

Neighbourhood Centres Queensland Annual Report 2024



A year of significant change



Neighbourhood Centres Queensland acknowledge the
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional
custodians of Country; we pay our respects to their
Elders, Ancestors, land and seas.

Sovereignty has never been ceded.

It always was and always will be, Aboriginal land.

About Neighbourhood Centres Queensland (NCQ)

NCQ is the peak body for Neighbourhood
and Community Centres in Queensland.

With over 150 Neighbourhood and Community Centres
(NCCs) across the state, our sector represents the largest
community-led infrastructure in Queensland. NCQ is here
to grow our collective impact by increasing the resourcing,
recognition, and relationships of Neighbourhood and
Community Centres at the local, state, and national level.
We collaborate with our members, partners and government
to measure impact and build sector capacity for long-term
community and social resilience.

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**Front cover photograph features people doing art and
calligraphy activities at a community event held for
Multicultural Multicultural Queensland Month.**
Photo courtesy of The Neighbourhood Hub in Mackay,

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About Neighbourhood Centres Queensland

NCQ is the peak body for place-based Neighbourhood Centres in Queensland.

With over 150 Neighbourhood Centres across the state, our sector represents the largest community-led infrastructure in Queensland. NCQ is here to grow our collective impact by increasing the resourcing, recognition, and relationships of Neighbourhood and Community Centres at the local, state, and national level. We collaborate with our members, partners and government to measure impact and build sector capacity for long-term community and social resilience.

Our work in 2023 - 2024 was focused on five key areas:



Communicating Sector Value

Highlighting the role and importance of Centres and advocating for additional resourcing.



Demonstrating Sector Impact

Encouraging and supporting research on Centres to demonstrate their impact in communities.



Growing Sector Capacity

Supporting our workforce through professional development, resource sharing, coordinated actions & more.



Partnering for Community Outcomes

Building strategic partnerships across sectors to create better outcomes for Queensland communities.



Influencing Policy for Systems Change

Advancing policy and place-based program design through collaborative processes and advocacy.

Chair's Report

It's been a remarkable year of transition, growth, and impactful action for Neighbourhood Centres Queensland (NCQ). As we continue to adapt to the evolving needs of communities, NCQ has embraced new challenges, implemented sector-wide reforms, and strengthened our role as vital, community-driven infrastructure across the State.

Under the visionary leadership of former CEO Em James, NCQ has solidified its role as a vital force in Queensland's social landscape, promoting Neighbourhood Centres as essential community hubs. Em's leadership over the past four years has been invaluable, and I extend my heartfelt thanks for their transformative contributions.

During our transition, Interim CEO Chris Mundy led NCQ with energy, steering us through sector reforms, disaster recovery efforts, and a state election advocacy campaign.

As we look to the future, I'm excited to welcome our new CEO, Cate Akaveka, whose passion and expertise promises to enhance our impact.

In closing, I extend my sincere gratitude to our dedicated Board, the hardworking NCQ team, and the network of Neighbourhood Centres across Queensland. Each of you plays a crucial role in creating communities where everyone has the opportunity to connect, contribute, and thrive.

Together, we are building a stronger, more inclusive future for Queensland.

Warm Regards,



Caroline Cuckson

Chair, Neighbourhood Centres Queensland





CEO's Report

It is an honour to step into the role of CEO at Neighbourhood Centres Queensland. The growth of the sector reflects years of dedication from many stakeholders, and I am humbled to join the organisation at what is such an exciting chapter for the Neighbourhood Centre movement.

The recent repositioning of the sector has brought our work to the forefront of government policy, emphasising the value of Neighbourhood Centres as essential, place-based social infrastructure.

Joining such a dedicated, yet small team is inspiring. As I write, our team of four full-time equivalent staff are delivering a diverse range of important projects, including statewide election advocacy strategies, an energy literacy project, the community-led disaster resilience project and the annual Sector Impact Report. They are also developing the community food project, community development micro credentials, online learning platform and national sector branding, amongst a number of other projects.

Looking ahead, my priority is to meet and learn from as many Neighbourhood Centre staff and volunteers as possible - to hear their stories, understand their work, and deliver on a vision that everyone is a part of. I look forward to working alongside our dedicated sector to continue creating communities that support and empower every person to connect, participate, contribute, and thrive.

Together, we'll continue to strengthen the fabric of our communities, writing a story that reflects the incredible strength and potential of Neighbourhood Centres and their communities across Queensland.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in white ink that reads "Cate Akaveka".

Cate Akaveka

CEO, Neighbourhood Centres Queensland

Thank you to our Members

As the peak body for Neighbourhood and Community Centres in Queensland, we represent over 150 Neighbourhood and Community Centres across the state. 2.4 million visitors attended Centres over the 2023/2024 financial year, and whilst Centres continued their demanding local-level work, they also contributed to statewide change.

Walk into a Neighbourhood Centre, and you'll meet committed, caring and resourceful people. Whether volunteers, staff or board members, they care about their communities and work hard to deliver extraordinary outcomes every day.

2024 has been particularly demanding for many members. The soaring cost of living, the homelessness and the housing crisis, social isolation and loneliness, natural disasters as well as the tail end impacts of Covid-19 have been impacting communities across the state. In the midst of responding to these community challenges, Neighbourhood Centres have undergone significant sector reforms requiring the implementation of the new initiative guidelines and reporting framework. Attendance at Centres has grown year on year, with over 1.6 million visitors in 2019/2020, 2 million in 2021/2022 and an astounding 2.4 million in 2022/2023.

Regardless of the challenges, Neighbourhood Centre staff and volunteers have rallied together to respond and strengthen their communities in innovative ways. They have worked thoughtfully to come up with community-led and innovative solutions to housing and homelessness, from sleep buses to 'meanwhile use' housing to buying land and building properties.

