



Neighbourhood Houses  
Tasmania

## MEDIA RELEASE

Friday 9 February 2018

# LIBERAL PARTY FUNDING COMMITMENT FOR NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSES

### **Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania, the network of 33 DHHS funded Houses, their staff and the over 1400 volunteers in Houses are ecstatic about the election commitment made at Risdon Vale Neighbourhood Centre!**

The commitment to increase annual recurrent funding by \$45 000 to each of the 33 currently funded Neighbourhood Houses is desperately needed.

NHT and its Members have been meeting with elected Members to demonstrate how vital extra recurrent funding is to their communities. This \$45 000 will mean each House has the capacity to increase their staffing to the equivalent of 2 FTE. This increase will make a massive difference to what each House achieves for their community. It will also prevent unemployment in communities because without this funding increase Houses will have to put valuable staff off, as the existing non-recurrent funding for Houses ends in June 2018.

Houses have been under great pressure from increasing demand and our advocacy has at times been quite desperate. Some of our Neighbourhood House staff have been in tears with local Members when discussing the pressures they feel and how much they need the support of extra staff to be able to do the work with their community.

The government knows that Houses deliver for their community. Community gardens, pathways into training and employment, referrals to counselling/crisis support, community lunches, NILS loans..... the list of programs and supports Houses provide are too many to mention. But the results speak for themselves.

The community is working together. Recent data shows there is 4.4 FTE in volunteering on average for each House, with 492 contacts with community members per House per week. As a result of interaction with their local House: 83 % of people are more confident; 71% of people feel safer in their community; 81 % have improved

their family relationship; 89% are more connected in their community.

John Hooper, Executive Officer of Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania commented "The government have seen this evidence, but also as local Members they've met with participants and volunteers at Houses and so they know the difference we make in our communities. The awesome power of Houses is that we create ways for people to connect together – whether it's over lunch, in the community garden or learning together in a course. We know that when individuals and families and communities are better connected everyone is better off. That is why the Liberal Party today are investing in our community development model.

However the government didn't stop there – they have also committed to a \$2 million infrastructure fund to continue the upgrading of Neighbourhood House buildings across the state. This is much needed as while many Houses have been refurbished under funding committed by the previous and current government, there is still much infrastructure improvement needed to make Houses fit for purpose.

Our Associate Member, Phoenix House on King Island, has been promised (finally after years of advocacy) recurrent funding. This great community development organisation and the people of King Island have for years struggled from one one-off grant to another, with constant stress of having to close. They are very excited about the certainty this funding would give their community.

Kate Beer, President of Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania Inc, and Manager of Devonport Community House said "I can't tell you what these commitments mean to my community and to all the Houses across the state. This moves us to a sustainable and sufficient core funding. We congratulate the Liberal Party for listening to the 34 communities across the state and making this commitment if they form Government".



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