Neighbour News

Summer Edition

Nov 2026
Issue 133

Many hands build our community

In this edition, we want to recognise and celebrate the external providers that work with our team to deliver exceptional kindness and care to our clients.

By leveraging their expertise and experience, we are able to deliver client centred, evolving and innovative programs.

Neighbour Aid's Annual Report for 2025/2026 has just been released. On page 17 of the Annual Report, there is a list of our Service Providers and Partners who share our values and together we deliver a range of programs that allow our clients to remain independent, healthy and socially connected.

The team has spotlighted some of these providers in this edition. What is evident in these articles, is the time, energy and focus by our team to identify and develop strong working relationships with trusted service providers.

Additionally, their knowledge of the range of government services available for our clients and their carers is impressive.

So, do not hesitate to read on and find out more about what and how to access these support programs.

A huge thank you to all our amazing service providers and partners.

Wishing all our community a wonderful Christmas and may 2027 bring much peace and kindness.

Stella Angelo, Editor (volunteer)



Inside:

1. Welcome
2. Organisational News
6. Client Services
8. Gardening & Nature
10. Help at Home
11. Alive & Strong, Trolley Talk
12. Stand Tall, DanceMoves
13. Client Corner—Quiz
14. Client Highlights
15. Strong Together and Our Programs
16. 5 Senses Garden Workshops
18. Volunteer News
20. Living Well with Dementia Workshops
22. Photo Gallery
24. Community Christmas Party
25. Outings Highlights
26. Dec, Jan and Feb Calendars

Inner West Neighbour Aid

Organisational News

Annual General Meeting

An Annual General Meeting (AGM) is a yearly meeting where members come together to hear about the organisation's activities, achievements and financial performance over the past year. As an incorporated association, Neighbour Aid holds an AGM to ensure transparency and accountability, share important updates and give members the opportunity to ask questions and contribute to the organisation's future direction. "Members" are considered people who have paid their $25 membership fees for the financial year. All clients are invited to become paying members so they can participate fully at our AGM.

Our 2026 AGM was held on 21 October 2026 at the Croydon Park Club, attended by around 40 people. We congratulate our office bearers on their appointments - Alison Muir as Chairperson, Jeanette Gilbert as Treasurer and Tara Sarathy as Secretary. We thank and acknowledge returning Board Directors Simon Leong, Margaret Lergessner, Benjamin Lever, Peter Malhotra, Suzanna Pawley and Steven Takacs-Gal.

Thank you to our team who made the day run smoothly due to their kindness, professionalism and attention to detail. The Annual Report is available on our website www.iwna.com.au

The AGM was followed by an Aged Care Information session delivered by Paul Sadler from Paul Sadler Consultancy. Some people felt they had the opportunity to ask questions and some found the information helpful and a launching pad to furthering their own research. We also know it was difficult to digest all of the detail and we will try to provide some follow up information sessions on a smaller scale, potentially at the program level in 2027.

It was a wonderful meeting, the best meeting I have ever been to. The food was magnificent, everything was very good. The information session was interesting, my question was answered and I also got up to speed on aged care funding information. ~Valerie, client



I heard many voices praising Inner West Neighbour Aid! Everything went well, finished on time, people happy, new friendships formed, older friendships renewed, Paul's Presentation enlightening. Thank you for your organizing this event and all your Staff Members. They are a credit to the Organisation! ~ Margaret Lergessner, Board Director

It was such an enjoyable AGM and so well run. Hearing the client stories and seeing firsthand the wonderful job the team does always reignites why we do what we do. It was a lovely reminder of the difference Neighbour Aid makes and the strong sense of community behind it. Well done to everyone involved — a terrific day. ~ Alison Muir, Board Chair

Organisational News

I'm always impressed with the quality of your AGM. It's also a lovely opportunity to get together with volunteers, clients and staff and celebrate the achievements of Inner West Neighbour Aid, in particular bringing community members together. Everybody spoke from the heart during their presentations, it was a perfect antidote to a lot of other events happening across the country at the moment. I'm really proud to be part of Neighbour Aid. ~ Suzanna Pawley, Board Director



It was a great AGM that captured the spirit of the Inner West Neighbour Aid community. It was wonderful to see all the interactions and connections in the room and to hear so many heartfelt contributions. Well done to the whole team and all the speakers. ~ Tara Sarathy, Board Director



It was a fantastic get together with the Neighbour Aid community. ~ Simon Leong, Board Director

Office Closure

Our office will close on the afternoon of Thursday 18 December 2026 and re-open on Monday 4 January 2027.

Newsletter Support

A big thank you to volunteers Maxine and Jane for helping the team fold and pack envelopes for our Spring Newsletter.

We are trialling a more environmentally friendly, non-plastic coated printing paper for our newsletter. We hope you are happy with the quality of the new-look newsletter and look forward to your feedback.

Program Fee Changes from 1 January 2027

Inner West Neighbour Aid regularly reviews its fees to help cover rising operating costs, including office rent, Award wage increases and superannuation, fuel, insurance and program supplies. We have delayed fee increases in recognition of cost of living pressures. The Garden Aid fee was last increased in July 2023 and the Social Support program fee in July 2024. Our updated fees have also been compared to other organisations and are intended to ensure our fees remain reasonable, competitive and are also equitable across our own programs.

There has been no change to the transport fee and we continue to waive cancellation fees for our government funded programs. However, repeated cancellations without a legitimate reason may be reviewed if they adversely affect another client's ability to participate in a service. Our private Help at Home program attracts a cancellation fee.