We are particularly grateful for the time and energy Centres have committed – amidst their incredibly demanding local-level work – to making the collective impact of Centres across Queensland visible.

In 2024 this included participating in the 2023 Sector Impact Survey, contributing to the Neighbourhood Centre Strategic Repositioning, participating in statewide Neighbourhood Centre events, courageously speaking up in media interviews and collaborating to develop and implement political

advocacy, disaster resilience strategies, community food programs and energy literacy projects.

From all of the team of NCQ, we thank you so much.

Cate Akaveka
CEO

Chris Mundy
Sector Lead - Research and Policy

Jacob Amos
Operations Lead

Natasha Odgers
Sector Lead - Disaster Resilience

Sally Foreman
Sector Project Officer

Melanie Maher
Strategic Communications Lead

Ally Kodet-Moran
Communications Officer



Cate Akaveka
CEO, Neighbourhood Centres Queensland

"A special thank you to the many Neighbourhood Centres who have welcomed me into their Centres and spent the time to share your stories. Over the coming months, I will meet as many of you as possible – to hear your stories, understand your work, and deliver on a statewide vision that everyone is a part of. I welcome all staff and board members of Neighbourhood Centres to connect with me."

Interim CEO's Report

It is my pleasure to present Neighbourhood Centres Queensland's (NCQ) 2024 Annual Report. This year has seen significant advancements, changes, challenges, and successes as we continue to strengthen our sector's role as vital place-based community-led infrastructure across the state.

Implementing the New Guidelines

The past year has been one of substantial transition as we introduced the new Neighbourhood Centre guidelines and reporting framework in October 2023, followed by *Neighbourhood Centres: Our Shared Vision* in December 2023. These groundbreaking initiatives have positioned Neighbourhood Centres at the heart of Queensland's social policy, building on the funding increase in 2022 and establishing a clear, forward-looking vision for our sector.

The implementation of these guidelines has brought valuable learning opportunities, prompting Centres to adapt their data collection, activities, and even staffing to align with our new three core activity dimensions. While some Centres have embraced these changes as a return to the sector's core values, others have faced notable adjustments to their operating practices. Amid these reforms, Centres have also managed increased community demands stemming from cost-of-living pressures and the housing crisis. Fortunately, our strong regional networks continue to provide vital support, enabling Centres to collaborate and learn from one another as we navigate these changes together.

NCQ Changes and Leadership Transition

Sector-wide transitions have also been reflected within NCQ. After four transformative years with our organisation, Em James stepped down as CEO in April 2024. Em's leadership was instrumental in guiding us through key milestones such as the Parliamentary Inquiry into Loneliness and Social Isolation, the Funding Uplift, and Sector Reforms. Em's friendly, compassionate approach and visionary focus helped strengthen our relationship with the Department of Communities, significantly enhancing collaboration between the sector and the government. Em also steered NCQ

through a period of substantial growth, including a rebranding and a new name as we expanded our role as a peak body. We are deeply grateful for Em's contributions and lasting impact on NCQ.

We also extend our thanks to Vi Van Le, our Finance Officer, and Sian Finn, our Sector Lead in Learning and Development, for their valued contributions during their time with us.

As Interim CEO over the past seven months, I am grateful to the NCQ board for entrusting me with this role. During this period, we consolidated our work and initiated several exciting projects, including the *ChargeUp!* Energy Literacy project, Community Development Microcredentials, and the Community Food project.

Disaster-Impacted Centres

This year, several Neighbourhood Centres were affected by severe natural disasters. Cyclone Jasper led to widespread flooding across Far North Queensland, impacting local communities and the Centres that support them. My visits to these Centres early in the year underscored their resilience, as they shared the challenges they faced balancing community needs with their own flood recovery efforts. Feedback from these experiences has informed NCQ's ongoing disaster resilience initiatives.

Additionally, Cyclone Kirrily impacted Centres in North Queensland, and severe storms struck South-East Queensland. Many Centres also continue to support recovery efforts from earlier events, adding layers of complexity to an already demanding year.

State Election Policy Platform

The state election this year marked another pivotal moment, as NCQ launched a policy platform developed

in consultation with Neighbourhood Centres in regional networks, our board, political advisors, and key stakeholders. Much like our previous advocacy efforts – such as the Parliamentary Inquiry into Loneliness and Social Isolation and Budget bid – this platform empowered local Centres to engage with candidates and MPs at the community level.

As we look ahead to potential changes in government, we recognise and are profoundly grateful for Minister Leeanne Enoch's remarkable work since taking over the Department of Communities portfolio in 2020. Her efforts have resulted in unprecedented advancements for Neighbourhood Centres, and her legacy will have a lasting impact on our sector.

The NCQ Team

In closing, I extend my deepest thanks to the NCQ staff team and board. Our small but mighty team continually goes above and beyond, and I am incredibly proud of Mel, Jacob, Sally, Ally, and Tash for their commitment and dedication throughout this transition. I also wish to thank our board members – Caroline, Louise, Alana, Sandra, Sharon, and Tracey – for their guidance and support during this time of change.

I am delighted to welcome our new CEO, Cate Akaveka, whose passion and extensive experience supporting Neighbourhood Centres will be invaluable as we move forward.

Finally, my heartfelt thanks go to the Neighbourhood Centres across Queensland. Your work inspires and enriches our communities. It is an honour to collaborate with you and to champion the issues that matter most to you.

Warm Regards,



Chris Mundy

Interim CEO (April to October 2024)

Sector Lead – Policy and Research (Present)

Neighbourhood Centres Queensland



Treasurer's Report

FY 2023-2024

Neighbourhood Centres Queensland is grateful for the support and funding received in 2023-2024.

Income

Income for Neighbourhood Centres Queensland for the financial year 2023-2024 was \$825,940 representing consistent revenue, thanks to the increased project-based funding received from the State Government. This was the third year NCQ received funding as the peak body. Project funding grew to 25% of total revenue for FY2024, illustrating the increase in place-based projects being delivered with the sector.

