



Neighbourhood Houses
Tasmania

MEDIA RELEASE

MINISTER ANNOUNCES \$10 000 ONE OFF FUNDING FOR TASMANIA'S 34 NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSES

In parliament this morning Minister for Human Services Jacquie Petrusma announced a welcome one-off boost to the 34 Neighbourhood Houses across Tasmania.

"This is a very welcome and timely boost for the volunteers and staff of each community run Neighbourhood House" commented John Hooper, Executive officer of Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania.

The State Government announced in the 2016-17 Budget \$15 000 a year extra funding over two years, for each House. This was an acknowledgement of the pressure each Neighbourhood House is under to cover costs and support their community.

Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania in October submitted to the State Government as part of the Budget Submissions process for each House to receive extra recurrent funding of \$41 255. [NHT Budget Submission 2017-18](#)

Today's announcement we see as an acknowledgement of the government's belief in the vital work of Tasmania's Neighbourhood Houses, and that the calls from Neighbourhood Houses to their local members of parliament for much needed financial support has been heard. This brings the extra funding for this year to \$25 000.

"We are incredibly grateful to the Minister, the Treasurer and all the Government that through savings made in the 2016-17 State Budget they've found this immediate lifeline for our Members, and we look forward to further discussions on how a permanent recurrent funding boost can be found."

WHAT DO HOUSES DO?

Neighbourhood Houses are places where people come together to support their local community and work together to make a significant difference in their community and

people's lives. They are run by the community, for the community, and offer a wide range of programs and activities for local people.

As a network the Houses form the largest community development infrastructure in Tasmania, with the most regionally diverse footprint of any non-government community service organisation in the state.

Each individual House is an independent entity, with on average 1.5 FTE of staffing supported by a dedicated group of volunteers and committee members.

In 15-16 state wide statistics showed:

445,336 contacts were made by community members with all Houses;

This is 13 495 contacts on average in each House for the year;

Which is equivalent to 281 contacts per week in each House;

Volunteers contributed 189 608 hours across the State over the year;

This means there are 120 hours of volunteering per week in each House; and

Each House worked with an average of 27 partner organisations during 2015-16.

While the above numbers are useful and tell a positive story, it is each individual story that is of most significance. Each person who connects with a House has their own story, and so many people use the House as an important part of the journey back from a crisis in their lives, or to a place of renewed confidence and skills, and/or to give back to their community.

"Today is a great example of what Houses mean to their community. In 31 Houses across the state over 1000 children are gathering with their parents to take part in



National Simultaneous Storytime, and each child will take home a book to keep. As Houses are located in our lowest socio – economic and regionally isolated communities, such events reach those parents that most need support and connection to provide the opportunities for their children that they might not have had. Small but significant moments like today help change the culture of communities. And every day in 35 Neighbourhood Houses across Tasmania such steps are being taken”

The power of Neighbourhood Houses is in acceptance, a warm welcome, a sense of inclusion, a smiling face, someone to talk to, and getting involved at the person’s own pace. People visiting a House don’t have to answer a lot of questions or fill out forms. People are able to contribute in their own way.

“What results over time is confidence, a sense of belonging, a safe place that is just there, friendships, hope, pathways and ultimately the community benefits and grows from all of these very subtle, perhaps very ordinary occurrences that allow people the chance to become who they were before.” (Peter from Ravenswood)

Please see our 30 second video which captures the essence of what Neighbourhood Houses are all about: [One](#)

We have become more and more concerned at the day to day pressure on the staff and volunteers at Neighbourhood Houses – they are all things to all people – literally. One coordinator sent me a list of her day from 9-12 and that is just a very normal day.

1. Swap cars community transport
2. Staff and volunteer meeting
3. set up computer group
4. organised, took payments and waved off this morning’s social bus trip
5. Set up Pilates group
6. Set up account for donations online
7. Answered 24 phone calls
8. Comforted a grieving community member
9. Discussed our award win with volunteers and congratulated them
10. explained new time sheet
11. planned our local festival with seven partner organisations

12. coordinated a mental health assessment for an unwell community member
13. transported someone to an urgent appointment
14. accepted money for eggs for food access
15. Mopped floors
16. Cleaned toilets
17. Guided a very frustrated parent to access Centrelink over phone

“These funds will help with some immediate increase of hours for some staff, will enable some vital infrastructure to be bought for our community kitchens and gardens. For some Houses it will enable better access to debriefing and counselling after some of the critical incidents that unfortunately can occur on a day to day basis. It might also enable a few great community events and celebrations – which are needed more and more as communities grapple with events like Manchester overnight. At times like this we all must come together and reinforce the love and connections within our communities – Neighbourhood Houses are great at that” said John Hooper.

“We are so grateful to the government for today’s announcement and I’ve already had some excited coordinators welcoming the announcement made at 11am today!”

Please contact John Hooper on 0408 320 82 for further details or comment

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