening Legal Service offering legal advice on domestic violence and family law matters. Aaron joined the Northside Connect Management Committee in November 2024.

The Northside Connect team brings a wealth of expertise across diverse fields, including Legal Services, Social Work, Human Services, Finance, and Not-for-Profit Administration. Our staff work collaboratively across all programs to deliver services that are both innovative and responsive to the evolving needs of our local community. This year, we've grown to a team of 11 and placed a strong emphasis on staff wellbeing and professional development—ensuring our workforce remains skilled, knowledgeable, and well-supported to meet the often complex needs of those we serve every day.

MANAGEMENT

SHARON GINGELL - COORDINATOR

Sharon Gingell has been the Coordinator of Northside Connect since March 2012. She has over 30 years' experience in the Community Sector, 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

Justine has been the Principal Solicitor of BNCLS since October 2023. She was admitted as a solicitor in 2007 and has worked and/or volunteered in the community legal sector for around 10 years. Since taking on the role, Justine has supported BNCLS with significant and welcome change including new processes for managing service delivery, changes in staff and increased funding. As the Principal Solicitor, Justine is responsible for ensuring clients receive accurate legal advice, mentoring, compliance with service agreements, professional regulations, accreditation and sound risk management.

BRISBANE NORTH COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE TEAM

- Lauren Everett, Solicitor
- Kamal Kaur, Legal Operations Supervisor
- Teagan Reynolds, Intake and Administration

NUNDAH NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE

- Peita O'Louhglin, Community Engagement Worker
- Jo Money, Intake and Administration
- Fatima Boorooni – Finance Manager and NCI Management Committee Secretariat

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAM

- Hannah Sanson, Senior Domestic Violence Counsellor
- Kerry O'Donnell, Domestic Violence Counsellor
- Aurora Du Bois- Molloy, DV Administrator

STAFF



STUDENTS

At Northside Connect we are committed to creating 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 2024 - 25, we wish you all the best with your career in the community services sector.



NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE STUDENTS

Second Semester 2024

- Bethany Jackson (BHS Services) 1st Placement
- Eliana Nuguid (BHS) 2nd Placement
- Shontay Harrison – Administration Trainee (Kurbingu)

First Semester 2025

- Grace Arnott (BHS) First Placement
- Asmita Pradhan (BSW) Final Placement

Australian Catholic University Students

This year NCI welcomed students from ACU completing their placement hours for the Universities Community Engagement Program. Students are required to do a short placement in a community engagement, enriching their studies and developing their understanding of social justice. Students have assisted volunteers and staff in a range of roles across the organisation. We welcome this new partnership with ACU.

1. Jessica Rixon (BNCLS)
2. Cyrus Jamieson
3. Amy Filmalter
4. Veronica Lyell
5. Jack Balkin

Legal Service Student Volunteers

1. Irene Elza Soji
2. Ken Ngo-Ralston
3. Sara Quale
4. Sherin Thomas
5. Jessica Rixon
6. Beth Slatter
7. Alfie Cleminson
8. Ollie Greenwood
9. Anya Wadham
10. Joanna Woo
11. Bella Bguyen
12. Laela Nali
13. Mathishkhka Anenden
14. Lachlan Watson
15. David Chui
16. Savannah Trafford
17. Annie Jean Kemp
18. Christina MKay
19. Sophie Robertson
20. Denisha Tyler

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers remain a vital part of Northside Connect, playing an essential role in supporting the delivery of groups and activities across all program areas. We deeply appreciate their contributions and acknowledge the compassion, dedication, and enthusiasm they bring to our organisation.

Volunteers in 2024 – 2025 have included:

NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE VOLUNTEERS

Front Desk/Administration:

- Trish, Teagan, Leonie

Food Relief and Community Lunch:

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

Emergency Relief

- Ian and Glynis

English as a Second Language Classes:

- Deb, Damian, Jean, Marian, Susan, Gary, Gavin

Community Garden & Maintenance

- David and Jeff respectively

Sewing Group

- Pauline, Robyn, Nancy, Shirely

Art Group

- Gwyneth

Tech Savvy Thursdays

- Gary and April

WEDNESDAY EVENING LEGAL SERVICE VOLUNTEERS

Our Wednesday Night Telephone Legal Advice Service simply wouldn't be possible without the dedication of our volunteers. BNCLS has proudly offered this service for many years, and it has become a cornerstone of our community support. We are deeply grateful to our volunteers for their ongoing and invaluable contributions.

Our volunteers bring a diverse range of legal expertise, and their commitment ensures the continued success of our Wednesday night service. Thanks to their efforts, the advice provided remains of consistently high quality. We also have a strong framework for review and collaboration to support this standard.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to all BNCLS volunteers for generously giving their time—often after long days of work or study—to support our community.

Feedback from a Volunteer – *“it has been a fantastic experience to volunteer at the centre”.*

Sadly, we say goodbye to some of our longstanding legal volunteers due to work, personal and family commitments being, Clancy Robba, Ellen Brown, Michael Logan, Natalie Corico, Christina Simmondis and Ellen Brown - we sincerely thank them for offering their time to assist our community.