Expenditure

Total expenditure for the financial year ended June 2024 was \$870,854. Our most significant expenses related to employment costs, which increased to \$645,529, illustrating the rapid growth of NCQ, required to meet the needs of the sector as well as the strategic objectives of the organisation. Expenses grew by 17% across the whole of the organisation, illustrating both; the investment in NCQ to deliver for the sector, as well as the rising cost of doing business more broadly.

Overall Result

Overall, Neighbourhood Centres Queensland, delivered a net loss of \$44,914 for the financial year. Invested funds remain strong at \$216,093. The NCQ Board continued to drive a strategic growth focus for 2023-2024, investing in programs, personnel and

systems to better support the sector. FY2024 represented a period of strong delivery and investment in programs and initiatives for the sector, capitalising on the organisational uplift investment of the FY2022-23 Financial Year. The NCQ board accepted a small loss for the financial year as a means to maintain service delivery and impact for the sector, even as funding arrangements concluded. The hard work and continued service delivery has positioned NCQ to operate from a strong position in the next financial year.

Financial Stability

Neighbourhood Centres Queensland has ended the 2023-2024 financial year in a strong and sustainable financial position.

Audited Financial Report

The Audited Financial Report for the 2023-2024 financial year is provided [here](#).

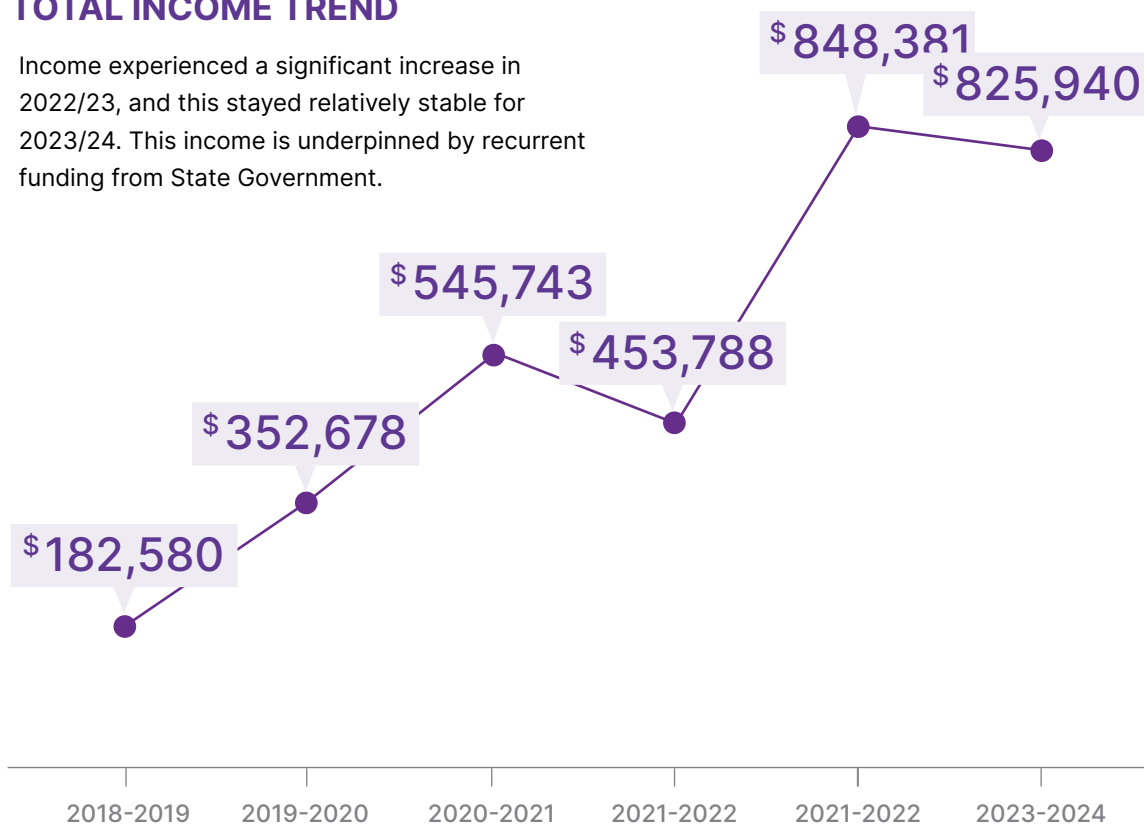
Warm Regards,



Alana Wahl
Treasurer
Neighbourhood Centres Queensland

TOTAL INCOME TREND

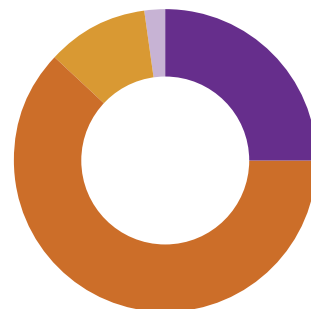
Income experienced a significant increase in 2022/23, and this stayed relatively stable for 2023/24. This income is underpinned by recurrent funding from State Government.



