

THE

Heart

Of

Community



ANNUAL
REPORT
2025-2026



Our



Northern Suburbs Community Centre

Strategic plan 2024-2030



Mission Statement



Through collaboration we strive to provide a safe environment that all people feel welcome, valued and included.

Our Vision



For an informed thriving community, driving its own direction.

Our Values



Respect, Ethical, Integrity, Accountability, Leadership, Belonging.

Overarching Goals



As part of the funded neighbourhood house network through Department of Premier and Cabinet each House works towards the following four program goals:

Strategy focus Areas



To address barriers and achieve these goals, the Board has identified five key strategic areas. These are:

- Mitigate under-resourcing.
- Establish and strengthen partnership with businesses.
- Establish school-based mentoring program
- Review and increase focus of volunteer recruitment strategy.
- Learning and Development

01

Build, connect and support community networks of inclusiveness, involvement, trust and cooperation to improve community spirit, cohesion and wellbeing.

Connect
Community

02

Support the development of the personal skills, knowledge, abilities and resilience of people to improve the health and wellbeing of themselves and their communities.

Support People

03

Support skills development, life-long learning, training and employment readiness opportunities to improve people's social engagement and economic opportunities.

Create
Opportunity

04

Be a community operated organisation, led by a Board of Governance consisting of volunteers living or working in the local community.

Local Leadership





Greg Mallett, President

Living our Vision

It is with great pleasure that I present my Chair's report for the 2025/26

financial year. As I reflect on the past year, I am proud of the continued commitment, care and collaboration shown across the Northern Suburbs Community Centre. Our Centre remains a welcoming place where people feel valued, included and supported, and this is only possible because of the combined efforts of our Board, management, staff, volunteers, partners and community members.

This year has again demonstrated the strength of our Centre and the importance of the role we play in the community. We have seen continued success through our mentoring program with East Tamar Primary School, supporting young people to build confidence, connection and positive relationships. We have also been successful in securing grants for activities at The Shed and for our young people's programs, enabling us to expand opportunities, strengthen participation and respond to community needs in practical and meaningful ways.

Another pleasing highlight has been our addition as a recipient in the Recycle Rewards program. This provides a new way for the wider community to support the work of the Centre and helps reinforce the value of local people contributing to local outcomes. Across our programs, we have also experienced growth in participation numbers, which reflects both the relevance of our services and the trust the community places in us.

Our Strategic Plan 2024–2030 continues to guide our work. Our mission — *“through collaboration we strive to provide a safe environment that all people feel welcome, valued and included”* — remains at the heart of everything we do. This is reflected every day in the way people are greeted at the front counter, welcomed into programs, supported through difficult times and encouraged to take part in community life.

At the same time, we acknowledge that the year has not been without its challenges. Volunteer numbers continue to decline, placing additional pressure on our staff and remaining volunteers. We are also seeing increased demand for services, particularly food relief, as cost-of-living pressures continue to affect households across our community. The increased reliance on NILS loans is another indicator of the financial strain many people are experiencing, and it reinforces the importance of the practical, respectful and responsive support offered through the Centre.

I would like to sincerely thank our staff, led by General Manager Trish O'Duffy and Assistant Manager Mary Challis, for their professionalism, compassion and tireless work throughout the year. Their commitment ensures that the Centre continues to be a place of welcome, dignity and belonging. I also thank our volunteers, whose contribution remains vital, our Board for their guidance and governance, and our partners and supporters who help make our work possible. As we move into the year ahead, we will continue to build on our strengths, respond to emerging needs and work together to support a connected, inclusive and resilient community.

Greg Mallett
President
Northern Suburbs Community Centre

General Manager's Report

It As I reflect on the past 12 months, one word comes to mind: community. In a year marked by increasing cost of living pressures, growing demand for support services, and significant change both within our organisation and across our broader sector, I have once again been reminded of the power of people coming together. Every day across our centres in Newnham, Mowbray and Rocherlea, we see community in action — people supporting one another, sharing skills, learning new things, overcoming challenges and finding a sense of belonging.

The following program reports provide a snapshot of the breadth of activity undertaken across NSCC throughout the year and highlight many of the individual successes, partnerships and achievements made possible through the dedication of our staff, volunteers, Board and community. I encourage you to spend some time exploring these reports and our NSCC At a Glance infographic which captures the year in numbers.

While the figures are impressive – more than 31,000 visits, 4,160 food parcels and relief items distributed, support for 10 Community Corrections participants contributing 456 placement hours, and the contribution of over 100 volunteers – the real story sits behind the numbers. It is in the friendships formed over a community lunch, a learner driver gaining confidence, a young person benefiting from a mentor, a volunteer finding purpose and connection, or a family leaving with food, support and renewed hope.

Our centres continue to get busier each year. The trends we are seeing are reflected across community organisations statewide: increasing financial hardship, housing stress, food insecurity, social isolation and growing complexity in people's lives. We have also seen increasing demand for support from culturally diverse community members navigating systems and services. These challenges reinforce the critical role neighbourhood houses play as trusted, local and accessible places of connection and support.

Partnerships remain one of NSCC's greatest strengths. The organisations named throughout this report represent only a fraction of the many agencies, schools, businesses and community groups working alongside us. During the year we collaborated closely with TasTAFE, Starting Point Neighbourhood House, Welcome Cultural Services, UTas, Anglicare Tasmania - Children for Communities, the City of Launceston Council, East Tamar Primary School, OzHarvest, Launceston Benevolent Society, Rotary and many others. We also greatly value our relationships with the Department of Premier and Cabinet, the Department for Education, Children and Young People and many many more stakeholders and government partners who continue to support our work.

We are particularly grateful for the tremendous support provided through our food security partnerships. Weekly bread deliveries from the Launceston Benevolent Society and regular food supplies from OzHarvest continue to make a meaningful difference to people doing it tough. As demand has grown, so too has the importance of these partnerships. Food support is about much more than nutrition; it is about dignity, relief and knowing that someone cares.



General Manager's Report cont/d.....



NSCC at a Glance 2025 – 2026

Stronger People • Brighter Futures • A Connected Community

People
Community
Opportunity
Always ♥



A welcoming, inclusive and vibrant community where everyone is valued, supported and empowered to thrive.

IMPACT DASHBOARD

Real people. Real support. A stronger community.

31,000+

Visits to our centres across the year



20

Dedicated staff making a difference



100+

Amazing volunteers giving time, skills and heart



3

Community hubs
Newnham | Mowbray
Rocherlea (The Shed)



10

Community Corrections participants
456.30 placement hours



4,160+

Food parcels & relief items distributed



13

Bikes available for community loan

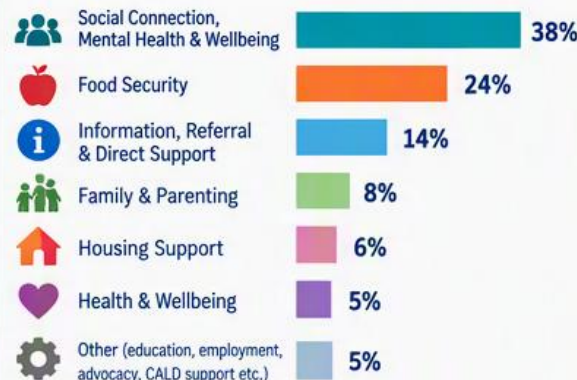


\$2,000

Reinvested into environmental and community projects through Boomerang Bags

Community Need Trends

% of all support provided (census trends)



What this tells us

- More people seeking support with cost of living pressures.
- Ongoing demand for food security assistance.
- Housing stress and financial hardship impacting families.
- Increasing complexity of community needs.
- Demand for social connection and wellbeing programs continues to grow.
- More CALD community members accessing support and services.
- Our centres are busier than ever.

Community Highlights

People, partnerships and programs making a difference.



Strategic Plan Success

- ✓ Mentoring target achieved ahead of 2030
- ✓ Number of mentors doubled beyond original target
- ✓ East Tamar Primary School partnership expanded to The Shed

Brighter futures together



Food Security Partners



OzHarvest
Weekly fresh food and grocery provisions



Launceston Benevolent Society (LBS)
Weekly bread supply

With cost of living pressures continuing to impact many households, these weekly food provisions provide practical relief and dignity for our community.



Bike Lending Library

- ✓ Partnership with NRM North, City of Launceston and TBUG
- ✓ 13 bikes available for community loan
- ✓ Weekly Bike Club from The Shed to Mowbray with a cuppa and soup in winter
- ✓ Uptake is growing – we remain focused on promoting.



Boomerang Bags

- ✓ Diverting plastics from landfill through recycled bags
- ✓ Partnership with local IGA (thanks to Sandra and her team)
- ✓ \$2,000 raised and distributed to community projects
- ✓ Donation to LGH Breastfeeding Clinic at the request of our volunteers
- ✓ The gift that keeps giving.



People Planet Community



All Stitched Up

- ✓ Weekly group providing friendship and support
- ✓ Santa sacks, Volunteer Week bags and other community items
- ✓ "We Create to Donate"
- ✓ Beautifully handcrafted Volunteer Week bags this year.