List of Legal Volunteers – (July 2024 – June 2025) Lawyers-

1. William McLay
2. Manjo Oyson
3. Franco Cioterello
4. Chris McGill
5. Jackson Haswell
6. Emma Lewis
7. Sarah Lindsay
8. Kent Fawke
9. Rachel Elaurant
10. David Bambling
11. Amahlia Riley
12. Liam Spargo
13. Alice Elliot
14. Victor Wong
15. Clancy Robba
16. Brittany Graham
17. Belinda Hughes
18. Ciara Furlong
19. Elise Williamson
20. Samantha Thomas
21. Ricco Hawke
22. Lauren Gracie



‘NCI veteran’, Gwyneth, has been coming to the Centre for over 20 years! She began as a counselling client in the early days. However, when it became apparent that Gwyneth is a trained and talented artist, she was asked if she’d like to facilitate a Community Art Group at the Centre. Gwyneth accepted the offer and has been a cornerstone volunteer in our weekly program ever since.

Gwyneth says that coming to the Centre and contributing to the community gives her a sense of purpose and opportunities for social interaction. She states, “I enjoy encouraging people to get in touch with their creativity. It’s so nice to see how people progress” in the art group.

Gwyneth’s calm and welcoming presence provides a safe space for people of all skill and confidence levels to ‘have a go’ at making art, and the smiles, chatting and laughter that can be seen and heard in the art space during the group is evidence that creativity and connection go hand in hand at NCI!

Notably also, for our Mental Health Week Mini Expo, Gwyneth facilitated group art activities, with people continuing to work on their projects, chatting and enjoying artmaking together, well into the afternoon after the expo had ended.



HIGHLIGHTS

FRONT SPACE UPGRADE

We're excited to unveil our newly upgraded reception and front space! After years of grant applications and fundraising efforts, we were successful in securing a Gaming Grant to transform this area. Originally built in 2011, the Centre's layout no longer met the evolving needs of our community or organisation. The previous reception area was small and lacked the welcoming, accessible environment we envisioned. With our team now including two staff members and a volunteer or student at reception daily, the upgrade allows us to better respond to requests for support and assistance.

Also, we had expanded our service footprint by converting the former computer lab into an emergency relief pantry. This space is now more accessible, enabling staff and volunteers to safely assist community members with frozen meals, pantry items, toiletries, and more. Working closely with the builder and his team, staff helped design a bright, open, and inviting space that has truly transformed the Centre. The new environment has been a game changer for NCI, and the response from everyone has been overwhelmingly positive.

COLLABORATION AND LEADERSHIP

NCI continued to take on leadership roles within peak bodies and local organisations that share our values, helping to strengthen our services and deepen our ties to the community. These roles have included serving on advisory committees, contributing to strategic planning initiatives, and representing our centre in advocacy efforts.

Key partnerships included Neighbourhood Centres Queensland, Community Legal Centres Queensland, Nundah Now Inc., and NAADV. We greatly value the collaboration and shared purpose we have with these organisations, which enhances our collective impact.





NUNDAH NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE

SOCIAL INCLUSION & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

HOMELESSNESS WEEK

During Homelessness Week and throughout August, Northside Connect collected donations for our blanket and food drive to support individuals facing homelessness, food insecurity, and those in need of warmth during the colder months. National Homelessness Week, held from August 5–11, aims to raise awareness of homelessness in Australia and encourage community and government action to end it. At Northside Connect, we joined the national effort by engaging the Nundah community through educational posters, infographics, and art installations—shining a light on a population that is often overlooked.

MENTAL HEALTH WEEK

Northside Connect Inc hosted approximately 40 attendees at our Mini Mental Health Expo in October 2024 with special guests from mental health services, Stepping Stone Clubhouse Chermside, and PHN . Brisbane North's Head to Health set up information stalls and provided a number of referrals to their local mental health support services.

We also had a range of wellbeing activities for participants to join in on including yoga teacher, Nicola Smith of Reflect Yoga, running four 15-minute chair yoga and mindfulness sessions, with some people joining in on more than one session. Some of the NCI staff also had a go at yoga! Our art instructor, Gwyneth, once again facilitated art activities, with people continuing to work on their projects into the early afternoon after the expo had ended.

NUNDAH STREET FESTIVAL

Northside Connect proudly participated in the annual Nundah Street Festival—a vibrant and successful event celebrating local businesses, services, food, and artists. In addition to hosting our NCI raffle and information stall, our carpark featured a variety of community-focused stalls, including:

- The NCI Sewing Group volunteers' stall

- Boomerang Bags stall
- The Noonga Reconciliation Committee stall
- A fundraising blow-up bouncy slide, which was a huge hit with children.

The event was a fantastic opportunity to engage with the community and showcase the diverse initiatives supported by Northside Connect.