Please contact us on 9799 5099 if you have any questions about how these changes may affect you.

Organisational News

Program Fee Changes from 1 January 2027

From 1 January 2027, some program fees will increase, as outlined below. New fees have been highlighted in yellow.

Program	CHSP Clients	Public Participants	Support at Home funded clients
ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP	$25	$25	$25
HELP AROUND THE HOME			
Help at Home	$120 per hour	$120 per hour	$120 per hour
Garden Aid – full pension	$80 per service		
Garden Aid – part pension	$95 per service		
Green Waste per bag	$25 per bag		
HEALTH AND WELLBEING			
Alive and Strong	$10 per session	$30 per session	$140 per session
DanceMoves	$10 per session	$25 per session	$45 per session
Stand Tall	$20 per session	$30 per session	$45 per session
OUT AND ABOUT			
Outings	Nil	$15 per outing	$168 per outing
Strong Together – Centre based	$10 per session	$30 per session	$140 per session
Strong Together – Outing	Nil	$15 per outing	$168 per outing
WORKSHOPS			
5 Senses Garden Workshop	$10 per workshop	$30 per workshop	$168 per workshop
5 Senses Garden Workshop – Outing	Nil	$15 per outing	$168 per workshop
Living Well with Dementia Workshop	$22 per workshop	$22 per workshop	$22 per workshop
Living Well with Dementia Workshop - Outing	$15 per outing	$15 per outing	$15 per outing
SHOPPING			
Trolley Talk	Nil	N/A	$45 per session
Assisted Online Shopping	$20 per order	N/A	$45 per order

Organisational News

Farewell to 2026

As the end of 2026 draws near, I want to thank everyone who makes Inner West Neighbour Aid such a special community – our valued clients, generous Board and volunteers, our incredible partners and providers and dedicated team. The years do seem to go faster and faster. Throughout 2026, we have continued to connect, share stories and experiences, laugh, reflect, build friendships and support one another in ways both big and small.



It is the warmth, compassion and sense of belonging within our community that make what we do so meaningful. May the year ahead bring happiness, good health and opportunities to keep learning, smiling and making connections. Wishing everyone a wonderful start to 2027.

Allison Yee-Brogan, General Manager





Acknowledgement of Funding

Inner West Neighbour Aid is primarily funded by the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing. Although funding has been provided by the Australian Government, the material contained herein does not necessarily represent the views or policies of the Australian Government

Client Services

Staff News



Introducing our new Social Support Coordinator - Emma Torres. Emma has been working at Neighbour Aid for the past 10 years and initially started as a Social Support Worker in 2016 before moving to the Client Services Coordinator role in 2020. We can't wait to see Emma in this role, leading the Social Support staff and volunteers. Emma brings her kindness as well as her knowledge of clients and programs to the role.

Staying Cool and Hydrated Over Summer

Sydney summers can experience high temperatures and it is predicted to be a warm summer this year. Here are some handy tips to stay cool over summer.

Don't wait until you feel thirsty

As some people age, their sense of thirst can become less noticeable. NSW Health recommends drinking water regularly throughout the day, even when you don't feel thirsty. A great way to remember to drink water is to carry a water bottle with you. You can make it more appealing by adding cucumber, mint, coconut water or a powdered electrolyte. Frozen fruit can also be a hydrating and refreshing summer snack.

Exercise and do housework early

If you enjoy walking, gardening, household chores or exercising, try to do it early in the morning, before temperatures rise.

Know your home's coolest room

Work out which room in your home stays coolest and spend more time there during hot weather. Close curtains and blinds during the day and, where possible, use air conditioning or fans. On very hot days, try to use the oven and stove less, as they can add significant heat to your home.

Have a "cool place" plan

If your home becomes too hot, identify somewhere nearby where you can cool down, such as an air-conditioned shopping centre, library, cinema or community venue.

Neighbour Aid's Extreme Weather Policies

Neighbour Aid has extreme weather (both hot and cold) procedures in place to ensure everyone stays well and safe at our programs. This mainly impacts those programs that are conducted outdoors. As we approach summer, we wish to remind you about our hot weather procedures. Extreme heat is usually considered above 33°C , however humidity and potential storms will also be taken into consideration.

5 Senses Garden

For programs located in the 5 Senses Garden, in the event of extreme weather, the program will be moved to an indoor location. If an indoor location cannot be secured at short notice, then the program will be cancelled.

Garden Aid and Help at Home

For Garden Aid and Help at Home, in the event of extreme weather, the service may be cancelled. We may also start earlier, with the client's permission, to beat the heat.

Social Support Groups and Outings

We may cancel group programs or move to a closer location for outings in the event of extreme weather. We will take into account a number of factors, eg the distance that will be travelled on the day, air conditioning at the proposed venue, proximity to a coastal breeze.

Clients and volunteers will always be contacted and kept up to date about any program cancellations.

Client Services

Staying Connected Over the Holiday Season



The holiday season can be a great time to connect with family, friends and the community, but it can also be a lonely time for some people.

One way you can stay connected, is by calling friends or family, enjoying a chat with a neighbour or joining in with a local Christmas or holiday event.

If you meet someone you enjoy chatting with at one of our programs, consider swapping phone numbers so you can stay in touch over the holiday break. If you haven't seen someone in a while and want to check in, you can call us at Neighbour Aid and with both person's consent we can facilitate the exchange of phone numbers.