Our Partners

Stronger together for a brighter community.

TasTAFE | Starting Point Neighbourhood House | East Tamar Primary School | City of Launceston
NRM North | TBUG | Rotary | OzHarvest | Launceston Benevolent Society | Welcome Cultural Services
UTas | Anglicare Tasmania | Children for Communities | Department for Education, Children and Young People
Department of Premier and Cabinet | and many more...

A Volunteer's Perspective

“Volunteering at NSCC doesn't just help other people. It gives you a sense of purpose, belonging and connection. You feel like you're part of something bigger.”



Thank you

To our volunteers, staff, partners, supporters and community – thank you for making NSCC such a special place.



General Manager's Report cont/d..



This year also saw significant progress against our ambitious Strategic Plan. One of the achievements I am most proud of is the success of our mentoring program. We have achieved our mentoring target well ahead of our 2030 goal and have doubled the number of mentors originally planned. Our valued partnership with East Tamar Primary School also expanded further this year, extending support opportunities to students through activities at The Shed in Rocherlea. These achievements demonstrate the power of collaboration and community investment in young people.

Another highlight has been our continued commitment to investing in people. Through funding and support from our Board, both staff and volunteers have continued to access professional development and training opportunities. We also commenced our journey toward becoming a Deliberately Developmental Organisation, embracing a culture that encourages growth, learning, reflection and continuous improvement. We know that strong communities are built through strong people, and investing in our team remains a priority.

During the year we undertook an important redesign of our Mowbray reception area. Like many community organisations, we are seeing increasingly complex presentations and behaviours, and we have a responsibility to ensure our staff and volunteers remain safe while continuing to provide a welcoming environment for everyone. The redesigned space has achieved both aims, allowing us to maintain the warmth and accessibility that people value while improving safety and functionality for our team.

We also continued to advocate strongly for our community. Alongside neighbourhood houses across Tasmania, we worked to raise awareness of the growing funding gap affecting our sector and the uncertainty this creates for local services. We remain grateful for the bipartisan support we receive from our elected representatives and appreciate the constructive relationships we have developed. As a non-political, non-religious and non-government organisation, our focus remains firmly on advocating for the needs of our community. One local issue that continues to impact participation is the shortage of parking around our centres. We were pleased to welcome the Premier to our centre recently to discuss this issue following our advocacy efforts, and we thank all elected representatives who have supported these conversations. While solutions are still being explored, it is encouraging to see momentum building and a willingness to work together toward practical outcomes.

A particularly meaningful achievement this year has been our work with Community Corrections. Ten participants completed placements across our sites, contributing more than 456 hours to NSCC while gaining valuable skills, confidence and community connections. Experiences like these remind us that when people are welcomed and given opportunities to contribute, they often discover strengths they did not know they had.

Environmental sustainability also continued to feature strongly in our work. Through the dedication of our Boomerang Bags volunteers and our partnership with Sandra and her team at the local IGA, significant amounts of material have been diverted from landfill and transformed into reusable bags. The group distributed over \$2,000 into community and environmental projects this year, including a donation to the Launceston General Hospital Breastfeeding Clinic. Likewise, our All Stitched Up group continued to live their motto of "We Create to Donate", providing handmade gifts, bags and practical support to community projects throughout the year.

General Manager's Report cont/d.....

Of course, none of this would be possible without our volunteers. Nationally, volunteer numbers continue to decline, making the contribution of those who continue to give their time all the more precious. At NSCC, volunteers remain the heartbeat of our organisation. They lead activities, welcome visitors, mentor young people, prepare meals, support events, serve on our Board, maintain gardens, help behind the scenes and generously share their skills and knowledge with others. Their contribution extends far beyond the hours they provide; they create connection, build belonging and strengthen community every single day. To each and every volunteer, thank you. NSCC is a better place because of you.

I would also like to sincerely thank our incredible staff team. Every day I witness their professionalism, compassion, flexibility, humour and commitment to supporting others. They embrace challenges, celebrate successes and continually go above and beyond for our community and for each other. It is a privilege to work alongside such a dedicated and talented group of people. A special thank you also to Mary, whose steady support, practical wisdom and ability to keep all the moving pieces together remain greatly appreciated but most of all for the big belly laughs we share each day.

This year was also one of profound sadness as we farewelled our Chair, Greg Mallett. Greg's contribution to NSCC was extraordinary. He was a passionate advocate for community, a thoughtful leader and someone who genuinely valued people. Greg was actively involved in discussions around the organisational restructure undertaken this year and strongly supported investment in staff and volunteer development. On a personal level, Greg provided me with unwavering guidance, encouragement and friendship throughout his time on the Board. His support meant a great deal to me, and his legacy will continue to influence NSCC for many years to come.

Finally, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to our Board. Serving on the volunteer Board of a neighbourhood house carries significant responsibility, and our Board members undertake this role with dedication, integrity and genuine care. Their support, governance, strategic direction and commitment to our community provide the foundation upon which NSCC continues to grow and thrive. I am particularly grateful for the way the Board worked creatively and collaboratively this year to support my transition to a three-day working week while allowing me to remain in a role I genuinely love. Their willingness to prioritise staff wellbeing is one of the many reasons NSCC continues to be such a wonderful place to work.

As we look ahead, the challenges facing our community and our sector remain significant. However, if this year has demonstrated anything, it is that together we are stronger. Through partnerships, innovation, advocacy, compassion and an unwavering commitment to community, NSCC will continue to be a place where people feel welcome, valued and included.

Thank you to everyone who has been part of our journey this year.

Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.

– Helen Keller

Trish O'Duffy
General Manager



Assistant Manager's Report

It is with the utmost pleasure that I present this Annual report. As I sit here and reflect on the last year and all the programs and services offered across our sites, I am reminded that every program delivered and every outcome reached is its own individual story of connection. It is sadly a documented fact that individuals are losing the chance of connecting with one another and that the statistics for those reporting a sense of loneliness and dis-connection in their lives has increased exponentially. This is why a Neighbourhood House is so important to the communities that they walk alongside. Over this past year our organisation has continued to bring people together, provide meaningful support and create opportunities that strengthen the lives of individuals and families across our community to not only connect – but to thrive.

Across our sites this past year, a wide range of programs and activities has fostered meaningful connection. At our Newnham site, programs such as Community Lunches, Goldies, and Knitting Groups have provided welcoming opportunities for people to come together, share a meal, build friendships, and connect through common interests. The impact of these programs extends well beyond each individual session. Their lasting value is reflected in the vibrant atmosphere of our café area throughout the week, where community members eagerly greet one another, continue conversations, and proudly share the projects and experiences they have been working on since they last met.

At our Mowbray site programs such as Modernism and Landscape Art, Cooking with Allan and Mahjong also foster powerful connections. This is evident not only in the engaged, jovial conversations heard around the table each week but also in gentle interactions between participants as they guide one another in reading a recipe or share their insight on a particular art technique.

Of course, the past year has also provided valuable opportunities for participants to build and develop their skills and knowledge through a range of special interest programs. These included Scrapbooking, Certificate I & II in Business, learn 2 Sew, All Stitched Up and Be Your Best. These programs not only fostered creativity and practical skills but also encouraged personal growth enabling participants to gain confidence while pursuing their individual interests in a supportive and engaging environment. Boomerang Bags is another example of a program that not only connects, builds skills and knowledge but also empowers participants to affect positive change within community. Each week the dedicated Boomerang Bags crew design and create colourful cloth, sustainable shopping bags. The bags are purchased by centre users as well as being supplied to the local IGA. The income generated from bag sales is then distributed to different organisations as chosen by the Boomerang Baggers themselves. This past year one such donation was made to the Lactation Unit at the LGH. The donated funds were used to purchase lactation kits for Mum's accessing the unit. One community member who visits monthly, purchases a selection of bags that are sent to Alice Springs to be used by patients undergoing dialysis treatment under a local indigenous program.



Assistant Manager's Report



Partnerships and collaborations with service providers and community organisations, remain a central focus of our Strategic Plan. Maintaining strong relationships with existing partners has continued over the past year whilst also establishing several new ones., broadening our capacity to respond to the diverse needs of the community. The past 12 months these collaborations have included amongst others, Red Cross Connected Women's Program, Moreton Medical Group, Launceston Community Legal Centre, Catholic Care Multicultural programs, Youth Health North, Bapcare, Tas Tafe, Services Australia and Yemaya. One consulting service booked a meeting room on twenty separate occasions to facilitate Family group conference meetings.

These meetings supported local families to engage with one another along with Police, Child Safety, local schools and other relevant service organisations to work together to create meaningful change for each family.

Our on-going partnerships with Oz Harvest and Launceston Benevolent Society enable community to access bread, vegetables, fruit and other miscellaneous grocery and bakery items that assist in putting food on community tables. Approximately 40 people access the carts outside each center daily.

NSCC continues to be an active partner of NILS Tasmania No Interest Loan Scheme. This past year our dedicated team of volunteer loans officers have supported 328 community members successfully apply for a NILS loan. The impact that an approved Nils loan has for the individual applicant is immeasurable. In a survey conducted by NILS Tasmania this past year a quote from a successful applicant was shared with me.