CHILD PROTECTION WEEK

In support of Queensland Child Protection Week, our two placement students—Bethany and Eliana—joined staff and volunteers to host an information stall focused on child safety. They also created a shaded space where children and their parents or carers could relax and enjoy craft activities together. The initiative was well-received, offering a peaceful retreat from the heat and excitement of the festival. Over 150 lanterns were coloured, painted, and decorated throughout the day.

CHRISTMAS 2024

Christmas can be a challenging time for people, particularly when they may be disconnected from family due to domestic violence, mental health or other reasons. The expectations and costs associated with making it an unforgettable experience for children also adds pressure for families who are struggling financially. Each year we aim to alleviate some of those challenges and give our community an opportunity to celebrate Christmas. This year our Christmas event was attended by over 150 people including children of all ages who all received a gift from Santa. Thank you to the Lord Mayors Charitable Trust, Bridgeman Baptist Church (hampers) and Ray White Nundah (gifts for women who were victim survivors of domestic violence) for your contributions which made a real difference.

EVENTS

EVENTS

SORRY DAY

Northside Connect is a proud member of both the Management Committee and the Sorry Day Working Party of the Noonga Reconciliation Group. On Friday, 30 May, the Noonga Reconciliation Group hosted its annual Sorry Day gathering at the Stolen Generations Memorial Site in Kalinga Park, Woolloowin. Each year, this meaningful event brings together local schools, kindergartens, community leaders, Elders, and organisations to honour the Stolen Generations through heartfelt tributes, song, dance, and storytelling.

INFORMATION & REFERRAL

Information and referral services is not just about giving out phone numbers and information on different services available. It is often about being there to listen while people share the challenges they are going through, providing a cuppa or something to eat and taking time to go through their options with them. Many of our community members see us as a valued part of their support network and often drop in to share what is going on for them and their family and do a check in on how they are managing some of these life challenges.

Each day staff, volunteers and students respond multiple times 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 enquires about the programs and activities run at the Centre.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Community development continues to play an integral part in the work we do at Nundah Neighbourhood Centre. We do this through creating opportunities to engage with community on what they see is important and relevant to them. Our role is to create space for people to connect, listen to community as they share their challenges and concerns and build the capacity of the community in responding to these issues and concerns.

This year community development activities we supported included; the development of drop in tech support program, Tech Savvy Thursdays, a student engagement program to support volunteers in their roles, a community garden project and a mental health expo to inform and connect community members to activities and services that improve mental health and wellbeing.

EMERGENCY RELIEF

Over the 12 months, the Centre 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 Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety 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 rescued food each week
- Brumbies Bakery Nundah for our weekly bread collection
- Communiy Community Canteen who supply up to 100 frozen meals on a fortnightly basis

- Nundah Village Shopping Centre donation cage for the community to drop food off
- 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, dispensing sanitary items for free to women
- JJ Richards recycling for the cardboard bin
- 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.



COMMUNITY MEMBERS' PROFILES



MAREE

"I just love coming here!" is something Maree happily states to staff at NCI often! With her ready smile and her enthusiasm to be involved in the Neighbourhood Centre programs, Maree has been at NCI every week since she first attended for some legal advice about a year ago.

Since then, she has regularly attended the sewing group, art group and the Tuesday community lunch; and has recently taken on responsibility for watering the community garden several mornings per week, as head garden volunteer David's indispensable assistant. Maree carefully selects ripe and mature produce from the garden to be used in cooking the community lunch on Tuesdays. She also assists with food prep and sets out the selection of thrifted clothes on offer for attendees on that day.

Maree can often be seen with a big smile, chatting with volunteers and staff. She has related to a staff member that the Centre provides her with much needed social interaction and she very much enjoys the creative activities on offer.



FATIMA

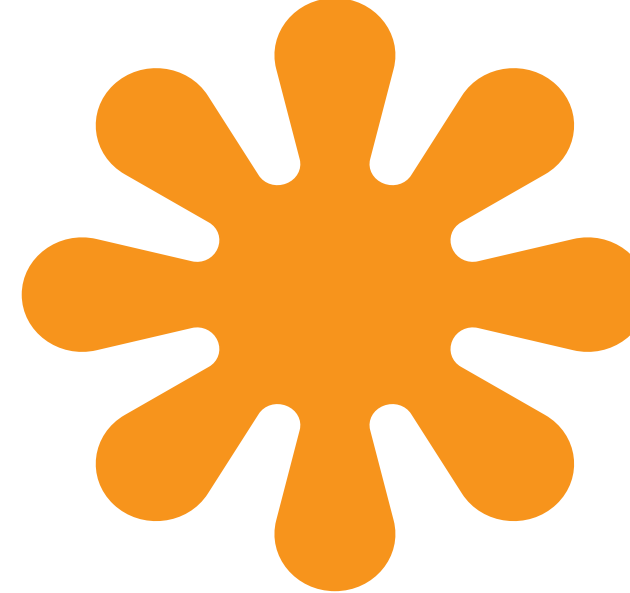
Fatima has attended NCI's Community Lunch program on Tuesdays since 2020. She received both food relief and legal support in the early days. However, more recently she has become much more active and involved in the volunteer-run social groups facilitated by NCI. Fatima says the centre offers her opportunities "as an elderly person" to both give to others with her time and energy, and to receive support, by being an active part of the community.