TOTAL UNDERLYING INCOME

\$825,940

Project funding	(\$203,428)	25%
Recurrent funding	(\$515,544)	62%
Other income	(\$93,993)	11%
Membership fees	(\$12,870)	2%



TOTAL UNDERLYING EXPENSES

\$870,854

Employment	(\$645,529)	74%
Administration	(\$74,495)	9%
Other	(\$150,830)	17%



Our Strategic Plan 2023-2025



OUR VISION

Place-based leadership for regenerative, equitable and inclusive communities



OUR PURPOSE

Neighbourhood Centres Queensland grows the collective impact of Neighbourhood Centres by increasing the recognition, resourcing and relationships of our sector at the regional, state and national level



OUR VALUES-DRIVEN APPROACH

Collaborative, courageous leadership

GOAL 1

Advance Place-Based Leadership

STRATEGIES

- Support Neighbourhood Centres to connect, guide, and inspire each other
- Evidence, develop and celebrate the place-based practice and community development expertise of our sector
- Identify Neighbourhood Centre workforce challenges, strengths and priorities to co-create a workforce strategy

GOAL 2

Maximise Place-Based Investment

STRATEGIES

- Facilitate Neighbourhood Centre input into program design and delivery
- Advocate for the role and value of Neighbourhood Centre as place-based social infrastructure
- Direct place-based funding to community-based organisations including Neighbourhood Centre

GOAL 3

Grow our robust, participatory and accountable peak body

STRATEGIES

- Foster a culture of curiosity, learning, and innovation
- Developing meaningful relationships with our members based on trust, understanding and reciprocity
- Invest in Neighbourhood Centres Queensland's capability in order to deliver on our purpose and strategy

Together, Neighbourhood Centres in Queensland supported over

2.4 Million Visitors

in one year alone.

This was achieved through:

155



Neighbourhood Centres

Of which 128 receive NC Program funding from Qld Gov, and 27 do not receive this funding

1,547



Staff Members

Working a total of 1.64million hours over the year

2,454



Volunteers each week

Working a total of 727,850 hours over the year. Worth over \$37.6m

\$258,680



Median Funding Per Centre*

Calculation based only on the *128 Centres who receive NC Program funding

805



Funding Applications

to maintain operations

1,598



Community Projects Run

Over the year, and supported 917 Community Projects run by others

Making an Impact

For every **\$1** invested by the Queensland Government, the sector produced **\$4.09** in Community Value.

Food Relief



1,285tne

Equating to \$25.8 million in Community Value

Frozen Meals



162,042

Equating to \$1.6 million in Community Value

Non-Food Emergency Relief



\$3.85m

Equating to \$3.85 million in Community Value

Programmed Activity Participants



1,193,350

Equating to \$39.6 million in Community Value

Referrals to Other Services



299,800

In one year alone

Social Enterprises



\$2.78m

Worth of income, as well as \$10.28 million income from fee-for-service activities

Reference: Mundy, C. (2023) Neighbourhood Centres Queensland 2023 Sector Impact Report. Neighbourhood Centres Queensland. To download the full report, visit ncq.org.au.

2023 Sector Impact Report

NCQ's Sector Impact Report is Queensland's most comprehensive source of information about Neighbourhood Centres. The 2023 Sector Impact Report found that Neighbourhood Centres in Queensland supported over 2.4 million visitors in the year, and Centres also delivered \$4.09 in social value for every \$1 of investment by the Queensland Government.

Each year, the Sector Impact Report captures the key data and insights from the largest Queensland-wide census of the Neighbourhood and Community Centre sector and summarises the community value and impact of Centres for the Financial Year.

The 2023 Sector Impact Report was published in 2024, and compiled data from 102 Centres who participated in the 2023 Sector Impact Census, as well as other data sources. Along with a state-wide report, each Centre that participated in the survey received their own '2023 Impact Snapshot' report about their individual Centre's impact, which Centres can use for communications to funding bodies, grant applications, annual reports, reporting, AGMs, and advocacy.

The 2023 Sector Impact Report included research into First Nations engagement through Neighbourhood Centres and additional datasets about the Neighbourhood Centre workforce.

The Sector Impact Report was released during Neighbourhood Centre Week in May 2024 and was sent to key government stakeholders and 93 members of state parliament.



NCQ State Election Policy Platform

NCQ's political advocacy work starts and ends with the voice and participation of Neighbourhood Centres. The 2024 Election Policy Platform included the sector in its development and delivery as Queenslanders prepared to vote for their local candidates.

The work on election priorities began with NCQ visiting regional networks and engaging directly with Centres across the state. This resulted in a variety of suggestions, including the need for more workers to distribute emergency relief, to advance organisational development, implementation of new guidelines, enhancements to physical infrastructure, and concerns regarding potential changes in government and the funding uplift.

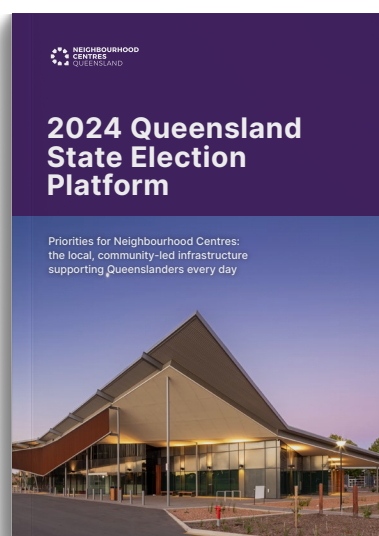
Further conversations with Centres helped to consolidate suggestions into state-level themes aligned with current social policy on Neighbourhood Centres, after which priorities were presented back to the sector for additional feedback.

NCQ consulted with political experts in order to ensure a non-partisan approach and the election priorities were reviewed throughout the process by the NCQ board, ensuring alignment with the sector's goals. Additionally, NCQ met with the Queensland Community Alliance to compare policy priorities.

The final Election Policy Platform was shared with 93 MPs and opposing candidates in marginal seats, as well as with the Department of Premier and Cabinet and DTATSIPCA to inform future internal budget submissions.

NCQ spoke with various candidates, both in person and by phone as well as promoted the policy platform on social media along with key messaging. Neighbourhood Centres were encouraged to share the platform and engage with their local MPs and candidates.

Under the new government, NCQ will continue to advocate for the policy platform to advance the Neighbourhood Centre movement across the state. However, it is the local relationships between Centres and MPs that have the greatest impact. The Election Policy Platform will remain a valuable tool for the sector to frame discussions about Neighbourhood Centres at both local and state levels.