A short conversation, phone call or even a text can make a world of difference. If you know someone who may be feeling isolated, reach out and let them know you're thinking of them. A little connection can go a long way in making every day, and the holiday season brighter.

Maja Sorensen, Senior Coordinator



Gardening and Nature

Mario Caruso of 'Complete House and Garden', Lawn Mowing Contractor

2026 marked the end of a remarkable chapter with the retirement of Mario Caruso, our longest-serving lawn mowing contractor.

For over two decades, Mario and his wife, Teresa, have been a vital part of our community. In October 2026, we welcomed them to our office to celebrate their incredible contribution, hear about their plans for the future and reminisce about their years of dedicated service.

For many years, the subsidised lawn mowing program was an important part of Neighbour Aid's service offerings. During this time Mario, supported by Teresa as Office Manager, made a lasting impact on our community. Through his dedication, skill and genuine care Mario earned a reputation as a trusted professional who consistently went above and beyond for his clients.

There were many times when Mario phoned the office because of concerns he had for a client's health or safety. His authentic relationship with his clients was such that if there was something amiss, he would notice and then follow up with the Garden Projects Coordinator and the client's family.

Such professional care and concern is a very special attribute and for this reason Mario will be missed by clients and staff alike.

After receiving his certificate of appreciation and gift, we asked Mario and Teresa what they plan to do with their extra time. They said they want to spend a lot more time with family, including their daughter who lives in sunny Queensland. They also want to spend more time on themselves, travelling and seeing more of Australia.

When asked if he would do any work or odd jobs for his long standing clients, he shared that there are a few long-term clients he will still look after. Although as Teresa said in Mario's official resignation message, "it's time for him to finally hang up his boots".

Thank you, good luck and all the best for the future Mario and Teresa.

Stuart Blundell, Garden Projects Coordinator





Gardening and Nature

Seasonal Gardening Tips

Watering the Garden

With Sydney predicted to have a hot and dry summer this year, here are some tips that will help your gardens survive the warmer months.

When watering, the best method is give the soil a deep soak rather than a few light sprinkles. This encourages roots to grow deeper, where the soil is cooler and retains more moisture.

Another important part of gardening in summer is choosing when to water. Choosing the right time of the day when a garden is watered can have very different effects on your garden:

- **5 am to 9 am** – Best time: The air is generally cooler, and little to no water is lost through evaporation.
- **9 am to 4 pm** – Avoid: Higher temperatures and winds are at the highest, meaning a large proportion of the water does not reach the roots of plants.
- **4 pm to 7 pm** – Acceptable: Watering in the late afternoon can be suitable, particularly for pots or plants showing signs of wilting.
- **During the night** – Avoid: Foliage can remain wet for up to 9 hours, leading to increased chances of fungal diseases.

Where possible, water close to the soil and avoid wetting the foliage. This is because in hot and humid conditions, wet foliage can increase the risk of fungal diseases such as black spot and powdery mildew.

Mulching

Mulching is an effective way to retain soil moisture, reduce evaporation and minimise the need for frequent watering. For the best results, spread a layer of mulch at least 75 mm deep. Remember to, keep the mulch away from the stems of plants and the trunks of trees to help prevent any potential root damage.

Fertilising and Spraying

Fertilising or spraying pesticides and herbicides of plants and lawns should not be done if the temperature is expected to exceed 30°C.

Applying fertilisers or sprays in high temperatures can place plants under additional stress, potentially resulting in severe leaf burn and root damage.

Water Saving Plants

Planting Australian native plants is a way to have a more water efficient garden. Many native varieties can tolerate hot, dry weather once established, while generally requiring less maintenance.

Some examples of hardy native plants include:

Callistemon varieties (bottlebrush): Range from ground covers and shrubs to small trees, with a variety of flower colours.

Grevillea varieties: Known for their vibrant flowers, can grow in relatively poor soils and tolerates dry conditions

Pigface (Carpobrotus glaucescens): A colourful, hardy ground cover well suited to rockeries and sandy soils.

Tanika (Lomandra longifolia "Tankia''): A compact, low maintenance and drought tolerant native grass.

David Wilson, Garden Aid Team Leader



Callistemon "Little John''



Grevillea "Molly"

Help at Home

Help at Home

Our Help at Home program provides valued professional gardening and lawn services.

We want to share some beautiful feedback from a Help at Home client, Helen:

I would like to share my experiences and feelings about Inner West Neighbour Aid and their Help at Home team.

I have always taken great joy in the gardens around the houses I have lived in.

I am also very lucky as I live at home with family. At my age in my mid-eighties I have found that it is OK to live at home because I have help with those jobs that are now beyond my physical capabilities. Good people come every fortnight and help me with keeping a rather large house and garden under control.

By the 2020s my garden had just got beyond me. The word 'jungle' was a good description. Of course I loved my garden even as a 'wildernesque' because I knew where the interesting plants were - but that was certainly not obvious to anyone else.

A council social care person gave me the number of the Inner West Neighbour Aid organization. What a revelation. People came out to assess financial capability and what areas of help were needed etc. - all carried out conscientiously and courteously.

The Help at Home team was decided upon to help me and out they came. Over the last few years they have conquered the 'jungle'. Now visitors can spot the little 'treasures' that I knew were hiding there (somewhere). It has always been a joy to wander round the garden. I have always loved it. Now it is glowing. If I was honest, I love it possibly even more with its gently disciplined demeanour than when I was head gardener.