Fatima has become a committed participant at both Sewing Group and Art Group on Wednesdays, learning to sew for the first time by creating an entire patchwork quilt! Fatima is now also a regular at the Community Art group, particularly enjoying colouring, drawing and watercolour painting. Fatima arrives early for the groups and assists organisers in set up and pack down. When the Sewing Group held their regular stall in the NCI car park for the Nundah Street Festival and Fatima volunteered at this, assisting the sewing teachers with their stall for the day. Fatima recently shared with staff that NCI has become like "a second home" to her.

COLLABORATING WITH THE 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
- Noonga Reconciliation Group
- Boomerang Bags
- Street Smart
- Brisbane City Council Community Development Team



Nundah Neighbourhood Centre

Provided \$909,693 in community value in 2024

This community value equates to \$3.11 for every \$1 of Queensland Government Neighbourhood Centre funding or \$293.45 for every 1 hour the Neighbourhood Centre was in use.

This includes the value of:



Improved quality of life through social connection

\$231,991



Volunteer contributions

\$335,702



Emergency relief provided

\$246,000



Services provided

\$96,000



Emergency relief value includes:

Food and groceries	\$240,600
Clothing and Personal Care	\$5,400



Services value includes:

Facilities use or hire	\$60,000
Community lunch, frozen, other meals	\$36,000



Employment

In 2024 Nundah Neighbourhood Centre provided 1.4 full time equivalent positions including 1.3 direct and 0.1 indirect positions.

These values are produced by Neighbourhood Centres Queensland based on data provided by Nundah Neighbourhood Centre in the 2024 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 2024.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAM



PROGRAMS

During this period the counselling service supported 91 women and provided 1525 hours of therapeutic support (goal was 1504 hours).

We provided service system support to 378 users over 516 hours (goal was 376 hours).

This financial year has seen our Domestic Violence Program enjoy significant change and growth.

In September of 2024 Kerry O'Donnell joined the Program as our second Domestic Violence Counsellor, while Hannah Sanson moved into the Senior Domestic Violence Counsellor position after the retirement of Lisa Berlin.

In January of 2025 Northside Connect created a Domestic Violence Administrator position which was held by Teagan Reynold's until Aurora DuBois joined the team in July, greatly increasing our capacity as a service.

PHASES PROGRAM

Our PHASES (Personal Health and Self-Esteem Strategies) therapeutic programs have continued to grow this year, with 4 Movement classes and 2 Art Therapy groups running across the year.

As with the Journeys program, free child-minding has been provided on-site during PHASES, to increase the accessibility to women with young children.

MOVEMENT FOR WOMEN

- The trauma-sensitive movement group was renamed to "Movement for Women" during this period Theresa from IWSS joined Linda (IWSS) and Julie (independent facilitator) in co-facilitating the classes to ensure cover

- should a worker take leave.
- Two workers facilitate each class, with one worker leading the practice and another sharing alternative movement options and provided additional support to women as needs arise.
- Classes are designed specifically to support women impacted by domestic and/or sexual violence to support in trauma recovery.
- The classes typically run between 7-8 weeks during each school term. The sessions are an hour long and women share afternoon tea together afterwards, to allow an opportunity to debrief on the session and connect with one another.
- Movement for women is a collaborative project between Northside Connect, Immigrant Women's Support Service (IWSS) who provide facilitation, and the Brisbane Rape and Incest Survivors Support Program (BRISSC) who fund the afternoon-tea.
- The Movement for Women working party meets at the end of each quarter to review feedback, identify areas for growth, and continue improving the program.
- In term one and two of 2025 we held an open day for workers to join a class and learn about how movement supports women in trauma recovery. This supported workers to share information with clients and increased referrals from agencies who attended.
- During July – August 2024 10 women attended the classes, October – November 2024 6 women attended, February – March 2025 14 women attended and in May – June 2025 10 women attended.

The program is evaluated by the attendees during the middle of the term and again at the end. Evaluations are anonymous and support us to respond to needs as promptly and effectively as we can.

The feedback women provided is shared on the next page.



**91 WOMEN
ACCESSED
COUNSELLING**

"Connected and grounded. Better able to concentrate"

"More relaxed and present in the moment. Mind's slower"

"My mind and body are more at peace and not so tense"

**4
MOVEMENT
FOR WOMEN
GROUPS
2024/2025**

"More able to engage socially. Open to connection"

"I appreciate the space you create"

**TOTAL OF 40
PARTICIPANTS**

"I feel calmer"

**1525 HRS
THERAPEUTIC
SUPPORT
PROVIDED**

"Thank you for providing this"

**SERVICE
SUPPORT
PROVIDED TO
378 USERS
(<516 HRS)**

DV ART THERAPY

This program is offered to women who have previously completed Journey's Women's Group or engaged with individual counselling at Northside Connect. It is offered during alternating terms to Journeys to allow newer participants a warm transition into PHASES.