Neighbourhood Centre Regional Networks

NCQ has remained highly involved in 10 regional Neighbourhood Centre networks around the state, and continues to support unfunded Centres, creating a community among those dedicated to building community.

NCQ has continued to play an active role in supporting regional networks across Queensland – some of which have been operational since the 1980s. These networks offer connection, peer support, information sharing, continued learning, opportunities to work together on complex challenges and a sense of community for those involved.

During 2024, NCQ attended meetings held for each of the 10 Neighbourhood Centre Regional Networks:

- Far North Queensland
- Far West/Remote
- Ipswich and West Moreton
- Logan
- North Brisbane
- North Queensland
- South Brisbane
- Sunshine Coast
- Southwest Area (SWAN)
- Wide Bay Burnett.

Attendance at these meetings allows NCQ to keep up to-date on challenges and opportunities

facing Centres and their communities across Queensland, provide support when requested and share state-wide updates relevant to the sector.

The information gathered from these meetings informs how NCQ negotiates outcomes with government and other stakeholders, identifies opportunities for development and raises awareness of the sector's value.

In 2024, NCQ conducted a survey to better understand the Networks, identify areas of opportunity and whether further support from NCQ is needed, including identifying the needs of those Centres not aligned with a network.

A report capturing survey feedback will be made available to members to inform and guide the development of each network in 2025.

Further networks to support specific Neighbourhood Centre activities were also formed by NCQ or the sector, as needed. These included groups for Community Connect Workers, Service Navigators and Community Development peer support.

Disaster Resilience

The implementation of the Queensland Neighbourhood Centres Strategy for Disaster Resilience 2023 – 2026 has become increasingly important as more disasters affect regions across the state. When Queensland faced a cluster of disasters between October 2023 and April 2024, the impact on communities was greater than the 2022 floods.

The essential role of Neighbourhood Centres in disaster-affected communities is gaining increased recognition by all levels of government. Following the disaster cluster earlier this year, 28 Neighbourhood Centres were formally activated with Community Recovery (Queensland Government) as either Recovery Hubs or support service providers.

This mass engagement of Neighbourhood Centres was the highest level of formal recovery activation ever seen in the sector, with many additional Centres providing essential recovery support in other ways.

NCQ has worked with Centres that played formal recovery roles in response to 2023/24 events to debrief and share recommendations with the state government. This led to NCQ and Community Recovery staff co-hosting workshops with 74 Neighbourhood Centre managers in five regions, plus an online session for Centres statewide, with a total of 124 attendees.

The workshops were based on information and recommendations gathered in the debrief process.

Workshop outcomes included:

- (a) direct communication, clearer understanding of expectations and processes to inform decision-making for Centre managers
- (b) adoption of the Neighbourhood Centres disasters roles template to inform disaster planning and local capacity for recovery; and
- (c) a commitment for Principal Community Recovery Officers (PCRO) for each region to offer to meet with Centres to discuss recovery capacity for future disasters.

NCQ also ensured Neighbourhood Centres are formally considered in regional and state-level submissions to the 'Review into the 2023-24 Severe Weather Season' through the Office of the Inspector General for Emergency Management (IGEM).



Elli Gardner

CEO, Varsity Lakes Community Resource Centre

"The workshop empowered VLCRC, strengthening disaster response coordination, clarifying roles, and increasing government support. This collaboration is vital in ensuring our community is prepared and resilient in future crises."

Community-led Practice Flood Recovery Project

The Community-led Practice Flood Recovery Project saw NCQ and Neighbourhood Centres come together to develop a shared understanding of community-led practice to support communities impacted by disasters.

The project aimed to strengthen the Neighbourhood Centre sector, local communities and the broader disaster management sector in flood recovery and resilience through enhanced community-led practices.

Over the duration of just five months (April – August), this peer-led initiative achieved significant outcomes, driven by the experience and knowledge of Neighbourhood Centres involved.

This project has led to an improved understanding of best practice in supporting disaster impacted communities. Key outcomes included:

- Peer-learning opportunities, including presentations on current Neighbourhood Centre projects, leading to in-depth discussions on community-led practices in disaster settings.
- Online sessions with leading disaster recovery specialists.

- A mental health and wellbeing session for Centre workers with Dr Rob Gordon, clinical psychologist and disaster recovery pioneer.
- Development of a resource collection showcasing disaster recovery and resilience initiatives by Neighbourhood Centres, designed to inspire and connect others in disaster-related work.
- Presentations on Neighbourhood Centres' community-led approaches by NCQ, Community Plus and Benarrawa Community Development Association at the 2024 Australia and New Zealand Disaster and Emergency Management Conference.

All resources have been made available to Neighbourhood Centres across Queensland.



Tomoe Shimoyukawa

Community Action for Multicultural Society Project Worker

"This amazing project has deepened my knowledge, sparked inspiration, and empowered me to apply disaster resilience practices for multicultural communities. I'm truly grateful for Tash, Sally, and the peers involved."



Charge Up! Energy Literacy Project

NCQ has partnered with QCOS and Energetic Communities Association to deliver the *Charge Up!* Project, an energy literacy initiative delivered by 20 Neighbourhood Centres across Queensland.

With many households, especially low income and vulnerable families, facing challenges in affording the cost of energy, understanding energy usage and navigating energy matters, *Charge Up!* focuses on making essential information accessible and empowering communities with practical energy solutions.

By equipping Neighbourhood Centres with the resources to support their communities, the project seeks to bridge gaps in knowledge and ensure that essential energy information reaches Queensland's most vulnerable households.

Understanding the importance for place-based approaches, the program was designed to empower Neighbourhood Centres to design their localised engagement strategies and adapt the delivery of the project to meet their context and the unique needs of the community they support.