"I first heard about Nils through a pamphlet at Northern Suburbs Community Centre when my daughter was a baby, my daughter is now 23. I have always had a good experience there, they are legend. All the loans have made a huge difference in my life"

Community events and celebrations provide meaningful opportunities to recognise achievements, strengthen connections, and celebrate the diversity of our community. This past year has been no exception. Together, we have shared moments of laughter, danced, enjoyed great food, and created lasting memories through a range of community events that brought people together. These included Seniors Week, Community Carols, Cancer Council Biggest Morning Tea, Bus Trip to Brickendon., Agricultured Luncheon and Volunteer Week celebrations. Our Garden of Peace and Reflection celebration highlighted the unveiling of the garden's newest feature—an inspiring wind chime installation symbolizing harmony.



Assistant Manager's Report cont/d....

Participants gathered to share a meal before enjoying traditional music and dance performances led by members of the Bhutanese community inviting all to join in, creating a vibrant and inclusive cultural experience.

None of what we achieve at NSCC would be possible without the generosity, dedication, and kindness of our incredible volunteers. Whether you're preparing lunches, offering a warm welcome at reception, answering phones, supporting people through NILS, or caring for our gardens, your time and compassion make a lasting difference every single day. You are far more than volunteers—you are the heart of our community. Your commitment creates a place where people feel welcomed, supported, and connected, and the impact of your contribution reaches far beyond what words can express.

I feel incredibly privileged to be part of such a passionate, dedicated, and committed team. To all my colleagues, thank you for starting each day with a smile and a cheerful hello. Your support, kindness, and teamwork make our workplace a wonderful place to be, and I truly appreciate each and every one of you. To the amazing Trish my heartfelt thanks for all that you do. I am constantly in awe of your patience, gentle guidance and support. I am so grateful for the chats, laughs and fun that we share with one another each week. It truly would not be the same without you.

As another year as part of the NSCC community begins, I look forward to the daily interactions with everyone who walks through our doors. It is a genuine privilege to be part of such an inspiring, welcoming, and vibrant community organisation. I am grateful for the opportunity to contribute to the positive impact we make together.

Mary Challis
Assistant Manager



26TEN Program Report

Over the past year, through their work with 26Ten at the Northern Suburbs Community Centre, Sarah O'Duffy and Sharon Wagner have been privileged to support adults in the local community to build the literacy skills and confidence needed for everyday tasks in both workplace and personal contexts. Providing accessible and welcoming support across the Newnham and Mowbray centres as well as at the Rocherlea Shed, Sarah focuses on guiding people as they develop practical digital skills for everyday life and the workforce, while Sharon provides targeted support to strengthen reading, writing, everyday maths and oral communication skills. Together, they support adults to take meaningful steps towards their personal, education and employment goals.

26Ten Workplace Grant

The 26Ten Workplace Grant created valuable opportunities for Sarah and Sharon to support NSCC employees and volunteers in developing their practical literacy, numeracy, and communication skills. This was a one year grant that concluded in October 2025. Eleven learners received tailored one-on-one support to strengthen their reading, writing, numeracy, and oral communication skills, with most engaging in regular sessions with Sharon throughout the year or participating in at least five sessions. Support with written communication was provided across a range of activities, from refining brochure content for greater clarity and readability to building employees' capacity to communicate effectively through emails and reports. Staff from migrant and refugee backgrounds were also supported to develop greater confidence and clarity in their written and spoken communication. It was also a privilege for Sharon to support a new volunteer through the induction process and to assist another volunteer research further study pathways aligned with her employment aspirations. A particular highlight for Sharon was supporting a volunteer whose hard work and perseverance culminated in the successful outcome of her group's grant application.

As part of the digital literacy component of the Employer's Grant, ten learners participated in one-on-one support sessions. Of these, five learners engaged in ongoing support, with a total of fifty-one individual support sessions delivered across the program. In addition, an AI information session was held, with nine participants learning about the functions, possibilities, and limitations of artificial intelligence. The grant created valuable opportunities for meaningful collaboration between trainers and participants. Learners actively contributed ideas, resources, and feedback on a range of topics, from Canva training to OneDrive filing instructions. Furthermore, after completing their training in Word, Excel and Canva, one participant independently undertook an additional course in their own time to further build their skills. These outcomes were made possible through the valuable connections created by the grant's intentional focus on understanding the goals and experiences of NSCC staff and volunteers. The success of the 26Ten Workplace Grant also reflects the time, dedication, and openness of the grant participants. It has been particularly rewarding to witness learners grow in confidence and achieve their individual goals. Supporting participants to recognise and build on their existing strengths and potential will remain a key focus moving forward. Overall, it was a wonderful year of learning, collaboration, and relationship-building, and it has been a privilege to be part of this work.

Community Grant

Through her ongoing role as an Adult Literacy Trainer at NSCC, Sharon has been thankful for the opportunity to support 26 community members for at least one month of weekly sessions over the last financial year. Most of Sharon's sessions were dedicated to supporting learners in the development of their reading skills, with 127 individual reading sessions provided. For some adults, learning difficulties or negative educational experiences had prevented them from experiencing the enjoyment and benefits of reading. Through a focus on building confidence, improving comprehension, and extending vocabulary, learners were encouraged to develop reading skills that were meaningful and relevant to their daily lives, work, and personal aspirations. It has been a real privilege for Sharon to provide one-on-one support for two migrants as they learn to read for the first time in any language, opening new opportunities for confidence, independence, and participation in their community. Furthermore, it has been rewarding to support NSCC volunteers to complete a range of courses, including Food Safe Handling and Safeguarding Children training, ensuring they are well prepared and confident in undertaking their roles.



26TEN Program Report cont/d.....

There were also 69 one-on-one sessions focused on developing oral communication skills. Many sessions with learners from migrant and refugee backgrounds focused on strengthening speaking and listening skills to build their confidence in everyday interactions and enhance their sense of belonging within the local community. For example, while some learners took advantage of individual support sessions to prepare for the Australian citizenship test or to sit English language tests needed for employment in Australia, others focused on building the English vocabulary and communication skills required to safely undertake practical driving lessons.

Sixty-three one-on-one sessions were provided to learners seeking to improve their writing skills. Most learners were working towards specific goals, including enhancing the accuracy and readability of meeting minutes, communicating more effectively in the workplace, and expressing their ideas with greater clarity and confidence in both personal and professional contexts. Although only two community members specifically requested budgeting support this financial year, discussions in other learning sessions indicated a broader demand for numeracy support, especially in areas related to everyday financial decision-making.

Sarah joined the 26Ten Communities program as a Digital Literacy trainer in October 2025. Since then, she has supported a total of 27 learners, with 8 participants receiving ongoing assistance. Overall, 94 one-on-one support sessions were delivered. It has been a rewarding experience to provide tailored support aligned to individual goals, across a diverse range of topics including digital safety, Outlook communication procedures, and Excel graphs. For example, Sarah supported two volunteers through the NSCC induction process, assisting them with completing the Safeguarding Children course and obtaining their Registration to Work with Vulnerable People (RWVP). Sarah also enjoyed supporting Children's University participants to complete a digital survey, as well as supporting Ramona in her amazing work organising three Biggest Morning Tea events, in collaboration with NSCC. It has also been a creative year, with digital support provided to program staff in developing a wide range of resources and promotional materials, including trifold brochures, infographics, and social media videos. The innovation and creativity within NSCC continue to be both inspiring and motivating. This also reflects the strong collaboration between the Adult Literacy Trainers and NSCC program and event coordinators. In addition, positive partnerships have been developed with local service providers and community organisations, ensuring a smooth and supportive transition for learners referred for literacy support. Finally, Sarah and Sharon have been thankful for the opportunity to work collaboratively in supporting diverse learners' needs, such as providing assistance in fulfilling government requirements and obtaining employment.

At the same time, there have been many scheduling challenges this year, due for instance, to competing priorities, time constraints, and external demands. These factors can make it difficult for learners to maintain consistent engagement in their learning, particularly in the context of ongoing change at local, state, and national levels. Despite these challenges, learners have demonstrated remarkable commitment, resilience, and perseverance. Looking ahead, there is a strong commitment to building on this momentum, continuing to address barriers to participation, and enabling all learners to have the opportunity and support needed to achieve their goals.

What's Next . . .

Looking ahead, the NSCC Adult Literacy Team is excited about the opportunities and priorities that lie ahead. Sarah and Sharon are extremely grateful for the ongoing support and confidence shown by the NSCC Board. Through this support, the team can draw on the insights and data gathered over the past year to plan and deliver more targeted, flexible, and meaningful support that responds to the evolving needs of the community. Sarah and Sharon also remain committed to addressing the challenges and barriers identified throughout the year, utilising practical and innovative approaches, underpinned by a strong belief that everyone has the right to learn and achieve their goals. Supported by the meaningful relationships and connections made at NSCC, Sarah and Sharon look forward to continuing to contribute to and strengthen our community's culture of learning.