The program is facilitated by Rebekah Wall, an Art Therapist who has experience working in DFV and with victim/ survivors in group settings.

During term 4 of 2024 the group hours were extended from 2.5 to 3 hours and increased from a 6 week group to an 8 week group after feedback from participants about the need to extend their time in the program.

A total of 14 women attended this group and feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with women sharing anecdotal feedback that they felt safe and supported being in a space with women who understood them as they navigated their experiences of trauma through art.

In term 2 of 2025 the group had 18 participants overall, with previous participants being waitlisted due to extensive interest in the group.

The following feedback was provided by participants in term 4 2024:

- "I really enjoyed to participate in this group. Found something for myself while baby in childcare"
- "Bek is a sensational art therapist and gently holds space for anything that comes. Everybody felt seen and heard, which is so important when on a healing journey."
- "I can't express how much this group means to me. Everything about it I loved and needed."



JOURNEYS WOMEN PROGRAM

- Journeys is a 7-week group program for women who have experienced violence and/ or other forms of abuse in their intimate relationships and has a waitlist held year round so women can refer in at any point in the year.
- During this period Journeys was held in July/ August 2024, facilitated by Hannah and Kerry (who was this in her role as DFV Specialist at Act for Kids). Overall 19 women attended with 13 women completing the program. On Friday 6th of September 9 of the women returned to participate in a full-day art workshop facilitated by PHASES Art Therapist, Rebekah Wall.
- The program was held again in February/ March and co-facilitated by Hannah and Kerry (in her new role at Northside Connect) and QUT Social Work student, Asmita. The group was attended by 16 women overall and completed by 9 women.

NETWORKS, COLLABORATION AND EVENTS

NSAAN

Northside Connect remained heavily involved in the Northside Sexual Assault Action Network in the second half of 2024 in the lead up toward Sexual Violence Awareness Month (SVAM).

Both DV workers participated in the SVAM working party and on the 13th of September delivered a therapeutic art workshop to clients of NC, BRISSC, and Zig-Zag Young Women's Resource Centre. Hannah facilitated the workshop which was attended by 15 women and supported by a worker from each service. Feedback from the workshop was very positive and reflected a strong desire from women to connect with other victim/ survivors impacted by violence.

When asked what they had liked about the day three of the women shared the following:

- "A lovely inclusive and supported safe space. The facilitators were approachable and supportive"
- "Coming together with a common goal, working on a project together and everyone is valuable and having input"
- "Very well thought out group activity".
- "Great facilitators".

After the workshop, the artworks were linked together and printed on t-shirts. During SVAM, on the 25th of October, Northside Connect hosted a launch event where the women's artwork was displayed and t-shirts were sold.

The event was well received with over 80 registered attendees. Special Guest Aine Tyrell performed alongside women from BRISSC's music group which developed from the working party. T-shirts continued to be sold through BRISSC after the event to fundraise for future SVAM activities.



NAADV

The Northside Alliance Against Domestic Violence (NAADV) is a network of Brisbane North organisations and services who connect bi-monthly to provide an integrated service response, collaborate on projects, and support each other in the provision of services to our North Brisbane communities affected by DFV. Due to unprecedented growth of the network, in January 2025 NAADV moved location from Northside Connect to a larger space at Centacare.

DFVPM

In the lead up to Domestic & Family Violence Prevention Month (DFVPM) NC DV Workers joined a NAADV working party to develop the 2025 Brisbane North Safety Cards. The cards were launched in May at a forum and expo directed at school community leaders, guidance officers, and social workers to support them in recognising, responding, and referring families impacted by DFV. Over 50 attendees networked with 20 Brisbane North organisations.

NAADV participants, led by Queensland Police Service's Vulnerable Person's Unit, also hosted a stall at Westfield Chermside during DFVPM. Hannah & Kerry both attended to engage with community members around DFV and support in sharing information about new coercive control legislation.

WHEQ

Women's Health and Equality Queensland (WHEQ) are leaders in women's health, gender equity, and the primary prevention of violence in Queensland. They provide counselling, health services and other programs to women and gender-diverse people. In the first half of 2025 WHEQ counsellor Jess begun occupying a Northside Connect office on Friday's to support in service accessibility to women in Brisbane's North and facilitate greater referral sharing and capacity building between services.

During Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month in May WHEQ invited NC DV Worker Hannah to join the consultation group and to speak at the Brisbane DFV Forum to share about Northside Connect's services with over 450 attendees.