As part of the project throughout 2024, NCQ:

- Provided strategic insights to inform the design of the project delivery, resources and training.
- Consulted with Neighbourhood Centres to influence the project design and delivery and gauge current levels of energy knowledge and community demand for energy literacy.
- Developed and delivered a series of workshops for Neighbourhood Centres to build capacity in the areas of community engagement, communications and social media.
- Supported Neighbourhood Centres to create their own localised community engagement plans.
- Participated in two days of intensive train-the-trainer workshop in Brisbane, equipping twenty Centres with tools to enhance energy literacy.

This project will be delivered throughout 2025.



Natalie Saroglia

Coordinator, The Burderkin Neighbourhood Centre

"Being a part of this project is energising, engaging and inspiring, to be honest. The training is empowering us with knowledge that we will take back to our community and apply help make people's lives better."

Community Food Initiative

In 2024 & 2025, Neighbourhood Centres Queensland (NCQ) is excited to roll out the Community Food Initiative, a place-based project designed to address the rising cost of living and improve health outcomes across Queensland communities.

Thanks to a funding partnership with the Department of Communities, this initiative represents the growing trust and collaboration between the department and NCQ as a peak body, allowing the organisation to direct funding to Neighbourhood Centres.

Utilising existing relationships and the organisation's strong connection to the sector, NCQ will take part in the codesign of the program to distribute funds based on local need. This arrangement highlights the organisation's potential to help shape and deliver impactful, community-driven programs. The Department's confidence in this approach emphasises the strength of, and need for, local knowledge and tailored solutions for diverse communities.

A key element of this project is the direct Neighbourhood Centre input into program

design and delivery. Before any decisions are made on how funding will be distributed, NCQ is hosting codesign workshops that give the sector direct input into the project's design. This ensures that the Centres themselves guide the design and rollout of the initiative. Involving Neighbourhood Centres early in the process ensures that funding is allocated effectively and in line with community needs, creating a program built by the sector, for the sector

NCQ will monitor the program's progress, with an eye toward replicating this funding model in applicable future projects. This initiative represents a powerful opportunity for increased sector autonomy and place-based investment in Queensland's Neighbourhood Centres.



NCQ's ISO 9001 Certification

In 2024, NCQ achieved ISO 9001 certification, a significant milestone in the organisation's commitment to quality and excellence. This achievement reflects NCQ's dedication to improving internal capabilities and better supporting the needs of Neighbourhood Centres across Queensland.

Aligned with the strategic focus to invest in NCQ's capability, the journey toward ISO 9001 involved a comprehensive overhaul of policies, procedures, and tools. By developing a Quality Management System (QMS) that meets international standards, NCQ has ensured more consistent service delivery, enhanced credibility, and increased funding opportunities. These improvements not only strengthen NCQ's position as a peak body but also directly benefit members, empowering them to continue delivering high quality services for their communities.

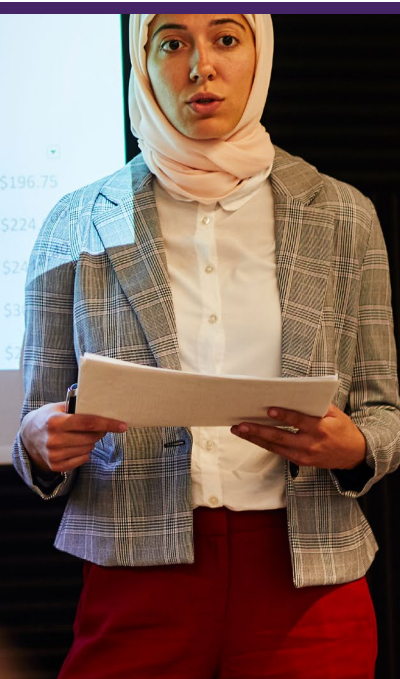
The certification process was guided by a "Keep It Simple" change methodology; incorporating design and discussions into existing forums to reduce the burden on staff and using existing tools and processes as the basis for new procedures. This approach allowed the organisation to overcome

resource constraints and time limitations, ensuring that the project achieved its objectives without directing resources away from core work.

With ISO 9001 now embedded in governance and operations, NCQ is operating at a higher standard, enabling evidence-based decision-making and ensuring compliance with regulatory requirements. The Board is well-equipped to govern effectively, with a strong culture of continuous improvement embedded across all levels of the organisation.

Looking forward, NCQ remains committed to maintaining these high standards, ensuring continued growth and innovation in line with the organisation's strategic objectives. This achievement sets the stage for even greater impact within the community sector.

Accessories			Other			Online		
Percent Markup	Total Sold	Total Revenue	Shipping Charge/Item	Shipping Cost/Item	Profit per Item (incl. shipping)	Returns	Total Income	
100.00%	15	\$300.00	\$15.00	\$15.00	\$14.25	2	\$196.75	
75.00%	18	\$362.25	\$15.00	\$15.00	\$12.88	1	\$224.25	
65.00%	20	\$429.00	\$15.00	\$15.00	\$12.20	0	\$249.00	
90.00%	50	\$475.00	\$15.00	\$15.00	\$10.00	0	\$395.00	
90.00%	42	\$319.20	\$15.00	\$15.00		3	\$274.20	



Branding the National Peak Body and Sector

There are over 1000 Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres across Australia. In 2024, NCQ worked with the national peak body and state peak bodies to design and deliver a new landmark and visual identity to increase visibility, recognition and connection of the sector nationwide.

With each of the 1000+ Neighbourhood Houses and Centres having their own name and brand, the connection and strength of the sector is not always obvious or visible.

