Strategic Plan 2026–31

Neighbourhood Centres Queensland

NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES QUEENSLAND

www.ncq.org.au

Strategic Plan 2026-2031

ABOUT US

Neighbourhood Centres Queensland is the peak body for Neighbourhood Centres across Queensland. We represent and support over 150 Centres in urban, regional & remote communities.

Neighbourhood Centres are places of belonging. They sit at the intersection of community development, social connection, early intervention, and grassroots advocacy. They are often the first point of call for people who do not know where else to turn.

NCQ's role is to make it possible for Centres to do this work well: by amplifying their collective voice, securing recognition and resourcing at the policy level, and building the conditions in which Queensland's Neighbourhood Centres can thrive.

OUR VISION

Neighbourhood Centres at the heart of strong, connected and flourishing communities across Queensland.

OUR PURPOSE

NCQ strengthens Neighbourhood Centres to support their communities, by building capability, fostering connection, and amplifying the collective voice of the sector.

OUR VALUES

Leadership, Participation, Cultural Connection, Integrity, and Courage.



PRIORITY ONE

Strong Voices.

Advocacy, evidence, recognition & policy influence

We advocate with credibility, build the evidence base, and ensure Neighbourhood Centres are recognised as essential community infrastructure.

PRIORITY TWO

Strong Centres.

Capability, practice & support for every Centre

We build capability, support sustainable, well-led centres and strengthen disaster preparedness, response and recovery.

PRIORITY THREE

Strong Connections.

Relationships, partnerships & cultural leadership

We build strong relationships and partnerships, and champion cultural leadership and inclusive, place-based community development.

OUR APPROACH

Participatory development is our shared practice foundation, and everything we do to strengthen Centres flows from it. A shared language and practical tools, co-designed with the sector, to support every Centre to embed community development as their way of working. Accountability will be demonstrated through our annual operational plans, reporting processes, ongoing review, and continuous improvement practices.



Strategic Priorities

NCQ has three strategic priorities for 2026–2031. These represent our external commitments to the sector.

Our focus is grounded in building on the strong foundations achieved to date, while ensuring the long-term sustainability, visibility, future resilience, and sustainable resourcing of the sector and our peak body in the next phase.
These priorities will be delivered through a participatory community development approach, working with not for our members.



PRIORITY ONE

Strong Voices.

Advocacy, evidence, recognition & policy influence

Queensland's Neighbourhood Centres have a story to tell and NCQ's job is to make that story heard and reflected in policy decisions. This means credible, consistent advocacy backed by evidence, a sector narrative that governments cannot ignore, and positioning Neighbourhood Centres as essential community infrastructure, not discretionary spending.

NCQ is committed to equitable participation, regional and rural inclusion, culturally safe engagement, and the amplification of underrepresented voices.

NCQ's authority as a peak body depends on the quality of what we know and our ability to translate it into action. The Sector Impact Census, research partnerships and published resources give Centres the tools to make their case locally, and give NCQ the credibility to make it at the policy level. Strong evidence is what turns advocacy into outcomes.

PRIORITY TWO

Strong Centres.

Capability, practice & support for every Centre

Neighbourhood Centres are strongest when they have the skills, tools, frameworks and connections to do their work with confidence. NCQ's role is to build that capability across the whole sector through learning and development opportunities specifically tailored for Neighbourhood Centre staff and volunteers.

NCQ supports sector sustainability, workforce wellbeing and workforce retention by strengthening governance, leadership and organisational capability.

NCQ supports Neighbourhood Centres in building community resilience and in the critical role they play in local disaster preparedness, response and recovery.

PRIORITY THREE

Strong Connections.

Relationships, partnerships & cultural leadership

Strong relationships are central to NCQ's influence and effectiveness - with members, with government, with communities, and with other stakeholders who share our commitment to place-based community development. Strong connections are not background work. They are how NCQ extends its reach, earns its authority and stays grounded in the communities the sector serves.

Our Values

These are not aspirational statements. They describe how we work at our best, and what we hold ourselves to when it is difficult. Each value is expressed in practice.

Leadership

We lead with purpose to strengthen the sector and influence positive change.

In practice, this means we:

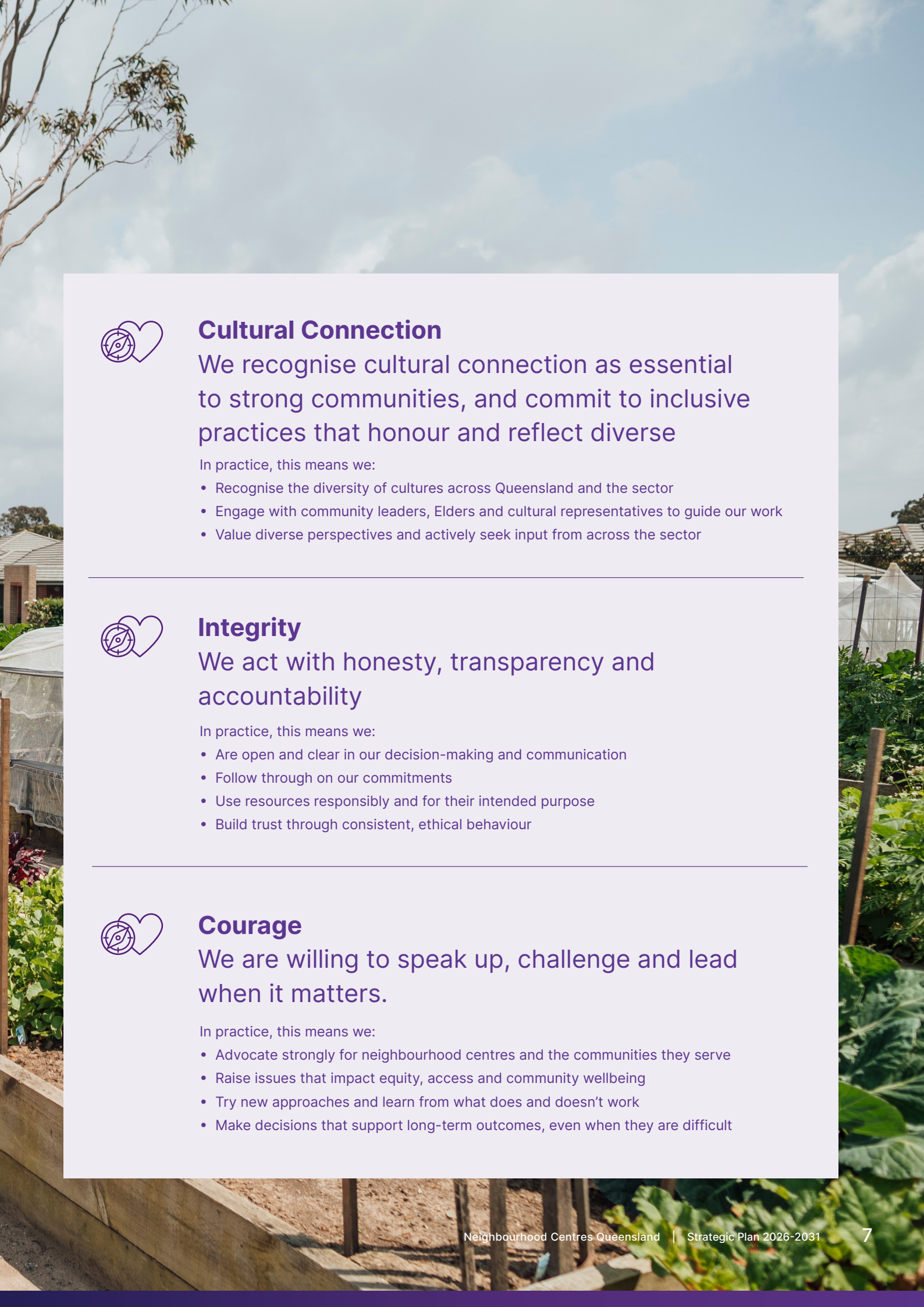
- Provide clear direction and support to neighbourhood centres
- Build the capability and confidence of the sector
- Use evidence and insight to inform our work and influence policy
- Represent the sector with credibility and professionalism
- Work in partnership with government and other organisations to strengthen outcomes for communities

Participation

We work most effectively when we work alongside Neighbourhood Centres to achieve goals and outcomes

In practice, this means we:

- Place the voices and experiences of Neighbourhood Centres & their communities at the heart of our work
- Create genuine opportunities for input, not just consultation
- Design our services and advocacy with members, not for them



Cultural Connection

We recognise cultural connection as essential to strong communities, and commit to inclusive practices that honour and reflect diverse

In practice, this means we:

- Recognise the diversity of cultures across Queensland and the sector
- Engage with community leaders, Elders and cultural representatives to guide our work
- Value diverse perspectives and actively seek input from across the sector

Integrity

We act with honesty, transparency and accountability

In practice, this means we:

- Are open and clear in our decision-making and communication
- Follow through on our commitments
- Use resources responsibly and for their intended purpose
- Build trust through consistent, ethical behaviour

Courage

We are willing to speak up, challenge and lead when it matters.

In practice, this means we:

- Advocate strongly for neighbourhood centres and the communities they serve
- Raise issues that impact equity, access and community wellbeing
- Try new approaches and learn from what does and doesn't work
- Make decisions that support long-term outcomes, even when they are difficult



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.

Acknowledgements
This Strategic Plan was developed with the participation of the NCQ Board and staff at the Strategic Planning Workshop on 24 February 2026, facilitated by Rachel Willis of The Planning and Practice Hub.

It draws on: the 2025 Sector Feedback Survey; the 2025 Sector Impact Census and Report; the PESTLE and SWOT analysis developed with Board and staff; the 50-Year Visioning exercise at the 2025 Queensland Community Development Conference; Centre Voice consultation; and the strategic planning workshop materials produced for the February 2026 workshop.

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