IWSS

The Immigrant Women's Support Service (IWSS) is a specialist service response for immigrant and refugee women from non-English speaking backgrounds who have been impacted by domestic and or/ sexual violence. During this financial year Northside Connect have collaborated with IWSS to bring their services to local women. Case Worker Miryeong occupies a counselling office at Northside Connect on Fridays and Case Workers Linda and Theresa co-facilitate our movement class. This has led to greater resource, information, and referral sharing across the services and increased the capacity of both organisations to respond to women in Brisbane's north.

Blue Edge

Blue Edge is a program run by Queensland Police to support at-risk youth in local schools. It offers personal training to young people in schools following by a morning tea where speakers are invited to share information about issues, resources, or services. During this period Blue Edge invited DV worker Hannah to speak at Kedron, Earnshaw, and Aspley high schools to speak share an understanding of Domestic and Family Violence, it's impacts, and where young people can find support.

White Ribbon Day

On the 12th of November 2024 Sharon and Hannah were invited to speak at Aviation High School about Northside Connect's Domestic Violence Program for their white ribbon morning tea. The morning tea fundraiser for our DV Program and raised over \$900 to support in the running of our programs.



**BRISBANE
NORTH
COMMUNITY
LEGAL
SERVICE**

WHAT WE DO

Brisbane North Community Legal Service (BNCLS) offers free legal advice, information, and referrals to individuals across Nundah, Brisbane, and the Moreton Bay region. While our primary focus is on advice, we may occasionally assist with minor legal tasks—such as drafting documents—when capacity and expertise allow. Please note that BNCLS does not provide legal representation or manage ongoing cases.

BNCLS are committed to delivering high-quality legal support and promoting fair access to justice. Our approach is client-centred and collaborative: we work closely with other internal programs to provide holistic support and maintain strong partnerships with external organisations to ensure seamless referrals when needed.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Increased funding and service sustainability
- Continued National Accreditation
- Strengthened staff wellbeing and risk management practices

HOW WE HELP

Clients can access legal support through:

- Daytime appointments (face-to-face or phone), booked via reception.
- Wednesday evening telephone clinic (5:45pm–7:45pm), staffed by volunteer solicitors. Evening appointments typically run for 20–30 minutes and are designed to provide timely, practical advice.

We assist with a range of legal issues, including:

- Family law
- Domestic and family violence
- Minor civil disputes
- Minor criminal and traffic matters

FEEDBACK

The following is a selection of client feedback from the past year:

- “...I’m grateful for the advice and links you have provided and will act on this information”
- “I would just like to say a very huge Thank you for the wonderful advice, depth and support AND time I was afforded from your service was greatly appreciated and warmly received”
- “Thank you so much for my meeting with on Wednesday approx. 5.45pm. He was so helpful and supportive! After my meeting I felt a weight dissolve and I really appreciate the support from you all...”
- “Again, thank you so much for your guidance and support, I really appreciate the help I have received”
- “Thank you. You have been so supportive!”
- “Thank you for sending this information through and your advice over the phone yesterday. It was much appreciated”
- “Thank you very much Lauren, appreciate all your assistance and advice over the past several months it has been invaluable!”
- “What is important is for me to thank you all for the service you provided and in particular Lauren for her knowledgeable advice. Please convey my thanks to Lauren.....A good outcome”
- “Excellent service, thanks very much”
- “Thank you for listening and guiding me for further legal assistance. Really appreciate your help”
- “Friendly, respectful and prompt responses. Thank you”
- “So friendly, caring and helpful thank you”
- “I found the staff EXTREMELY helpful & supportive. Thank You”
- “So helpful - Thank you!”
- “Staff was very friendly and approachable”



CASE STUDIES

DVFBV CASE 1

A young woman presented at our centre as a walk-in, visibly distressed and without legal support. She was due in Court within days regarding a domestic and family violence matter, but had not filed any paperwork and lacked the means to engage a private solicitor.

Recognising the urgency, BNCLS provided immediate legal advice and wraparound support using a trauma-informed approach. This included clear guidance on her legal options, emotional support, referrals, and essential items such as food, toiletries, and gift cards.

We followed up post-visit to ensure she had appropriate supports in place. The client later attended Court, resolved the matter, and reported a significant improvement in her wellbeing. She expressed deep gratitude for the assistance received, noting it helped her refocus on her future.

This case highlights the critical role of accessible, trauma-informed legal services in supporting vulnerable individuals and achieving positive legal and personal outcomes.

DVFBV CASE 2

A migrant woman came to our service requiring an interpreter and seeking help with domestic and family violence concerns. She was afraid the perpetrator might find her and her children and had little trust in the legal system due to past experiences in her home country. She was hesitant and downplayed the abuse she had suffered.

We identified several legal issues, including domestic violence, parenting arrangements, and dividing property after separation. Over six months, we built trust using a trauma-informed approach. We explained how to apply for a Domestic Violence Protection Order, and

helped her understand her rights under family law, including parenting arrangements and property matters.

As her confidence grew, she applied for the protection order and began counselling. She also sought help from Legal Aid Queensland, and we supported her in preparing her application and explaining her situation clearly. This case shows the value of taking time with vulnerable clients and providing wrap-around support to help them navigate complex legal and personal challenges.