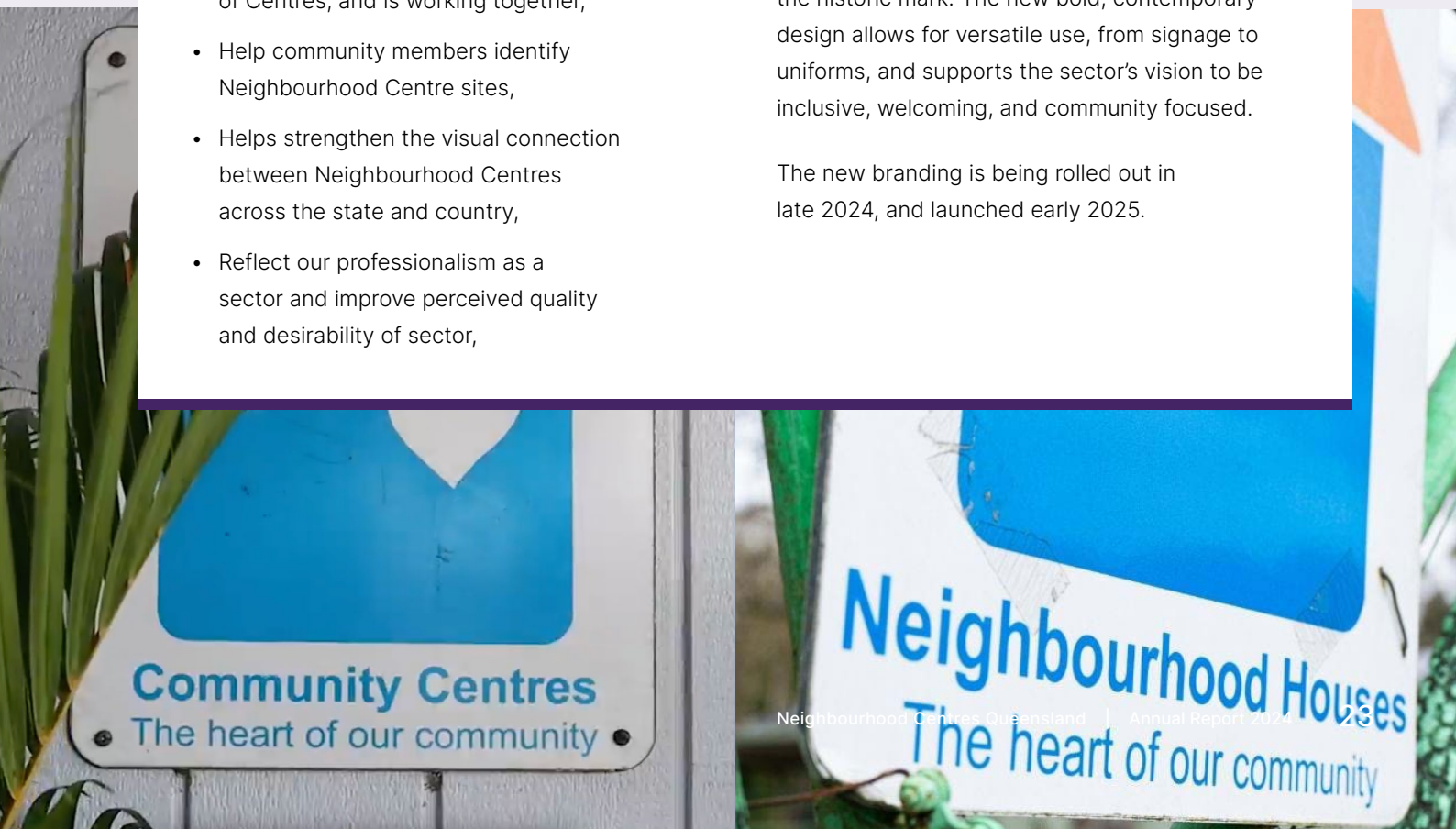
In 1996 a heart and house logomark to identify Centres and the national peak body ANHCA was developed, and is recognisable, however it is perceived as outdated and few Centres display the signage. In 2024, NCQ worked with the national and state peak bodies as well as the sector to develop a landmark and visual identity to:

- Help communicate the Neighbourhood Centre sector is strong, made up of hundreds of Centres, and is working together,
- Help community members identify Neighbourhood Centre sites,
- Helps strengthen the visual connection between Neighbourhood Centres across the state and country,
- Reflect our professionalism as a sector and improve perceived quality and desirability of sector,

- Grow Neighbourhood Centre sector brand loyalty (including loyalty of volunteers, staff, funders, community), and
- Allow NCQ to provide Centres with contemporary and relevant communication materials they can use to promote the sector.

This rebrand process involved national consultation, with the NCQ communications team designing three concepts that each ensured the updated landmark would reflect the evolution of the sector whilst providing a visual connection to the recognisable features of the historic mark. The new bold, contemporary design allows for versatile use, from signage to uniforms, and supports the sector's vision to be inclusive, welcoming, and community focused.

The new branding is being rolled out in late 2024, and launched early 2025.

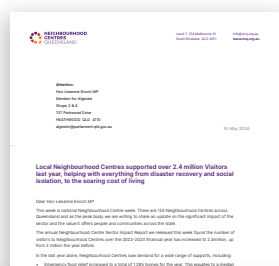
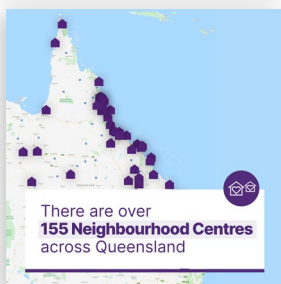


Neighbourhood Centre Week 2024

Neighbourhood Centre Week (13-19 May 2024) is an annual celebration that provides an opportunity to promote and recognise the role and value of Neighbourhood Centres.

The 2024 theme, 'Stronger Together' inspired Centres across Queensland to host a variety of different events and activities from open days, to cooking demonstrations, art activities and morning teas.

This year, to promote and support the work of Neighbourhood Centres as part of the campaign, NCQ launched the Sector Impact Report, wrote to all 93 state MPs about the role of Neighbourhood Centres, activated a social media campaign with partner organisations and engaged news media.

