



Joint Media Release

Thursday, 8 February 2024

NEW PARLIAMENTARY FRIENDS OF NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES GROUP ESTABLISHED IN NSW

Today the Local Community Services Association (LCSA), the peak body for Neighbourhood and Community Centres (NCCs), welcomed the formation of the new Parliamentary Friends of Neighbourhood Centres Group within the NSW Parliament.

With tri-partisan support, LCSA hopes the Friendship Group heralds an era of awareness of, and funding for, the invaluable work that NCCs do in communities across NSW. NSW is one of the only states in Australia to not provide core funding to NCCs.

NCCs in NSW form an essential social infrastructure network, embedded in communities across the state, that facilitate social connection, belonging and community empowerment. They provide physical spaces for community-run activities and programs, such as daycare or parent groups. They also provide an array of services related to domestic and family violence, homelessness, disability support, aged care, food relief and referrals to specialist services. NCCs often play a central role in the immediate and long-term responses to natural disasters.

Can Yasmut, Executive Officer of LCSA:

“Despite the integral role NCCs play in supporting local communities, there is no dedicated funding from the Government to keep the doors open. Instead, these centres rely on program-based funding, one-off grants, fundraising and donations to cover the cost of core staff.

“Like schools and hospitals, NCCs are essential social and physical infrastructure across communities in NSW. We wouldn’t expect a school or a hospital to run solely on program funding, and we shouldn’t expect that of NCCs.”

“We are heartened to find strong support for NCCs across the political aisle through the Friendship Group. LCSA looks forward to working with the Friendship Group to pursue better recognition and resourcing of NCCs, including ongoing and sustainable core funding”, he said.

Co-Chair Anthony D’Adam, Labor Member of the Legislative Council:

“Community organisations are often doing the heavy lifting during times of crisis. I hope that the Friendship Group raises awareness of the work that NCCs do and helps secure funding and recognition from the NSW Government. I look forward to bringing my parliamentary colleagues together on this important issue”, he said.

Co-Chair Jenny Leong, Greens Member for Newtown:

“Neighbourhood Centres are a fundamental part of our communities. They are hubs of social connection and empowerment, helping to create a vibrant and equitable community.

“As the Member for Newtown over the past 10 years, I have seen the powerful work our local Neighbourhood Centres do – providing critical housing and social support services for all. It is imperative that we support our Neighbourhood Centres to ensure that they are appropriately resourced to continue providing such vital services.

“I look forward to working with my parliamentary colleagues and the Local Community Services Association towards securing the sustained funding and support Neighbourhood Centres need to continue their crucial work. It's time for NSW to join other states in providing core funding to sustain these essential community hubs,” she said.

Co-Chair James Griffin, Liberal Member for Manly:

“I’m delighted to support the formation at the Parliamentary Friends of Neighbourhood Centres. I know firsthand, through my own local community centre, LocalKind Northern Beaches, how important they are. That is why I am joining the bipartisan group, to help advocate and elevate the presence of LCSA in the mind of policy and decision makers”, he said.

Media contact: Anthony Brown | 0431 572 130