Sharon Wagner and Sarah O'Duffy, NSCC Adult Literacy Trainers.



The FaRM Project Report

The FaRM (Food and Resilience Movement) project is a place for the Launceston northern suburb community to connect, learn and thrive; a place to grow fresh produce together, fostering skills in growing, cooking, and sharing healthy and sustainable food. Our mission is to feed, educate and rebuild the bond between food, people, and place, creating social, economic, and environmental resilience for everyone.

By cultivating fresh produce, we boost the community's access to healthy food, enhance skills in sustainable agriculture, and even create small business opportunities through market gardening. Our garden becomes a hub where individuals can learn, grow, and develop skills that are transferable to other areas of life, promoting economic self-sufficiency.

Our FaRM site in Mowbray continues to grow with the completion of our fence and gates, the installation of our tank and irrigation system and the connection of mains water to ensure that our produce has enough to drink. In addition, our garden has all weather accessibility with the completion of our new driveway. Inside the fence, our site has been levelled ready for our storage containers. It is so very exciting to see if all coming together!

This year we said goodbye to our gardener Jay who has been with the FaRM project since it's inception. We offer sincere thanks for his hard work in the design and creation of our Mowbray FaRM garden, his support and involvement in our Newnham FaRM garden and for the care he has taken in sharing his extensive knowledge of organic principles with our community. Always ready to roll up his sleeves regardless of the job at hand, Jay worked tirelessly alongside our volunteer team to ensure our gardens success.

As one door closes another opens! We were lucky enough to welcome Shaveta back to the Newnham FaRM garden. Shaveta has been working with our dedicated volunteer team and has brought her knowledge and experience in gardening and community connection to our team.

We also welcomed Tyler who has taken over the reigns of the Mowbray FaRM, working with our volunteers and contractors to develop our growing spaces and our site fit-out. Tyler's experience in establishing and building a community garden on the East Coast ensures that our plans for the FaRM continue and thrive.

Our focus upon growing and sharing continues with the hosting of workshops and working bees and supporting community projects including Work for the Dole and Department of Corrections activities. In addition, our gardens provide fresh produce for our Community Lunches and Micro Lunches programs.

Key achievements to be noted during the 12 months until 30 June 2026 include:

- ❖ The FaRM Project team presented at the National Food Policy Forum, participated at the Gastronomy Northern Tasmania 2026 Forum and provided subject matter expertise on the panel at both for an audience discussion
- ❖ Semi Finalist in the 2025 Community Achievement Awards for the Fonterra Agriculture Award
- ❖ To date we have supported a total of 28 community members in commencing and/or completing formal learning & development training. Thank you to the 26TEN team who have supplemented learning through literacy and numeracy support to ensure participant success.



The FaRM Project Report cont/d....



Our Mowbray FaRM garden has come a long way over that past twelve months! Our fence is in place, our site cleared and a new driveway allows access to the garden in all weather conditions.

We have over 300m² of garden beds developed and ready for new season planting with lots of compost and some good rainfall!

We offer a huge vote of thanks to Design to Live, TasWater and City of Launceston for our water connection to the FaRM Mowbray. All have worked together to overcome challenges and to develop great solutions for water supply. This will ensure that our produce flourishes even in the warm and dry summer months.

We are forever grateful to our volunteers who support our Mowbray and Newnham FaRM gardens. They look for new and exciting ways to maximise our garden use. This year we introduced a broad range of fresh flowers and herbs which we available for purchase at our weekly garden gate market. Not only a lovely addition to our beds, they also attract pollinators which are key to our growth cycles.

It's wonderful to watch our volunteer team build friendships and to have fun working together in the fresh air and sunshine. One of the FaRM project's key outcomes is to support improvement in physical, mental, social and financial wellbeing through healthy social activities and learning opportunities. What better way to look and feel better than to spend time in the garden sharing and learning from others along the way.

We are always happy to see new faces join our volunteer group so please phone or visit the Northern Suburbs Community Centre to find out more information. Alternatively, attend one of our monthly workshops to learn and share!

Our FaRM project is grateful to our business community including the Tasmanian Community Fund for their funding support, the City of Launceston and TasWater for water services to our FaRM, Design to Live for their ongoing help with architectural and site planning services, Darren Chilcott for our site preparation and driveway and GJ Fencing for our fence installation. There is a special thanks to our donors – it is their belief in our vision that will ensure its success and sustainability.

With last year's successes comes plans for the new year. The FaRM will:

- ❖ Continue to build our FaRM garden at Mowbray and start planting our next crop of seasonal vegetables
- ❖ Build and promote our fresh produce sales with local businesses and our community
- ❖ Promote our Volunteer opportunities
- ❖ Create repeat events to build engagement within the local Mowbray community and beyond

Fran Kneeves, FaRM Project Officer

Family Support Program Worker Report

The Integrated Family Support Service (IFSS) at Northern Suburbs Community Centre (NSCC) provides early intervention and trauma-informed support to vulnerable children, young people, and families across northern Tasmania. The service strengthens family functioning, enhances child and family wellbeing, builds resilience, and reduces the need for statutory child protection intervention.

Through a flexible outreach model, IFSS collaborates with families to identify strengths, address challenges, and achieve their goals. Support is tailored to each family's unique circumstances and delivered in a culturally safe, inclusive, and responsive manner. The worker provides advocacy, practical assistance, evidence-based parenting support, referrals, and coordinated case planning, helping families navigate complex systems.

A key strength of the program is its collaborative approach, working closely with schools, Child and Family Learning Centre's, health professionals, community organisations, NDIS providers, and government services to ensure coordinated support for families with complex needs.

Throughout the year, the service continued to provide intensive, strengths-based support to families experiencing multiple and often interconnected challenges. Support plans were developed collaboratively, recognising each family's existing strengths while addressing barriers to safety, wellbeing, and social inclusion. Families were assisted to strengthen relationships, improve parenting confidence, build resilience, and increase participation within their communities.

The program is guided by the Tasmanian Child and Youth Wellbeing Framework, which promotes positive outcomes across six key domains, namely: being loved and safe, having material basics, being healthy, learning, participating, and having a positive sense of culture and identity. This framework informs assessment, goal setting, and ongoing review, ensuring support remains focused on the wellbeing of the whole family.

Professional development remained a priority throughout the year, enabling the Family Support Practitioner to continue delivering evidence-informed practice and respond effectively to the increasingly diverse and complex needs of children, young people, and families across the northern suburbs.

One of the greatest strengths of IFSS is its location within Northern Suburbs Community Centre. Whilst much of the work of family support is outreach, there are many opportunities for families to access the Neighborhood House with the support of the Family Support Practitioner. NSCC provides a welcoming, non-stigmatising environment where families can engage safely and informally. This setting encourages early engagement, particularly for families who may be reluctant to access more traditional services. It is a privilege to see former IFSS families continue engaging with community programs, building relationships, and embracing opportunities for themselves and their children. These ongoing connections contribute to stronger, more resilient families and healthier communities.

The neighborhood house model also provides opportunities for families to participate in a wide range of programs, activities, educational opportunities, volunteering pathways, and practical supports. These connections often continue well beyond the period of formal case management, helping families remain engaged within their community and strengthening long-term wellbeing.



Family Support Program Worker Report cont/d....



Research consistently demonstrates that neighborhood houses are trusted, place-based services that improve access to support, reduce social isolation, increase community participation, and foster positive long-term outcomes for vulnerable families. They provide an important foundation for rebuilding confidence and reconnecting families who have previously disengaged from services or experienced negative interactions with institutions or other organisations. Furthermore, the Australian Institute of Family Studies has consistently identified social support as one of the strongest protective factors for families. Parents with trusted support networks are better equipped to manage stress, seek help early, and provide safe, responsive care for their children. Strong community connections are also associated with lower risks of child harm, family violence, and poor mental health.

During the 2025–2026 financial year, the program received seven new referrals, many involving highly complex family circumstances. The active caseload ranged between eight and eleven families at any given time, supporting approximately 23 to 27 children throughout the year.

Families were referred for a broad range of interconnected issues, including family violence and safety concerns, parenting and relationship difficulties, child development and wellbeing needs, mental health and substance use, housing and financial instability, and barriers to accessing essential services. The complexity of referrals highlights the ongoing need for coordinated, holistic, and flexible family support.

The service maintained excellent outcomes during the reporting period, and client and external stakeholders' feedback remained exceptionally positive. There was no waiting list for families accessing support and no complaints were received. Of those surveyed:

- 100% reported satisfaction with the responsiveness of the service to their individual needs.
- 100% were assessed as making progress towards or achieving their identified goals.
- 100% reported improved knowledge and awareness to support themselves and their families.

As community needs continue to evolve, IFSS remains committed to delivering flexible, person-centred support that empowers families to create lasting positive change. The program is an important agent of change for many children, young people, and families, fostering hope, strengthening resilience, and improving wellbeing through compassionate, evidence-based practice.

We look forward to continuing to support vulnerable families and thank the wider NSCC team for their ongoing commitment to creating a welcoming, inclusive environment where families can connect, participate and thrive.