What has happened is that once a fortnight a member of Help at Home team comes with tools, machines, whatever is needed and efficiently deals with whatever jobs have been negotiated. I give an outline of a problem and Joanne comes up with a solution. Possible dangers or difficulties are discussed. As I said before, the work is negotiated conscientiously and courteously. The Help at Home team are professional, expert and sooooo kind and helpful. Result, my garden is still my comfort and constant joy, AND it now looks good. Like all true gardeners, I can still make plans for improvements, additions and changes.

To my lovely Help at Home team, I am a very grateful, elderly gardener. ~ Helen

Maja Sorensen, Senior Coordinator



Alive & Strong

When: Every Tuesday from 11.15am to 1.30pm. Bring your own lunch..
Where: The Dutton Centre, Strathfield
Cost: $7 Client transport if required: $15
Please call 9799 5099 to book in.

We are Alive & Strong – moving, making friends and sharing food

The convergence of the Tuesday programs formerly known as Alive & Kicking and Strong Together has been a delightful success. The merged program is now officially called Alive & Strong, coordinated by Social Support Workers Emel Jurd and Chantel Jurcevic.

Our new home is the Dutton Centre in Strathfield. A bright and sunny open space, perfect for summer and hopefully we can head outside on days when it's not too hot. Fleur continues to facilitate movement with the addition of strength training with weights. There's always dancing included, as well as her famous ball throwing activity which almost always ends in raucous laughter.

To exemplify the conviviality of Alive & Strong I'll share an anecdote. A couple of month's back, Frances brought in an enormous harvest of beautiful parsley from her garden. The seniors were delighted and many took big bunches home, including Labiba, who promised she would make some homemade tabbouleh with the parsley and bring it in the following week. True to form, Labiba showed up the following week with an enormous tub of delicious homemade tabbouleh, more than enough to share around. We all enjoyed it with fresh lettuce leaves, as Labiba explained that this is the way it is eaten in her village in Lebanon.

This is the spirit of our lunch times at Alive & Strong, where people bring their diversity of packed lunches and spend time chatting and catching up before moving into the afternoon activity. It's extra special when there's some homemade food to share.

Chantel Jurcevic, Social Support Worker

Trolley Talk

When: 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month from 9.30am to 11.30am, during school term
Where: Ashfield Mall
Cost: Client transport $15
Please call us on 9799 5099 to book in.

A Community Partnership

We appreciate the ongoing opportunity to partner with Ashfield Boys High School. It has been inspiring to see how our clients and the students come together in ways that strengthen our community. Their time spent together fosters genuine connection, shared learning and a sense of belonging. We're excited to continue building on this meaningful collaboration as we move into the new year.

The partnership between Inner West Neighbour Aid and Ashfield Boys High School has a long tradition of bringing generations together through service and mutual support. It provides a wonderful opportunity for our students and older community members to learn from one another, share their experiences and recognise the valuable contribution each generation can make to our community. ~ Nazar Kucheruk, Head Teacher Student Leadership and Engagement at Ashfield Boys High School

Megan O'Rourke, Social Support Worker





Stand Tall

When: Every Thursday from 11am to 12pm
Where: CSP Gym Ashfield
Cost: $17 Client transport if required: $15
Non-Client: $27
Please call 9799 5099 to book in.

Standing Tall Together

CSP Gym and Neighbour Aid have worked together for over 9 years to provide our targeted exercise programs. These programs provide strength, mobility and balance exercises that perfectly meet the needs of our group attendees. CSP also provides a fabulous venue with its modern gym space in Ashfield. The gym is fully equipped with all the latest exercise equipment allowing group participants to move through their exercise routines with confidence. CSP's trainers consistently provide high quality programs, based on their own qualifications and experience, but it is their patience and genuine care that set them apart and make the program so successful.

Our regular trainer, Patch, provides an ever evolving exercise program that meets the changing needs of our Stand Tall group members. Patch has a genuine connection with each group member and has an ability to listen and adapt exercises to meet individual needs, allowing each person to get the most out of every session. Working together in partnership, Neighbour Aid, CSP Gym and Stand Tall members continue to go from strength to strength.

Emel Jurd, Social Support Worker



DanceMoves

When: Every Friday from 11.30am to 1.00pm
Where: Woodstock Community Centre, Burwood
Cost: $7 Client transport if required: $15
Non-Client: $22
Please call 9799 5099 to book in.

Dancing Together

Dance Health Alliance has partnered with us since June 2023 to deliver our special and popular DanceMoves program each week.

Congratulations to Gwen and the team from Dance Health Alliance who are celebrating 10 years. We were delighted to be included in the 10th Anniversary celebrations through our group being filmed doing a special dance routine. The recording will be played at the official celebrations in October, with many of our DanceMoves group members travelling to Wakehurst Golf Club for the celebrations.

Each week our mood is lightened and energy restored as our two fabulous regular dance teachers, Karen and Emmanuel take us through our paces. Not only are they talented dancers, but their careful song choice, enthusiasm and warmth welcomes everyone to the dance, regardless of skill or ability.

Thank you Gwen, Karen, Emmanuel and all the teachers at Dance Health Alliance for providing a wonderful program to us all.

Emel Jurd, Social Support Worker



Client Corner – Quiz



Many of our favourite TV shows are based around communities, with characters supporting each other through the ups and downs . . . I hope you have fun answering these questions.

Neighbours

1. Where was Neighbours set?
2. Who sang the original Neighbours theme song?
3. Name the main doctor in the series.
4. Name the hotel and manager .
5. Name the two characters who ran the coffee shop for a very long time.