CIVIL LAW CASE 1

An older disabled migrant woman sought advice regarding a consumer dispute after unknowingly purchasing a second-hand mobile phone missing essential items and unable to reliably connect to Wi-Fi or make calls—issues not disclosed by the seller. She had intended to buy a new device without a contract to stay in touch with family and access telehealth services which were essential to her requirements.

We provided legal guidance on consumer rights and remedies, including assisting with a letter of demand, referrals to the OFT and ACCC, and information on QCAT processes and fee waivers. Her confidence grew as she gained clarity on her options, and we ensured she was aware of practical support available through our office.

The client later reported a successful outcome: after filing and serving her QCAT application, the seller replaced the faulty phone with a new one.



CIVIL LAW CASE 2

A woman sought advice regarding a long-standing fencing dispute with her neighbour. After agreeing to a cost split, the planned work was cancelled without explanation. Tensions escalated, with reports of vandalism by the neighbour's child and an alleged assault. Mediation failed, and the client was advised to pursue a Peace and Good Behaviour Order.

Then the neighbour removed the existing fence without consent and built a new one, later issuing an inflated invoice despite lacking trade qualifications. The client lodged a QCAT application under the Neighbourhood Disputes (Dividing Fences and Trees) Act, and a ruling was recently made in her favour.

Our office provided ongoing support, including advice on fencing law, property damage, police complaints, and the QCAT process. We're pleased the client achieved a successful outcome.

COMMUNITY LEGAL EDUCATION

Brisbane North Community Legal Service (BNCLS) is committed to providing free legal education to the community through its Community Legal Education (CLE) program. We take pride in delivering presentations on a wide range of legal topics and actively encourage enquiries from members of the public.

In 2025, we broadened the reach of our CLE initiatives by contributing regular articles to the local publication Loving Nundah. These concise pieces aim to inform readers about current and relevant legal issues in an accessible format.

Our CLE have covered topics including:

- Recent amendments to the Family Law Act 1975
- Wills and Enduring Powers of Attorney
- Domestic and Family Violence

COLLABORATIONS

HWL EBSWORTH - SECONDEE PROGRAM

We are proud to continue our partnership with HWL Ebsworth Lawyers through their secondment program. This initiative provides law graduates with the opportunity to contribute to a community legal service, gaining valuable insight into the operations of the community sector. It also offers essential support to our team, enhancing our service delivery capacity.

We extend our sincere thanks to the following secondees for their contributions over the past financial year:

- **Reuben Amdur-Webb**
- **Alfie Green**
- **Chelsea Crawford**
- **Karina Dent**

Their assistance with both administrative tasks and client support has been immensely valuable and deeply appreciated.

SECONDEE PROGRAM

"As secondees from HWLE Lawyers to Brisbane North Community Legal Service/ NCI, we had the unique opportunity to engage in diverse areas of legal practice beyond the scope of general commercial law.

During our time at NCI, we were exposed to matters involving family law, domestic and family violence, as well as minor civil and criminal disputes. This breadth of experience allowed us to develop a broader understanding of the law in action and its impact on individuals navigating complex personal circumstances.

BNCLS's role as a community legal centre means that it primarily serves individuals who are unable to access traditional legal services due to financial or social disadvantage.

This made our work particularly meaningful, as we were not only developing practical legal skills but also contributing to a service that provides vital access to justice for some of the most vulnerable members of the community.

Our roles at the centre involved significant client interaction. In many cases, we were the first point of contact for individuals seeking assistance, which allowed us to play an important part in initiating the legal support process. We participated in client interviews, took detailed notes, and assisted solicitors in drafting legal advice and preparing case files. This hands-on experience deepened our understanding of client care and the challenges faced by community legal service providers. In addition to legal support, we also assisted with front-of-house responsibilities, which included answering calls, scheduling appointments, and managing walk-ins. This work gave us insight into the broader ecosystem of services offered by NCI, such as food relief, community support groups, and a language school.

It highlighted the holistic, wraparound support that community legal centres often provide, recognising that legal issues rarely occur in isolation from other social or economic challenges. Perhaps most significantly, our time at BNCLS reinforced the human element of legal practice. The gratitude expressed by clients and the impact of our assistance provided a sense of purpose and fulfilment. We strongly encourage all young lawyers and law students to consider a secondment, internship, or volunteer experience at a community legal centre such as BNCLS. For us, it was rewarding experience that not only builds legal skills but also fosters empathy, resilience, and a deeper commitment to access to justice."

- Karina and Chelsea



ACU STUDENTS

This year BNCLS began a partnership with ACU taking on students completing placements for a pro bono subject as part of their law degree.