Kylie Pike (BSW, BA)
Family Support Worker



Community Family Worker Mowbray Report



During the 2025/2026 year, the Community Family Worker role supported families, encouraged wellbeing, inclusiveness and participation.

Working alongside families, community partners and local schools, the role created meaningful opportunities for people to connect, learn and take part in community life.

The focus remained on building trusting relationships, supporting positive outcomes for children and their families, by welcoming into community services and activities

Friends Resilience

Friends Resilience offered separate groups for children, young people and adults, supporting participants to build confidence, resilience and practical coping skills. The program helped participants strengthen their emotional wellbeing, develop positive relationships and learn useful ways to manage everyday challenges.

Each program ran for 8 weeks, with approximately eight to 10 people attending each week. Over the past year, five Friends Resilience programs were delivered with 68 people fully completing the program.

A highlight was the introduction of outdoor sessions at Heritage Forest during spring and summer. Families responded positively to the relaxed setting and enjoyed the opportunity to take part in resilience-building activities in nature. The outdoor format allowed for more movement, created a calm atmosphere and supported engagement for both children and adults.

The program highlighted the importance of flexible delivery and listening to community needs. Although consistent attendance across the full program was sometimes challenging, adapting the format made it easier for families to participate.

Drumbeat

Drumbeat brought families together through music, rhythm and conversation, creating a relaxed space for connection across generations.

Across the year, eight Drumbeat programs were delivered, engaging 164 people across all programs.

Each program ran for 10 weeks, with a minimum of eight participants attending each week.

The mix of ages and experiences added warmth and depth to the weekly discussions, with participants sharing ideas, stories and encouragement.

The program helped build confidence, and a strong sense of achievement, leaving families feeling connected and supported.

Make Time to Play, Family activity group

Make Time to Play continued to be a valued weekly group where families could connect, play and spend quality time together. The group offered a mix of creative, physical and social activities where twenty-four participants regularly attended.

A key focus was child-led play, giving children space to explore their interests. The Mad Science sessions were a standout, with children dressing in aprons and safety goggles while enjoying hands-on experiments and activities.

Community Family Worker Mowbray Report cont/d....

The group allows each family to take part in the way that suited them best. Some joined in the activities together, while others valued time to relax, observe and connect with other parents and carers. This flexibility helped make the group welcoming and successful. Feedback regularly described the group as a positive way to end the week and ease into the weekend

Picnic and Play in the Park – National Children’s Week

One of the year’s highlights was Picnic and Play in the Park, held October 2025, to celebrate National Children’s Week. Designed for families with children aged 0–12 years, the event welcomed approximately 150 families from the Invermay, Mowbray and Rocherlea school communities. The event gave families a free and welcoming space to connect, celebrate and enjoy a range of activities. Strong attendance, including many returning families, reflected the trust families have in the community centre and its programs.

Children and families enjoyed activities including the Snag Chat van, smoothie bikes, pony rides, face painting and lucky door prizes. A Drumbeat trial session, seedling potting and woodworking with the Men’s Shed also encouraged creativity, skill-building and active participation. The event also showed the strength of local partnerships. Community organisations worked together to offer information, activities and support, helping families learn more about the services available locally. Partners included City Mission, Kanamaluka Collective, Baptcare, the NDIS Community Outreach Team, the City of Launceston Community Development Team, PCYC, Anglicare Communities for Children, HIPPY- Home Learning Assistance program. These conversations helped families discover and connect with other programs and services. For example, some families connected with community partners and later joined PCYC’s after-school trampoline fitness program. Picnic and Play in the Park showed how community events can strengthen relationships, raise awareness of local services and create positive experiences for children and families.

In summary of the past year, connection remained the strongest theme. Through resilience programs, activity groups and community events, families were supported to build relationships, develop new skills and feel more connected to their community.

I wish to express my gratitude to the management and staff of the Northern Suburbs Community centre. I feel privileged to work with a wonderful supportive team. I am equally thankful for the guidance received from the team at Anglicare, Communities for Children, Kanamaluka. Your support is truly appreciated.

Debbie Clark
Community Family Worker.



Community Connector Program

Community Connector interacts with people in the community through programs she facilitates & one on one's sessions in the areas of Newnham, Mowbray, Rocherlea. She engages with a variety of programs that caters for ages 0-88. The Community Connector networks with community, family, council & various services to enhance people's health & wellbeing by connecting them in their community. She engages in a variety of ways & continues to access changes according to the community's needs.

Your Space Program:

This operates at the Newnham NSCC (Wednesdays 1–2 pm) Mowbray NSCC (Mondays 1 –2 pm) & The Shed in Rocherlea (Thursdays 12–2 pm) Adults are connecting through chatting, having a free lunch together, activities, information sharing in a welcoming fun environment. This year new families have moved to this area & drop in or stay & have lunch & a cuppa. Each area has different people coming along & in some cases they go to several. The surveys show there is increased socialization skills which is evident with the friendships that are formed & this reduces their isolation which has been a high issue. The Social Club is also a place to meet people & engage through chatter, games & activities. In this program the Community Connector floats between the lunch area & outside & a room that she adapts depending on the needs. A group member said: "I felt like nothing was a problem, they were gone "This demonstrates people are feeling happy & can de-stress for this time & re focus on issues better later, it is good for their mental health. "I have no-one at home, this is the only thing I look forward to, all the long week" Participants: 652 (Your Space x 3 groups at Newnham, Mowbray , Rocherlea)



Dance Fit:

This is for people 18 years & older who have fun expressing themselves through dance moves in a wonderful welcoming environment. It is held at Mowbray NSCC every Tuesday 10-11am. "we don't just come to dance; we come to have fun & make friends". "it's my Favorite day of the week". The members also support each other when discussing issues, usually around health. It is wonderful to see the friendships that have been formed. Participants: 192

Tai Chi

This is on Mondays at The Newnham NSCC from 10-11am for adults. Everyone does this program at their own pace, in their own way. "It is good to get the blood flowing". "my week starts off good cause of this". The calmness of program & the warm, welcoming group make this enjoyable for all, mental health workers have brought clients to this. Participants: 159

Community Connector Program cont/d



Peeps Youth Group:

This is a fun youth group for children 10 – 17 years old & is held at The Shed in Rocherlea on Mondays 3 pm -4. 15pm. It is their space to chat, eat together, play eightball, table tennis, soccer etc. The Community Connector & worker engages with the children & listen to their needs.” I love hangin with my friends here “. We got funding for a bike safety excursion which many families from Peeps & Children’s University came along which was very valued & wonderful connections were made throughout the school holidays. “we could not afford to do this with our kids, it’s just wonderful”. “Me & my kids had the best time, loved everything”. Families also accessed more community events which was fabulous! PCYC come along once a month bringing physical activities. At present some children have moved on due to their age & attending high school & sports after school, so we are encouraging & slowly getting new participants. We engage with the children one on one & support issues they are addressing & building their confidence is a high need. Participants: 381



Children’s University:

This is a wonderful program for children 8- 15 years old. It is held at Newnham NSCC on Thursdays at 3.15 – 4.15. We adapt to the family’s needs i.e. many go to different schools so sometimes come later, but that’s ok as they are committed & excited. Children love the surprise of not knowing what activities we are doing. Children have been at school all day so the Community Connector & support worker make the activities fun with a learning element & they love having snacks after a long day. We have many families who have committed for years with this program & we now have for the first time a 15-year-old who has earned a maroon passport book which means they are now a leader so helps the younger children. Children supported & were involved in community events i.e. Youth Week. We were based at The Shed however the acoustics & parents staying due to travelling made it difficult to hear voices, so we re-accessed & moved back to Newnham NSCC which has proved successful. Participants: 463



Community Keep Fit:

This is for anyone over 18 years of age who wants to enjoy doing exercises with fun. Lots of laughter while exercising at your own pace. “This is good for me & I love making new friends” “I couldn’t afford other classes & wouldn’t be able to do this if it wasn’t for free”, I feel better in my health”. Participants: 150



Community Connector Program cont/d

Baby Bugs Playgroup:

This is a community playgroup for anyone with children 0 -5 years old. It is held on Wednesdays at 12pm at Newnham NSCC. Loads of laughter, singing, music, adventure play & eating together. “I get excited to come here each week”. “I love watching my kids have fun & its good for me to get out of the house”. We have a several volunteers that have supported this group for years & are training up in courses i.e Food Alert Safety & got for the first time their Working with Vunerable card. We have 2 new volunteers this year who are coming along each week, such dedication! This year there have been challenges with regular children going to school ,so encouraging new families into the program & re booting which takes time but this is also good for a littler group for those just getting the confidence to come along. Participants: 411

Cooking for Two:

These girls have moved mountains! Learning to cook, done food alert training & have certificate, done volunteer inductions, WWVP card processes, learnt to cook & keen to teach others. They have a folder with all their recipes in it, so can make the dishes anytime. Participants: 42

The Community Connector has engaged participants to various referral services : Anglicare (financial), Baptcare, Working Together Program, Parent Next, 26 TEN, Family Support, Housing, Childcare Services education programs, NSCC skills training courses etc.