Northern Exposure

6. Where was the show set?
7. What was the name of the doctor who was sent into the town for what he thought would be a short time?
8. What was Maggie's job and what did she call the doctor?
9. Who was the town film buff and handyman?
10. Who ran the radio station and provided social commentary?

A Country Practice

11. Where was the show set?
12. Where was the show filmed?
13. What was the name of the animal that gave cast members grief by biting them?
14. What was the name of Molly and Brendan's daughter?
15. Name Vicky the Vet's mother and the actor who played her.

Home and Away

16. Where is Home and Away set?
17. Who is the town's stalwart, there from the very first episode?
18. Can you quote something that character might say if he is shocked, or bothered by someone?
19. Where do the locals go for a coffee?
20. Which Hemsworth played Kim Hyde from 2004 to 2007?

Did you know that Neighbour Aid client, Peter Fraser, appeared in Home and Away, A Country Practice, Mother and Son, Sons and Daughters as well as many other television shows, movies, commercials and many performances with the Australian Ballet and Opera?

Karen Paige, Client Services Officer

Answers on Page 20

Client Highlights

Client Photo Shoot

Earlier this year we were contacted by Sydney based video and photography agency, Laundry Lane, who worked with the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing on a photography project showcasing older Australians ageing at home and in their communities. The Department refreshed its image library to better reflect positive, empowering ageing – capturing real people in their everyday lives, staying active, connected and independent. The Department reached out to the Inner West Neighbour Aid community.

Peter F was one of the participants and with a background in acting, he was a natural. I was able to attend Peter's photoshoot and watch how it all works. When I asked Peter about the experience, Peter shared: "It was a very interesting shoot. Took 3 hours with what seemed like hundreds of photos taken at my home and in the nearby park".



Pina M also participated in the photoshoot. Initially Pina felt too shy to have photos taken but thankfully had a change of heart and decided to step out of her comfort zone. Pina looked very comfortable in her garden. What a lovely smile.

Thank you to the Department and Laundry Lane for this opportunity. We look forward to seeing these friendly faces in their publications in the near future.

Emma Torres, Social Support Coordinator



Strong Together and Our Programs

When: Every Wednesday from 11am to 1.30pm
Where: Croydon Park Club Cost: $7
Client transport if required: $15
Please call us on 9799 5099 to book in.

Partners in Possibility

There's a saying; "It takes a village" and it certainly is our Neighbour Aid "village" that brings the Strong Together program alive each week. Our partnerships with many different contractors allow Neighbour Aid to provide expert information sessions, creative activities, music therapy, intergenerational programs and much more!

Strong Together regularly works with trained Music Therapists, Olli and Michael, who use music to engage our group members in meaningful sessions that combine percussion, creativity, music and fun. Thanks to them we see and feel the energy change in the room as we discard our worries and begin to relax and be present in the moment to make music together.



Our partnership with MLC's Year 8 students is another way that we expand our Neighbour Aid community. We are so grateful to the MLC Students who with our group members, share, laugh and create together. There are interesting differences due to ages and stages of life, but there are many more similarities in all our experiences that connect us as one community.

Another wonderful organisation that is part of the Neighbour Aid community is CSPA. This organisation provides free health education sessions targeting the needs of seniors. Their trained volunteers have provided fabulous informative sessions for Strong Together on Preventing Falls, Arthritis Management, Maintaining Healthy Bones and being Stroke Safe. We thank them for this life saving and life affirming knowledge.

Neighbour Aid thanks all our contractors, clients, volunteers and community partners, who, with their skills, kindness and knowledge enable us to learn and grow and remain Strong Together.

Emel Jurd, Social Support Worker



Call us on 9799 5099 to find out more

5 Senses Garden Workshops

When: Every Monday 11am to 1pm. Light lunch is provided.
Where: 5 Senses Garden Rhodes Park, Concord West. Entrance via Killoola St.
Cost: $7 Client transport if required: $15 Non-Client: $27
Please call us on 9799 5099 to book in.

7 December: Art Therapy

Throughout summer, Karen Burns continues to offer monthly art therapy sessions at the 5 Senses Garden. Karen brings wonder, imagination and deep care to every session, come relax and create with her.

14 December: Christmas Party

Our last Monday at the 5 Senses Garden for 2026 deserves celebration. Join us for a Christmas party with BBQ, drinks and festive cheer. Feel free to bring a plate to share. If you would like to get into the spirit, wear your favourite Christmas outfit.

4 January: Art Therapy

Karen returns with her calming art therapy sessions at the 5 Senses Garden. All abilities welcome and materials provided.

11 January: Oral Health Session

Pascale Mehan, Oral Health Specialist from Concord Hospital, visits to share practical tips on oral health for seniors. She's friendly, knowledgeable and happy to answer your questions. Pascale has previously visited our other programs and been an invaluable resource to our community. We look forward to inviting her to the garden.

18 January: Community Greening

Paris Taia returns for seasonal gardening sessions through 2027. Paris is a Sydney-based horticulturalist, educator and artist who shares knowledge about sustainable gardening, plant use and connecting with nature. All experience levels are welcome.

25 January: Koori Kinnections – Collective Art Making

Koori Kinnections is an Aboriginal-owned and led organisation that offers First Nations-led cultural and creative workshops. Sit, chat, and learn about Indigenous culture while creating a collective artwork with experienced educators. A warm, hands-on way to connect with First Nations culture and community.

1 February: Art Therapy

Regular art therapy sessions continue with Karen at the 5 Senses Garden. Relax, create, and enjoy company. Materials provided.