Our first student, Jessica Rixon writes about her experience below –

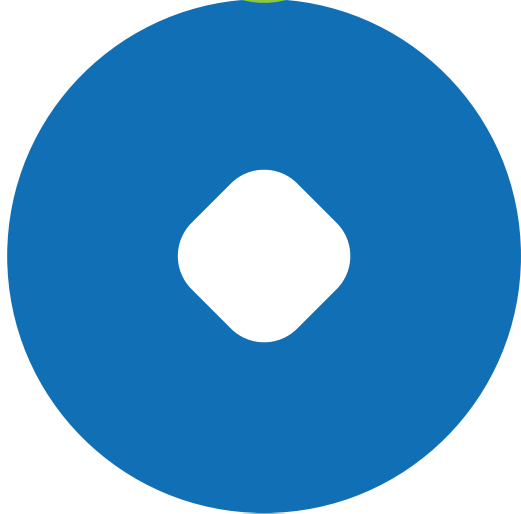
“During my 80-hour pro bono student placement at Northside Connect (Brisbane North Community Legal Service), I was given the opportunity to learn in an environment dedicated to supporting the community while fostering student development. Throughout my time there, my confidence as a law student grew significantly. I undertook a variety of tasks, including booking legal appointments, conducting legal research, attending client meetings, assisting at the Wednesday Evening Legal Service (WELS), and reviewing legal advice. Participating in client meetings and the WELS gave me exposure to diverse areas of law such as family law, domestic violence, wills, minor QCAT matters, and neighbourhood disputes. Working alongside a team so deeply committed to community service has been invaluable to my professional growth. Supporting disadvantaged members of the community was an immensely rewarding experience, and I am grateful to Northside Connect for both the opportunity and their outstanding mentorship”.

IMPROVING OUR RESPONSES

Recent natural disasters, the ongoing rise in the cost of living, property prices, and rent—combined with limited housing availability—has led to a noticeable increase in homelessness and a shift in the types of legal matters we are seeing. BNCLS continues to respond with agility and compassion. We are committed to upskilling our legal team, delivering holistic support to clients, and strengthening referral pathways to ensure access to practical assistance and wraparound services.

LOOKING AHEAD

Despite these challenges, BNCLS remains optimistic and focused on solutions. Our proactive approach to system transition and our commitment to responsive service delivery position us well to continue meeting the evolving needs of our community. With the support of our funders and sector partners, we are confident in our ability to adapt, innovate, and deliver meaningful impact.



DELIVERABLES



CLIENT DEMOGRAPHICS

TOTAL NO. OF CLIENTS WAS 772

Those experiencing financial disadvantage: 743
Those experiencing domestic and family violence: 296 in family law matters and 201 in civil/criminal matters
Those who identify as First Nations: 42
Clients who advise they have a disability and/or mental health: 163
Where English is not their first language: 91
and how many times we used Interpreters:16
Outer Regional and Remote Clients: 6
Homelessness Indicator: 131

Ages

Young Persons (24 and under): 28
Ages 25 – 34: 153
Ages 36 – 49: 301
Ages 50 – 64: 197
65 and older: 79

Those who identify as female: 481
Those who identify as male: 280
Gender – other: 2 and unknown: 9

Income Level

Nil income – 156
Low – 204
Medium – 270
High – 129



FINANCIAL REPORT

TREASURER'S REPORT 2025

I am pleased to present the Audited Financial Report for Northside Connect for the year ending 30 June 2025.

Our appointed auditor, Arabon Audit & Assurance, has noted that the financial report provides a true and fair view of the organisation's financial performance and position, and it fully complies with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) reporting requirements.

Financial Overview

For the 2025 financial year, Northside Connect's income was derived from the following sources:

- Legal Aid Queensland - \$320,393
- Department of Justice and Attorney-General - \$247,632
- Department of Communities, Housing & Digital Economy - \$18,000
- Department of Communities, Disability Services & Seniors - \$304,139
- Brisbane City Council - \$9,090

A few additional one-off grant was also received in the financial year:

- Emergency Relief Grant - \$10,000
- Gambling Community Fund - \$57,680
- Volunteer Activity Grant - \$5,000

It is worth noting a few donors in our community who has contributed to Northside Connect for the financial year:

- Ray White Nundah
- Deswik Mining
- Aviation High School
- Vinted Vineer

The net profit of the year was \$17,917. Of this amount, \$11,998 was generated from room hire, with remaining balance attributed to various unexpended grants.

Key Highlights

The highlights last year includes:

- Uplift Funding 145,512
- Grants received to upgrade to new Customer Management System \$58,000
- Commonwealth reduce pay disparity \$17,170
- Grant received for front reception renovation

Expenditure and Operations

Day-to-day operational expenses were well managed and remained within budget. Investments in centre improvements over previous years have reduced ongoing maintenance costs; however, major expenditure areas such as insurance, software/IT, and utilities continue to rise in line with broader cost trends.

Outlook

Northside Connect continues to operate from a strong and stable financial foundation, positioning the organisation to sustain and expand its vital community services in the years ahead.

Acknowledgement

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all staff and volunteers of Northside Connect for their ongoing commitment, professionalism, and dedication to our community.

Ru Mckinnon

Treasurer