She would like to thank her Co-worker Carl & NSCC staff, management , volunteers who are so valuable & appreciated, City Mission, PCYC & all services connected with over the year has been of a benefit to these communities.



Caz Bellis, Community Connector Program Coordinator

Learner Driver Mentoring Program Coordinator Report

A driver’s licence opens doors. It means getting to work, to study, to attend appointments and to connect with family – it boosts self confidence and independence.

For many people in Launceston’s northern suburbs, the hardest part is the 80 hours of supervised driving needed before the provisional licence test. They may not have a car, anyone with a full licence to sit beside them, or the money for lessons. The L2P program at the Northern Suburbs Community Centre fills that gap. We provide the car, the fuel, the insurance and a trained volunteer mentor. This is made possible through funding from Department of State Growth that ensures no cost to eligible learners. Our learners and mentors come from Australia, Bhutan, Nepal, Myanmar, Sudan and Afghanistan, and many speak English as a second language. Learners find us through word of mouth and through referrals from settlement services, employment services and family support agencies.

Between July 2025 and June 2026, 58 learner drivers were active in the program, supported by 27 volunteer mentors. Together they completed 667 sessions and 1,185 hours behind the wheel. Each learner averaged 20 hours with us, up from 14 the year before. Building Tasmania asks each program to reach 60 supervised hours a month. We averaged almost 100 hours per month and reached the target in 11 of the 12 months.

The L2P car, a 2018 Hyundai i30, travelled 24,264 km during the year. That is more than halfway around the world. More than a third of sessions were on weekends, and some started early in the morning or ran into the evening. Learners practised in city traffic and out on the highway, in all kinds of weather and light.

Seeing a learner come back with their P plates is the best part of this program. This year 29 learners passed their practical driving assessment and gained their provisional licence. Each of them put in the hours, and each had a mentor who gave their own time to help them get there.

None of this happens without our volunteer mentors. They give up evenings and weekends, stay calm through a nervous learner’s first roundabout, and keep turning up week after week. Thank you to every one of them. We are incredibly grateful for every mentor, and in recognising two outstanding contributions this year, we certainly don’t want to take away from the generosity and commitment of all those who give their time so freely. Dal Balisampangrai drove more than 430 hours with 12 different learners, over a third of all the driving in the program. Abbas Safari, who returned as a mentor last year to support our Farsi-speaking learners, gave 159 hours.

Mark Dover and Mani Rai, L2P Program Coordinators

58
learner drivers

667
driving sessions

27
volunteer mentors

1,185
hours of supervised driving

29
P licences gained

24,264
kilometres driven



3 June 2026: Learner Saniya Pradhan with mentor Dal Baalisampang after Saniya received her P licence.

Mentoring Program Report

Last year the Northern Suburbs Community Centre received funding to assist in the delivery of a Mentoring Program, which provides trained community members to support East Tamar Primary School students through regular one-on-one sessions held at the school.

The purpose of the program is to provide mentoring relationships that helps students to:

Feel better emotionally

Become more confident and learn to overcome challenges

Attend school more regularly

A strong partnership with East Tamar Primary School was established to promote the program and gain consent from students and parents. The enthusiasm and commitment shown by school staff in supporting students and fostering positive mentor relationships has been outstanding.

Volunteer mentors undergo screening, online and face to face training and meet with the Principal or a designated senior school staff member and the Mentoring Coordinator as part of the matching process to find out a bit more about the volunteer and what they have to offer a student.

The Mentoring Program Coordinator maintains regular contact with mentors, who provide feedback and reflections on their activities during mentoring sessions. Additional resources have been supplied to mentors on suggested activities, youth resilience and wellbeing. Additionally mentors have met as a group to share experiences, engage in peer learning and social connection.

This year, the NSCC Mentoring Program continued to grow in strength and impact with most of our wonderful mentors returning keen to reconnect with their students. We sadly farewelled a couple of mentors owing to travel, study and work commitments; however, we have been lucky to welcome another 8 new mentors who have joined our team. This means more young people will have access to a trusted mentor and the benefits of meaningful one-on-one support.

The program commenced with eight dedicated mentors volunteering a minimum of one hour each week during terms 3 and 4 of 2025. This number will soon increase to twelve mentors and students catching up regularly to spent time on student-focused activities.

Program Activities and Engagement

Mentors and students participated in a wide range of activities designed to build trust, encourage conversation and support wellbeing. Activities included:

- Outdoor play such as soccer, basketball and handball
- Creative activities including drawing, colouring, Lego, rock painting, and card-making
- STEM-focused sessions using Bitlink technology kits and fun science experiments
- Time in the school's veggie garden
- Quiet activities such as cards, board games and walking and talking
- Cooking sessions, which proved especially popular, with students and mentors making shakes, cupcakes, chocolate truffles, pikelets and decorating Halloween biscuits.



Mentoring Program Report cont/d...



School Feedback and Student Outcomes

2025 Anecdotal evidence collected clearly reflected the positive effects of the program. Student engagement, enthusiasm, and meaningful connections formed with the mentors, highlighted the value of this initiative.

One example was a Grade 6 student who demonstrated a strong need for connection at school. He was genuinely excited to participate—returning his permission form the very next morning and arriving promptly for his first session. The opportunity to talk with his mentor each week was invaluable as he prepared for the transition to high school - one of the biggest changes students face in their school careers. The support his mentor offered, is something this student might not have had if it were not for the program.

In another instance, when one mother was approached about the possibility of her son beginning the Mentoring Program, she was very keen and felt that this would be a great support for him. The student expressed a very positive attitude toward his time with his mentor and is currently teaching her to play chess demonstrating the reciprocal nature of mentoring. His mother has observed noticeable behavioural improvements on the days he meets with his mentor.

2026 The Assistant Principal has provided highly positive feedback about the program's impact: The Mentor Program is a much-loved and highly valued initiative at East Tamar Primary School. It offers our students a wonderful opportunity to build meaningful connections, grow in confidence, and engage in authentic conversations that strengthen their social skills and positive communication. Each week, students eagerly anticipate their mentor afternoon. It's a highlight many of them simply don't want to miss. In fact, they often check in throughout the week to make sure they're ready for their special time. The impact of the program is best captured through the voices of our school community. One parent shared, *"My daughter loves her mentor afternoon -I cannot stop her talking about it at home."* A student enthusiastically told us, *"I had the best afternoon the other day, we had milkshakes like you would at a café!"* Another reflected, *"I love my mentor, she is so kind and loves talking like me."* These one-on-one experiences are incredibly meaningful for our students, fostering a sense of belonging and connection that is valued not only by them, but by our entire school community.

The school continues to value the program as an important contributor to student wellbeing.

Mentor Reflections

- Mentors reported that their motivation for joining the program centred on:
- Making a positive difference in a young person's life
- Giving back to the community
- Finding a sense of purpose
- Supporting students to feel better about themselves
- Mentors felt they were doing a good job if there was no student absenteeism on mentoring day, or if the student was engaged in the activity and from positive feedback from teaching staff.

One mentor reflected *"Even though I was quite nervous about meeting my mentee, the idea of helping a young person in any way, was enough for me to go through with it. I still don't know how much difference it will make for him, but I've genuinely enjoyed panning our sessions and hanging out with N, and I realise I'm willing to step out of my comfort zone to be there for someone."*

Mentoring Program Report cont/d...

While mentors occasionally experienced disappointment when their student was absent, they consistently expressed how rewarding it was to build strong, trusting relationships and witness the growth and confidence of their mentees.

Feedback from other sources reinforced the program's significance:

"This is the stuff that makes such a difference in children's lives and can in fact change their outlook on life and build hope for a positive future. I am not overstating this!"

Program Growth in 2026

Most mentors from the previous year returned, with students eager to reconnect. While a small number of mentors stepped away due to other commitments, the program welcomed eight new mentors. This expansion means more young people will have access to a trusted adult and the benefits that mentoring provides. New mentors have now completed their training and will begin sessions in the coming weeks.

Honouring our Volunteers

NSCC and East Tamar Primary School acknowledge and deeply value the dedication and generosity of our mentors, and the positive impact they are making in the lives of young people. Without them, there would be no mentoring program.

What Mentoring Provides for Students

A mentor is:

- Someone who listens and gives their full attention
- A calm, safe adult to talk to
- Dedicated to providing one-on-one time each week
- Encouraging and builds confidence in the student
- Reliable and consistent
- Supportive to students with school-related worries
- Someone who offers the student a chance to relax and just be
- A trusted adult who understands and does not judge

Challenges

Recruiting sufficient community volunteers and securing ongoing funding remain the program's most significant challenges. These factors directly influence the program's capacity to grow, maintain consistency, and ensure that every student who would benefit from a mentor is able to access one. Meeting these challenges will require ongoing collaboration with schools, community members and funding partners to build a reliable and sustainable mentoring program.

Looking Ahead

There is also a growth opportunity to extend the program to other schools, supported by the strong interest already shown and the rich collection of mentor and student stories, case studies, and shared experiences that demonstrate the program's impact. These real examples continue to inspire new partnerships and help other schools see the value of introducing mentoring into their own communities.