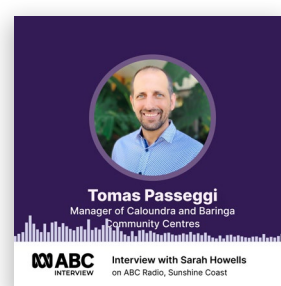


Communications & Media

In 2024, NCQ focused on implementing impactful communications initiatives that celebrated the achievements and impact of Neighbourhood Centres, facilitated access to valuable resources, and strengthened visibility of the sector's important work.

In 2024, communications projects included:

- **Media engagement:** NCQ engaged the media through press releases and radio interviews, showcasing the essential role Neighbourhood Centres play in their communities including in disaster recovery, reducing social isolation, and addressing challenges like the rising cost of living. Thank you to Chris Mundy, Melinda McInturff, Tomas Passeggi, Sandra Elton and LeeAnne Harris who spoke up for the sector, reaching thousands of listeners and readers.
- **NCQ Sector News:** A monthly e-newsletter distributed to partner organisations, government departments, and sector stakeholders. The newsletters feature statewide sector news, updates on NCQ's work, resources, case studies, highlights of relevant campaigns including how Centres engaged with them, feature stories on innovative Centre projects, the latest relevant research and career opportunities from the sector.
- **NCQ Members News:** A monthly e-newsletter tailored for NCQ members, including Neighbourhood Centre staff and board members. It provides regional network meeting details, important sector updates, opportunities for feedback, relevant resources and materials, details of upcoming campaigns including how to get involved, training and workshop announcements, grant opportunities, and more.
- **Social media:** NCQ utilised social media platforms to highlight Neighbourhood Centres and their diverse activities and projects, showcase NCQ visits to Centres, celebrate how Centres marked significant campaigns and awareness weeks, promote election priorities, and share valuable resources and case studies.
- **NCQ Members Facebook group:** A dedicated private group for NCQ members to seek advice, share experiences, connect with peers, celebrate successes, and collaborate on solutions to shared challenges.



Members' Resources, Learning & Development

In 2024, NCQ worked to understand members' priority development needs and strengths, and focused on the co-design and development of a bank of resources tailored to the Queensland Neighbourhood Centre context. These resources have been made available for access and use by members from anywhere at any time, at no cost.

Whilst NCQ has long curated and shared relevant existing learning and development opportunities and hosted live events, in 2024 NCQ increased the creation, co-design and development of a growing bank of tailored resources, including content on the topics of:

- Community Engagement
- Communications
- Social Media
- Policies and Procedures
- Disaster Resilience, Response and Recovery
- Housing and homelessness
- Social Enterprises
- Wellbeing
- Advocacy

NCQ Member Tanya Stevenson from Hervey Bay Neighbourhood Centre generously shared her entire comprehensive HSQF Cheat Sheet and Policies Suite, which was warmly welcomed by members. NCQ looks forward to working with more members willing to share their resources and help each other in 2025.

Learning and development opportunities were also made available through live training both face to face and online.

Members were also supported to connect, inspire and learn from each other through regular regional network meetings, peer learning circles, the Members private Facebook Group, and in person events.



Our Board in 2024

As a member-based incorporated association, NCQ is governed by an elected Board. We thank the Board for their time and commitment to the sector in 2024.

Our Board is comprised of a minimum of seven and maximum of nine committee members. This includes three ordinary members from the Metropolitan Zone and four ordinary members from the Rural/Regional Zone who are Neighbourhood Centre representatives. This geographical diversity supports NCQ to effectively represent, collaborate with and understand the unique perspectives of Centres and communities throughout Queensland.

Please note 'Metropolitan Zone' means SEQ, specifically metropolitan Brisbane, the Sunshine Coast and the Gold Coast. 'Rural/Regional Zone' means the remaining areas in Queensland that are not part of the Metropolitan Zone.



Caroline Cuckson

Chair

Metropolitan QLD
Deception Bay NC



Alana Wahl

Treasurer

Rural/Regional QLD
Laidley Community Centre



Sandra Elton

Vice Chair

Rural/Regional QLD
North Townsville Community Hub
(NOTCH)



Louise Judge

Secretary

Rural/Regional QLD
Chinchilla Community Centre



Sharon Gingell

Board Member,
Metropolitan QLD
Northside Connect



Tracey Dickinson

Board Member

Rural/Regional QLD
Better Together Community Support



Mel Hilditch

Board Member
Metropolitan QLD
Community Plus+

Board contact details:
theboard@ncq.org.au

Our Team in 2024

Our team has a deep commitment to social justice and sustainability, delivering on a diverse program of work from disaster resilience to community development.

Our team is a powerhouse of experience and expertise, and welcome collaborations for the benefit of the sector and the community.

Please note that most of our staff members work part-time, ranging from 1-4 days per week.



Cate Akaveka
CEO (October 2024 – present)
cateakaveka@ncq.org.au



Jacob Amos
Operations Lead
jacobamos@ncq.org.au



Chris Mundy
Interim CEO (March - Oct 2024),
Sector Lead - Research and Policy
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Sally Foreman
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Melanie Maher
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Natasha Odgers
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Ally Kodet-Moran
Communications Officer
allykodetmoran@ncq.org.au

Thank you to our Supporters

We are grateful for the supporters, collaborators and funders who have been part of our success over the past 12 months.

Australian Neighbourhood Houses
and Centres Association (ANHCA)

Community Development Queensland

Good Shepherd Australia

Queensland Council of Social Service (QCOSS)

Queensland Government Department of Treaty,
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships,
Communities and the Arts (DTATSIPCA)

Queensland Government Department of
Employment, Small Business and Training

Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements
(DRFA) Category C

Queensland Reconstruction Authority

SAS Group

Jackson Pearse Policy and Communications