8 February: Morning Games with Megan

Megan leads fun, social games at the 5 Senses Garden. Have a request for which games to play? Let Megan know in advance. Your feedback shapes our activities.

15 February: Seniors Rights Education

Ruth Bearpark from the Seniors Rights Service hosts a short, dynamic, interactive session on seniors rights. This session focuses on the Statement of Rights (Aged Care Act 2024) and how it applies when accessing Commonwealth-funded aged care services. Ruth will also bring goodies to give away.

22 February: Seeds to Trees

An intergenerational connection Concord West-Rhodes Preschool. This marks our first session with the new 2027 cohort, some familiar faces among the children and some new ones too! We'll introduce ourselves and explore the garden together through sensing and sharing time. Thank you to Preschool Director Marnie, the educators and the pre-schoolers.

5 Senses Garden Workshops

An intergenerational walk at Seeds to Trees

In August, Marnie, the Director of Concord West Rhodes Preschool, led us on an intergenerational walk on Wangal land by the Burramattagal (Parramatta) River. We were graced with gorgeous mangroves and big trees, as well as some local, much-loved wildlife.

As part of their nature-led and place-based learning, the preschoolers often go for walks. When we're at the 5 Senses Garden, we frequently see the preschoolers come past with their iconic bright green hats. They always holler a big hello and we reply with waves and hellos back. So it was very special to be invited on one of their walks.

What made the day most memorable was seeing the preschoolers walking hand in hand with our seniors. The preschoolers seemed proud to guide their companions along the path. Small hands held large ones and there was ease and comfort between them. The children were eager to share what they know about Wangal country.

Marnie introduced us to some culturally significant trees and shared stories. We even had the opportunity to gaze upon our local tawny frogmouths. Mum and dad sat together on one branch and their big adult child on another branch close by. The preschoolers knew the story of the tawny frogmouths well, and the seniors were delighted to receive their stories.

Chantel Jurcevic, Social Support Worker







Volunteer News

Welcome to New Volunteers

Welcome: Emma, Michael, Brighton, Raine, Lennie, Rebecca, Jin. We are very grateful to have you on board.

Thank you to all of our fantastic volunteers for an amazing year. We have volunteers across our whole organisation through our Board, Garden Aid, Working Bees, Group Social Support, Individual Social Support and admin.

This year our volunteers have:

- Helped out in people's gardens
- Beautified and maintained the 5 Senses Garden
- Assisted with group social programs
- Made decisions for the benefit of Inner West Neighbour Aid
- Walked dogs
- Called and visited people
- Folded and packed mail outs
- Assisted at events and expos
- Spread the word about Neighbour Aid

We truly appreciate the time and energy that you give to our community.

SAVE THE DATE: We will be holding an end of year event to thank and celebrate our volunteers on Wednesday 16 December – more details to come.



Volunteering at Neighbour Aid is quite often an outdoor activity, travelling between locations and physical activity, so it is important to look after yourself during the warmer months.

- **Stay hydrated:** Carry a water bottle and drink regularly throughout the day. Don't wait until you feel thirsty.
- **Take regular breaks:** If you're working outdoors or doing physical tasks, take breaks in the shade.
- **Dress for the weather:** Wear lightweight, loose-fitting clothing, a broad-brimmed hat and comfortable, breathable shoes.
- **Protect yourself from the sun:** Apply sunscreen, wear sunglasses and reapply sunscreen as needed.
- **Look after each other:** Keep an eye on fellow volunteers, particularly during very hot weather. Check in if someone looks tired, dizzy or unwell.
- **Be mindful when supporting clients:** Some people aged 65+ can be more vulnerable to heat for a variety of reasons.
- **Know the signs of heat-related illness:** Headache, dizziness, nausea, weakness, confusion or feeling faint can be warning signs. Move to a cool place, drink water and inform staff if you have any symptoms.
- **Check the forecast:** Speak with your Coordinator if you have concerns about undertaking your volunteer role.

Remember: There is no expectation to push through the heat. Everyone's health and safety comes first.

Maja Sorensen, Senior Coordinator

Volunteer News

Thank you to our Macquarie University Student Volunteers

For over a decade, Inner West Neighbour Aid has partnered with Macquarie University's Professional and Community Engagement (PACE) Program, welcoming 3rd Year Psychology students to gain hands on experience while making a meaningful difference in our community.

In the final semester of 2026, we welcomed 2 student volunteers Brighton and Raine, who contributed their time, skills and enthusiasm to our programs over the required 32 hours. Their involvement created opportunities for connection, learning and friendship, enriching the experiences of our clients while giving the students valuable insights into the lives and needs of older people. Thank you Brighton and Raine.



What I enjoyed most was definitely getting to meet and talk with so many different people, both the clients and the staff. I really enjoyed hearing about the clients' lives, experiences and interests, especially since many of them grew up in a very different time from me. It was also lovely to see how much the outings meant to everyone and knowing that I could contribute in some small way to making their day more enjoyable was very rewarding.

I think what surprised me most was how I could still connect with clients despite the age difference.

Before starting placement I wasn't really sure how much we would have in common and I was worried maybe I'd struggle with making conversation, but after just the first outing, finding something to talk about was not in any way the difficult part of the experience. Even when they brought up things I know very little about, like older movies and songs or countries I have never been to, just showing an interest and asking questions led to some real interesting and memorable conversations. Definitely a good reminder that you don't necessarily need to have similar backgrounds or experiences to get along with someone. ~ Brighton



My favourite volunteering moment was at the end of the activities, where everyone got the chance to sit down and chat over lunch. It felt more like hanging out with friends than it did volunteering, and the lovely ladies and men at DanceMoves and 5 Senses Garden had such great senses of humour!