Barb Donaldson, Mentoring Program Coordinator



Meenah Neenah Program Report

The Meenah Neenah team currently includes Chris Flood and Tegan Murray.

Meenah Neenah is a culturally safe, arts-based program that supports Aboriginal children and young people to explore identity, belonging, and connection through creative expression. Delivered weekly during school terms, the program operates across three schools in Northern Tasmania: East Tamar Primary School, Port Dalrymple School, and Ravenswood Primary School.

Through creative projects, storytelling, cultural learning, and group discussions, students strengthen their connection to culture, build confidence, develop positive relationships, and enhance their social and emotional wellbeing. Seeing and hearing the pride students take in their work is one of the greatest gifts they share with facilitators and the wider community. Their achievements reflect not only personal growth, but also the power of culture, creativity, and connection in fostering a strong sense of identity and belonging.

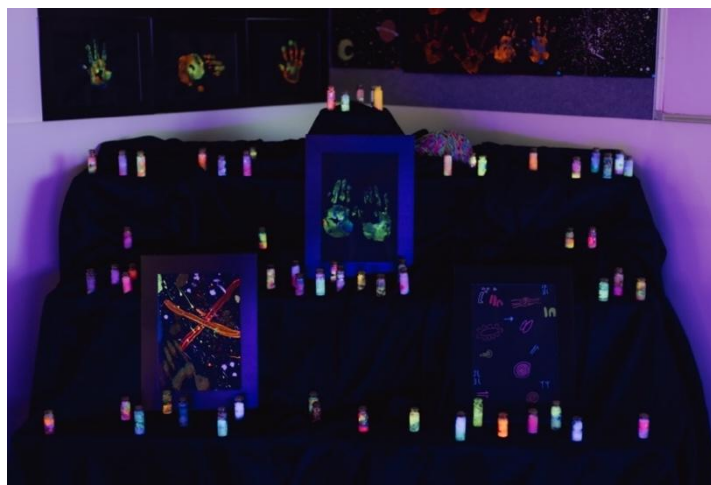
Program Delivery 2025–2026 // During 2025–2026, Meenah Neenah delivered:

- **Port Dalrymple School** – Three weekly sessions engaging up to 12 students per session.
- **Ravenswood Primary School** – Three weekly sessions engaging up to 6 students per session.
- **East Tamar Primary School** – One weekly group session for up to 8 students, complemented by one-on-one mentoring and in-class support.

While group sizes remain small to support meaningful engagement and relationship-building, the program regularly welcomes additional students seeking a safe and inclusive space within their school community. Beyond weekly sessions, Meenah Neenah facilitates excursions, incursions, exhibitions, and collaborative projects that connect students with Elders, artists, community members, and cultural knowledge holders.

Program Highlights Greens Beach Excursion

A significant highlight for students from Ravenswood Primary School was a cultural excursion to Greens Beach. Aboriginal students in Grades 3–6 participated in a full-day experience that combined recreational and cultural activities in a supportive group setting. Students were highly engaged throughout the day, and the excursion contributed positively to their sense of belonging, wellbeing, and connection to community.



Meenah Neenah Program Report cont/d...

NAIDOC Week Exhibition

During the July school holidays, Meenah Neenah hosted a NAIDOC Week Exhibition at the Northern Suburbs Community Centre, showcasing artwork created by students from all participating schools. The exhibition celebrated students' creativity, cultural journeys, and achievements while highlighting the strength of the relationships developed through the program.

Student Voice

Students consistently express enthusiasm for Meenah Neenah and value the relationships, safety, and sense of belonging it provides.

Some student reflections included:

"Are you looking forward to school holidays?"

"YES, but not for Tuesdays because we miss out on Meenah Neenah."

"No, because I'll miss out on Meenah Neenah."

"I wish we could do Meenah Neenah every day!"

"Thanks for the best time ever."

"You guys are so good to us, you're like our Aunty and Uncle."

"We are free to talk and be ourselves in Meenah Neenah."



Meenah Neenah Program Report cont/d...

Good News Story: A Safe Space for Connection

One particularly meaningful moment this year involved a student who had previously participated in Meenah Neenah but was no longer attending regular sessions. During a challenging day at school, the student chose to spend time in the Meenah Neenah space with facilitators and peers.

Previously quiet and withdrawn, the student remained with the group for more than an hour and spoke openly about their experiences and concerns. The student's decision to actively seek out the program during a difficult time reflects the strong sense of belonging and connection fostered through consistent, relationship-based engagement.

Cultural Leadership and Participation

A valued component of each session is the inclusion of an Acknowledgement of Country. Students may choose to listen to a facilitator deliver the acknowledgement or create and present their own.

Students have embraced this opportunity, often volunteering to read their own acknowledgements. Several students have extended this confidence beyond Meenah Neenah by delivering Acknowledgements of Country at school assemblies.

This practice has strengthened students' understanding of cultural protocols while creating opportunities to discuss the significance of Acknowledgement of Country and the distinction between an Acknowledgement and a Welcome to Country.



Meenah Neenah Program Report cont/d...



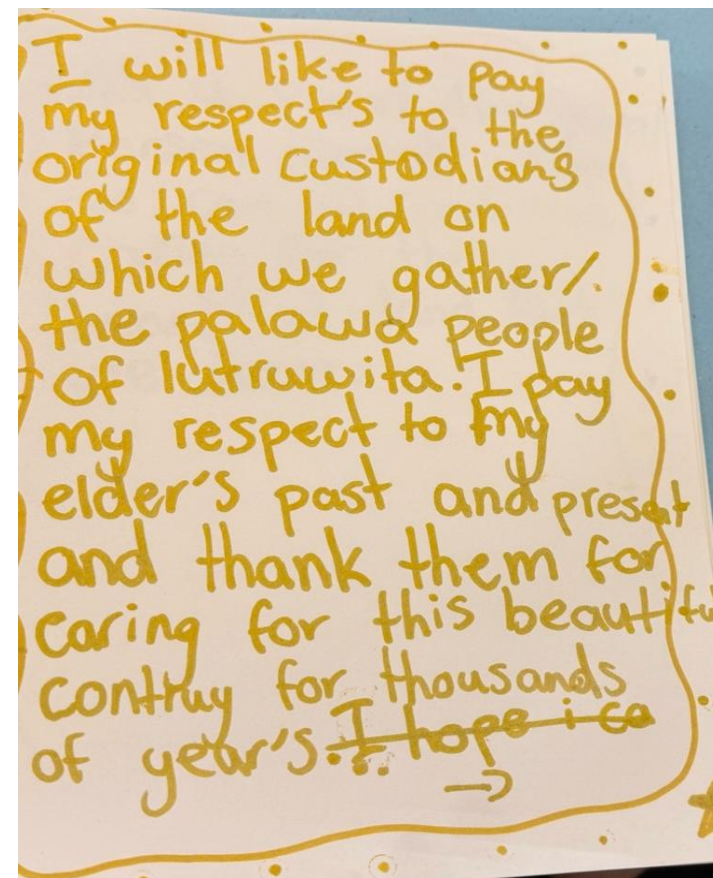
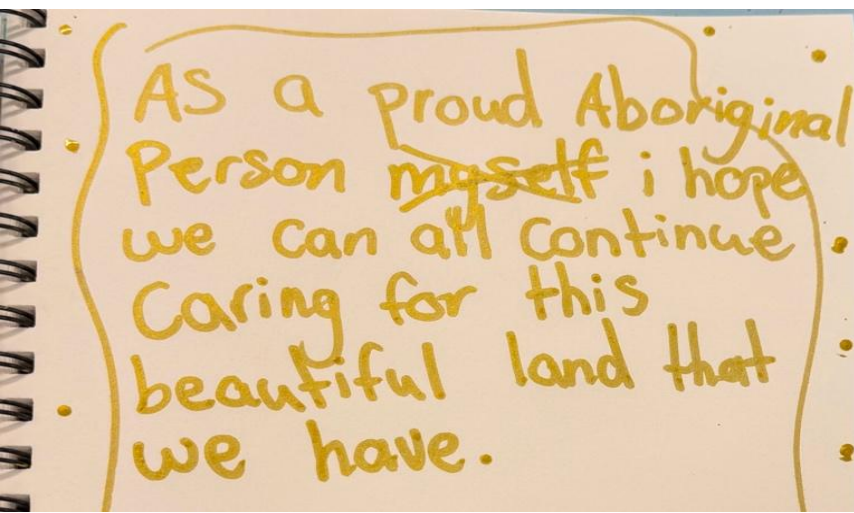
Community Partnerships

Throughout the year, Meenah Neenah continued to strengthen partnerships that enhance opportunities for participating students. A highlight was collaborating with the Young Aboriginal Support Program (YASP) at Port Dalrymple School to deliver a Claymation workshop followed by a shared pizza lunch. The activity provided students with a creative, hands-on learning experience while fostering connections with YASP staff. These relationships are particularly valuable as students transition into high school, helping them develop familiarity and confidence with support services they may access in the future. The collaboration highlighted the importance of strong partnerships in supporting Aboriginal children and young people and laid the foundation for future joint initiatives.