Even though there is an age gap, you can still find a great and genuine connection with anyone! Also, older people have a better sense of humour than you might expect, and I got to see this particularly from Elsie and Denise! ~ Raine



Maja Sorensen, Senior Coordinator

Living Well with Dementia Workshops

For people living with Dementia and carers. All workshops are held at the 5 Senses Garden
On the 1st Thursday of the month, 11am - 1pm
Workshop Cost: $22 for public participants, $7 for Neighbour Aid clients with CHSP funding
Light lunch or morning tea provided
To book call 9799 5099 or email mikali@iwna.com.au

3 December: Intergenerational Workshop

We will be joined by our young friends from Concord Rhodes preschool for our final workshop for the year, and will make Christmas cards using resources from the garden. Lunch to follow.



7 January: Paint the music

An art mindfulness workshop, we will be guided to tune into the sounds around us and turn music into visual art. Lunch to follow.



4 February: Community Greening

Paris from the Botanic Gardens will help us connect to plants through an inclusive and creative horticulture workshop. Lunch to follow



Mikali Anagnostis, Social Support Worker

Quiz - Answers

1. Erinsborough, much of the action centred on Ramsay Street
2. Barry Crocker
3. Dr Karl Kennedy
4. Lassiters, Paul Robinson
5. Harold Bishop and Lou Carpenter.
6. Cicely, Alaska
7. Joel Fleischman
8. Maggie was a pilot, she always called the doctor "Fleischman", not Joel
9. Ed Chigliak
10. Chris Stevens
11. Wandin Valley
12. On location around Pitt Town, Oakville and Windsor
13. Fatso the wombat
14. Chloe
15. Nursing Sister, Shirley Dean was played by Lorrae Desmond
16. Summer Bay, beach scenes are filmed on location around Palm Beach
17. Alf Stewart (Bonus Points for naming Ray Meagher as the actor who plays Alf)
18. "Stone the flamin' crows", "What a flamin' galah"
19. The Diner
20. Chris Hemsworth

Karen Paige, Client Services Officer

Living Well with Dementia Workshops

Finding support to fill your cup

Once in a while, it's important to stop and notice the things in life that fill up our joy and energy. Those people and activities that make the world a bit more colourful and make us feel a little lighter. This is especially true for carers.

In October, Art therapist Karen Burns led us in a collage workshop exploring the things that "fill our cup" in the midst of caring for someone. The workshop was part of National Carers Week, a time to recognise, celebrate and raise awareness of the more than 3 million Australians who provide unpaid care to a family member or friend. It is also an opportunity to shine a spotlight on the supports that are available for carers, so they can continue to do the things that nourish them.

An important service for all carers to know about is *Carer Gateway*. They can help you access a tailored support package, including services like respite, help with cooking and cleaning and transport. They also offer counselling and coaching, and help you access financial support. You can call Carer Gateway on 1800 422 737 or check out their website. Carer Gateway is an Australian Government program and services are free of charge.



In September, we also marked Dementia Action Week, an initiative of *Dementia Australia*. Dementia Australia is the national peak body for people living with dementia and their carers who have a wealth of support services available. Importantly, they have a 24/7 helpline, specifically for people with dementia and their carers or people who are worried about changes in their memory and thinking. This free and confidential service can help you with emotional support, offer guidance and help you navigate other services. You can call the helpline on 1800 100 500. Check out the Dementia Australia website to see the many other resources and services they offer.

When someone is diagnosed with dementia, it can be hard for them and the people they love to know what that journey might look like. It can be difficult to know who is available to help. Throughout Spring, we connected with a network of services that can support you to keep living well and to keep filling up your cup.

Mikali Anagnostis, Social Support Worker



Photo Gallery































Community Christmas Party



We'd love to see you at our party – call us on 9799 5099

Outings Highlights

When: Every Thursday, some Wednesdays, some Fridays.
Pick up times range from 9.30am to 11.30am. Drop off between 2pm to 3.30pm
What: Excursions and lunch at a range of venues incl. cafes, clubs, long drives and galleries
Cost: Transport $15 and cost of lunch
Please call 9799 5099 to book in.

Hello Summer!

Past Highlights

On our Spring outings, we enjoyed each other's company as we soaked up some magnificent water views at venues such as **Bondi Icebergs**, **Mosman Rowers** and **Sydney Fish Markets**. We were entertained by variety shows at both **Ingleburn RSL** and **Chester Hill RSL**. We tied in lunch with a spot of shopping at **Innovations** and **Bunnings**. We took some long scenic drives to **Lynwood Golf Club** and **Pie in the Sky.** We ate-all-we-could at a buffet on our **Mystery Outing** - just to name a few**.** In short, we had a lot of fun.

December

The festive season is upon us! We only have a handful of outings in December before we wrap up for the year. For those of you looking to buy a few Christmas presents (or something for yourself!), we are heading to **Marrickville Metro** for a shopping trip and a bite to eat. We will also have a chance to visit the **Hidden Garden Café** inside the Flower Power in Mascot. On our final outing for 2026 we will feast on a 3-course set menu at the **Polish Club** in Ashfield.