Future Opportunities

Student Work Placement

Meenah Neenah is exploring the opportunity to support a student through a structured work placement within the program. The student has demonstrated a strong interest in Meenah Neenah, regularly assisting during sessions and developing positive relationships with facilitators and participants. A placement would provide valuable practical experience, build confidence and skills, and support personal and educational growth while fostering future leadership and community engagement.



Meenah Neenah Program Report cont/d...

Looking Ahead

Key priorities for the coming year include:

Strengthening Partnerships

Continuing to build relationships with community organisations, Elders, cultural knowledge holders, and support services to enhance networks of care, cultural connection, and opportunity.

Enhancing Program Opportunities

Expanding culturally meaningful projects, excursions, exhibitions, and community events that strengthen connections to culture, identity, belonging, and Country.

Supporting Leadership and Pathways

Creating opportunities for young people to develop confidence, skills, and leadership through mentoring, work placement, and other participation pathways.

Our vision is for Meenah Neenah to continue growing as a vibrant, culturally safe, and inspiring space where Aboriginal children and young people feel connected, valued, and proud of who they are.

Acknowledgements

We gratefully acknowledge the ongoing support of Communities for Children, our partner schools, families, caregivers, Elders, community members, and collaborating organisations.

Their guidance, encouragement, and commitment help create opportunities for Aboriginal children and young people to strengthen their connection to culture, identity, and community while building positive pathways for the future.

Tegan Murray, Meenah Neenah Program Coordinator and Chris Flood, Meenah Neenah Program Worker



Community Shed Report

It has been another busy and rewarding year at The Shed Rocherlea, with plenty happening both inside the workshop and out in the wider community. Looking back over the year, one of the things that stands out for me is the variety of people who have come through our doors. School students, community members, families, TAFE students, volunteers and program participants have all used the Shed in different ways, and each has contributed to making it the welcoming and practical community space it is.

A real highlight has been our ongoing work with East Tamar Primary School. Students attended regular woodwork sessions where, with the support and patience of our Shed volunteers, they learned to use tools safely and created projects including wooden serviette holders. These sessions are about much more than making something to take home. They give young people an opportunity to build confidence, learn practical skills, work alongside others and experience the satisfaction of seeing a project through from start to finish.

We also welcomed students from Newstead Christian School for woodwork taster sessions and began working with TasTAFE around opportunities for Workplace Pathways students to attend the Shed as part of their workplace learning. In May, the Launceston Home School group joined us for a full-day session. The Shed was absolutely buzzing as children, parents, volunteers and staff worked together. There were plenty of smiles, and it was wonderful to hear from the facilitator that it had been one of the best sessions the group had experienced for some time.

Another major focus for the year was the development and delivery of Ride Safe Live Well. This program grew from NSCC's advocacy around the very real barriers faced by people on low or no incomes trying to obtain a motorcycle licence. The cost can be prohibitive and, for some people, creates a situation where they may continue riding unlicensed and place themselves and others at risk. Funding from the Department of State Growth and Cape Hope Foundation allowed us to deliver two 12-week programs designed to go beyond simply learning to ride.



Practical riding and safety skills were combined with literacy, physical and mental health, and conversations about risky behaviours and the effect those behaviours can have on riders, their families and the broader community. There was strong interest from the outset, with 15 people attending the initial introductory workshops. By the end of June, 19 participants had taken part, with only three still needing to complete their Driver Knowledge Test as part of wrapping up the program. Evaluation of the program will also help inform NSCC's continuing advocacy around motorcycle licensing reform.

The Shed has also played an important role in the development of NSCC's Bike Library. The initiative was established to give community members access to bicycles on loan as another option for transport. The launch even gave staff the opportunity to brush up on their riding skills in the car park, which provided plenty of fun and laughter along the way!

Bike repairs have complemented this work. Although our Bicycle Repair Café has had sporadic participation, the outcomes have made it worthwhile. Bikes repaired with the help of volunteers and Shed members have been passed on to local community members, while specialized bicycles donated by PCYC were cleaned and serviced before being donated to Eskleigh, where they found new homes. It is a good example of how something that may look small in numbers can still have a very meaningful impact for the people involved.

Community Shed Report cont/d....

Our monthly Repair Café has worked in much the same way. We have repaired everything from a vanity door, table and garden tools through to a line trimmer and donated lawnmower. The lawnmower was repaired and then passed on to a community member who was incredibly appreciative. There is something particularly satisfying about giving an item another life while also helping someone who needs it.

Not everything we try at the Shed takes off immediately, and I think it is important to acknowledge that too. Our community swap day/car boot sale unfortunately attracted no attendees, while activities such as the Repair Café, Bicycle Repair Café and Breakfast Club have experienced varying levels of participation. Rather than seeing that as a reason not to try, it gives us an opportunity to learn, adjust and keep finding the activities that connect with our community.

Our Breakfast Club has shown what can happen when that connection is made. While numbers have fluctuated, at its busiest we welcomed 15 participants. On those mornings there is a really good atmosphere, with volunteers, Shed members and community members sitting together, sharing food and having a chat. Similarly, our weekly Coffee n Chat started slowly but has grown to attract up to 15 people at times, including a number of regular faces. Combining Coffee n Chat with other activities has worked particularly well. With TAFE students now attending on Wednesdays, student Tia has also been learning the ropes of the coffee machine and enjoying the opportunity to serve people their favourite cuppa. It is these simple, informal connections that often help people feel comfortable enough to become part of something bigger.

Food support has also become an increasingly successful part of the Shed. Early in the year, some of the food supplied through OzHarvest was unfortunately not being taken before it spoiled. We trialled promoting its availability through Facebook and saw a significant increase in uptake. Following discussions about the need for refrigeration, CHL secured funding and provided the Shed with a double-door fridge. The combination of better promotion and appropriate refrigeration has made a significant difference, with almost all donated food now being collected.



Community Shed Report cont/d....

Community events have given us another opportunity to take the Shed's work beyond the workshop. Our volunteers supported the annual Christmas community event in partnership with Project North, City of Launceston and the Rocherlea Action Group, including cooking the free community BBQ. For Youth Week, the Shed produced wooden toys using our laser cutter so children could build and paint them at the Mayfield event. The activity proved extremely popular and was a great way of taking a little piece of the Shed out into the community.

Behind the scenes, we have continued to strengthen how the Shed operates. Monthly machinery inspections and maintenance were introduced to support safe operation and prolong the life of our equipment. I also completed electrical testing and tagging training, allowing this work to be undertaken across NSCC centres internally and reducing an ongoing cost to the organisation. Shed volunteers and staff completed first aid training, while professional development throughout the year included coaching sessions with Ben Panganas and IT development with Sarah O'Duffy covering areas including Canva and social media.

The year has also given us opportunities to celebrate the people who make the Shed what it is. Our Coordinator, Greg, received a nomination for Shedder of the Year at the annual TMSA gathering in Campbell Town, which was a well-deserved recognition of the commitment he brings to the Shed.

Finally, I want to finish by recognising our Shed volunteers. The programs, school visits, repairs, community events and everyday activity described in this report simply don't happen without people who are prepared to give their time, share their skills and make others feel welcome. Joe, Malcolm and Richard, thank you for the countless practical jobs, conversations, mentoring and support you have provided throughout the year. To Greg, Joe, Malcolm, Richard and all those who have contributed their time during the year, thank you. The Shed is ultimately about people, connection and having a place to belong. Our volunteers are at the heart of making that possible.

Carl Britton, Shed Project Officer.



Newham and Mowbray Reception

The Northern Suburbs Community Centre Admin team are the first point of contact for all community members, whether at our Mowbray or Newnham Centre. We enjoy welcoming new members but also are always happy to see our regular members come back in and know us by name. The admin team face a lot of different question every day, from what programs we run to can I have a cup of coffee. We are here to answer the communities' questions and make sure that they know this is their centre and that they are welcome. We always keep in mind that these centres are the communities, and we are here to help them where possible.

We also support other staff members when it comes to suggesting programs to new community members and introduce them to staff members that run the programs. We also support staff by keeping NSCC Facebook and website updated so the programs are advertised and we make sure that all Stats from Facebook go to the correct Manager to assist with funding for the centre.

We keep the day to day running of the centres going so that everyone can use the facilities such as tiding rooms, making sure the tea and coffee facilities are stocked, making sure that the areas are clean and appropriate for use.

We have a great team of volunteers that help us to keep the centres running which gives us time complete Administration work that we wouldn't have time for without them. We are in the process of developing a training package for new volunteers so they can feel comfortable when working here and can go back to the training if required. While we can't put everything we do in this report, we feel that the most important task that is to make sure that everyone feels welcome and at home in both centres. Please make sure you stop and say hello to the team we enjoy meeting new people and if you have any questions, we would be happy to answer them if we can.

Reception Team,

Grace, Deepa, Tabitha, Kathy, Sandy, Glenys, Anna, Jamie, Cathy and Jodie