January

Happy new year! January is a month of new beginnings. Let's welcome in 2027 with a couple of pub feeds at **The White Cockatoo** in Petersham and the **Woolwich Pier Hotel**. We will try out the stylish **Café Calibre** in Dulwich Hill and enjoy some Lebanese food at the newly relocated **Jasmin 1** in the Italian Forum. We'll head south for lunch with a view of the beach at **Cronulla RSL.** Put your trust in us and come along to our **Mystery Outing** or join us for lunch at **IKEA** and all your flat-pack needs. As January wraps up, we will hit the clubs at **Canterbury Leagues Club** and the **Concordia Club.**

February

Roll out the red carpet for February and join us at a variety show at **Club Ashfield.** Let's do as the French do for "La Chandeleur" and eat crêpes at the **Four Frogs Crêperie.** Next up is **Massey Park Golf Club** and then we're off to **Tramsheds** for some lunch, followed by some gelato to cool us down. As many celebrate Lunar New Year, we will head to **Cabramatta,** also known as "Little Vietnam". Wind down the week at **Organica Café.** Then we'll have the chance to try out the new bistro at **Leichhardt Bowlo** before ending the season with a trip to **Paddy's Markets in Flemington** - and maybe catch a cooking demonstration while we are there.

So there you have it!

A packed summer full of adventures. We have kept in mind that it is predicted to be a hot summer so we have chosen, for the most part, to enjoy what our local community has to offer. Hot tip: book in quickly for outings to avoid missing out. We will contact you at the end of each month to confirm your bookings for the following month. Until then, stay cool.

Megan O'Rourke, Social Support Worker

DECEMBER 2026

Inner West Neighbour Aid

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
	1 **Alive & Strong** Xmas Craft	2 **Trolley Talk** Ashfield Boys High School **Strong Together** Xmas Craft	3 Stand Tall **Outing: Hidden Garden Café** **Living Well with Dementia Workshop**	4 **DanceMoves**
7 **5 Senses Garden** Art Therapy with Karen	8 **Alive & Strong** Rivendell School	9 **Marrickville Metro** **Strong Together** Xmas Party	10 **Stand Tall** **Outing The Polish Club**	11 **DanceMoves** Xmas Party
14 **5 Senses Garden** Xmas Party	15 **Alive & Strong** Xmas Party	16 **NO PROGRAMS** **Volunteer Christmas Event**	17 **Stand Tall**	18 **NO PROGRAMS** **LAST DAY BEFORE OFFICE CLOSES**
21 **OFFICE CLOSED**	22 **OFFICE CLOSED**	23 **OFFICE CLOSED**	24 **OFFICE CLOSED**	25 **OFFICE CLOSED**
28 **OFFICE CLOSED**	29 **OFFICE CLOSED**	30 **OFFICE CLOSED**	31 **OFFICE CLOSED**	

Outings are extremely popular! Call us to book in on 9799 5099

JANUARY 2027

Inner West Neighbour Aid

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
				1 **OFFICE CLOSED**
4 **FIRST DAY BACK** **NO PROGRAMS**	5 **Alive & Strong** Bocce	6 **Outing: White Cockatoo** **Strong Together** Bingo	7 **Outing: Woolwich Pier Hotel** **Living Well with Dementia Workshop**	8 **DanceMoves**
11 **5 Senses Garden** Oral Health Session	12 **Alive & Strong** T-shirt Printing	13 **Outing: Café Calibre** **Strong Together** Café Calibre	14 **Outing** **Jasmin 1, Leichhardt**	15 **DanceMoves**
18 **5 Senses Garden** Community Greening	19 **Alive & Strong** Seniors Rights Education Session	20 **Outing: Cronulla RSL** **Strong Together** Jewellery Making	21 **Mystery Outing!**	22 **DanceMoves** **Outing Ikea Tempe**
25 **5 Senses Garden** Koori Kinnections: Collective Art Making	26 **PUBLIC HOLIDAY** **NO PROGRAMS**	27 **STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAY** **NO PROGRAMS**	28 **Stand Tall** **Outing Canterbury Leagues Club**	29 **DanceMoves** **Outing Concordia Club**

Outings are extremely popular! Call us to book in on 9799 5099

FEBRUARY 2027

Inner West Neighbour Aid

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
1 **5 Senses Garden** Art Therapy	**2** **Alive & Strong** Art Names - Colouring	**3** **Outing: Club Ashfield Show** **Strong Together** Recollect & Reflect	**4 Stand Tall** **Outing: Four Frogs Creperie** **Living Well with Dementia Workshop**	**5** **DanceMoves**
8 **5 Senses Garden** Games with Megan	**9** **Alive & Strong** Rivendell School	**10** **Outing: Massey Park Golf Club** **Strong Together** Massey Park Golf Club	**11** **Stand Tall** **Outing** **Tramsheds**	**12** **DanceMoves**
15 **5 Senses Garden** Seniors Rights Education Session	**16** **Alive & Strong** Bingo	**17** **Trolley Talk** Ashfield Boys High School **Strong Together** Bingo	**18** **Stand Tall** **Outing** **Freedom Plaza, Cabramatta**	**19** **DanceMoves** **Outing** **Café Organica**
22 **5 Senses Garden** Seeds to Trees	**23** **Alive & Strong** Balloon Tennis	**24** **STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAY** **NO PROGRAMS**	**25** **Stand Tall** **Outing** **Leichhardt Bowlo**	**26** **DanceMoves** **Outing** **Paddy's Markets Flemington**

Outings are extremely popular! Call us to book in on 9799 5099