



neighbour day

Sunday 31 March 2019

Neighbour Day for Councils

Neighbour Day is Australia's annual celebration of community, encouraging people to connect with those who live in their neighbourhood.

Whether through a cuppa, a picnic in the park, or a message of support; Neighbour Day is the perfect opportunity to say thanks for being a great neighbour and for being there to lend a hand.

Neighbour Day is celebrated on the last Sunday in March every year with the aim of fostering strong personal connections that last the whole year round.

The principal aim of Neighbour Day is to build better relationships with the people who live around us, especially the vulnerable and elderly.

The annual theme for Neighbour Day 2019 is **Loneliness: what neighbours can do to create connections.**

Councils and Shires are great supporters of Neighbour Day and are integral to the success of the movement. They have the capability to inform and engage large numbers of community members in neighbourly pursuits by using the Neighbour Day celebration as an additional vehicle to help achieve their community development goals.

The benefits of engagement with Neighbour Day (2016 post event survey) were identified as social participation and connection; building resilience and social capital; improved mental health and wellbeing; supporting vulnerable people; community development and education; celebrating and recognising community; improving community safety; embracing diversity; and utilising the values of Neighbour Day in their communities.

Neighbour Day 2018 achieved great results this year with participation increasing by 23% (from 2017) with numbers conservatively estimated at more than 118,000.

Clear themes emerged from the Neighbour Day 2018 survey feedback from event registrants about the benefits of promoting and/or hosting Neighbour Day.

Host survey respondents in 2018 said Neighbour Day is a useful tool to assist people to connect with their neighbours with 92% planning to maintain ongoing contact with their neighbours and a further 6% indicating that they may do so. Ninety percent of people who engaged with the day told us they kept in touch with their neighbours throughout the year.

The top five reported benefits for hosts/organisers were 'I got to know my neighbours/community'; 'Help create a strong community'; Fun/enjoyment/celebration/hangout; I was able to raise awareness of the importance of neighbours; and 'Opportunity to learn and discuss what is happening in my neighbourhood'.

The top five reported benefits for participants as perceived by hosts were 'Get to know their neighbours'; 'Fun/enjoyment/celebration/hangout'; 'Help create a strong community'; an 'Opportunity to learn and discuss what is happening in their neighbourhood' and 'Learn about the importance of neighbours'.

Many community organisations leverage their association with Neighbour Day to promote and catalyse social connection in their communities. Other groups take the opportunity to weave Neighbour Day promotion and engagement into their calendars, drawing people together to celebrate at events they host in the lead up to, and on the day. For example, Senior's and Youth weeks, Harmony Day, Earth Hour, Easter holiday events, etc.

Councils and Shires in every state and territory are utilising Neighbour Day to promote and catalyse social connection in their communities. A growing number weave Neighbour Day promotion and engagement into their calendars, drawing people together to celebrate at events they host in the lead up to, and on the day. For example, Senior's and Youth weeks, Harmony Day, Earth Hour, Easter holiday events and other community celebrations.

Easy Neighbour Day Ideas for Councils

Print Neighbour Day posters and display them in council buildings; libraries; community halls; child and family health, youth and senior citizens centres and other council premises.

Talk about Neighbour Day in council publications, e-newsletters, local newspapers, the Mayor's column and social media. Highlight Neighbour Day activities at community meetings, networks or groups focused on developing stronger communities and connected neighbourhoods. Perhaps the Mayor could be the local Neighbour Day Ambassador!

Access Neighbour Day council resources and the FREE e-kit at neighbourday.org. Subscribe to the 'Verandah by Neighbour Day' Enews and share with your community for great neighbourly information and ideas.

Distribute Neighbour Day calling cards to all council services and libraries for residents to collect and use.

Support and inspire residents to host their own Neighbour Day events with ideas, council approvals, equipment or other encouragement.

Align existing council events with Neighbour Day, including events that are held that are held before, or on or after the official day!

Register your event on the Neighbour Day web site at neighbourday.org

The free 2019 Neighbour Day e-kit for councils and community organisations

is now available for download at neighbourday.org. The updated e-kit includes event ideas, Neighbour Day logo and posters (including a version with space for your logo or local sponsor logos), invitations, Certificate of Recognition template, e-cards, connection and calling cards, promotional flyers to use at community events, stands, or shop counter tops, and Countdown (to Neighbour Day) selfie and event marker signs. Also included are social media drafts, and an easy to use media template.

How some councils do Neighbour Day ...

- Councils find it easy to promote Neighbour Day and offer tips for how to get involved for some examples visit [City of Vincent](#), [City of Clarence](#), City of Adelaide, Latrobe Council.
- Many Councils also host free events for example NEW [Very Neighbourly Organisation](#) City of South Perth.
- Very Neighbourly Organisation [Brimbank City Council](#), VIC has [offered grants](#) of \$250 to residents for a number of years to encourage connection and community participation at a local level with great success. Council previously partnered with Gallery Sunshine Everywhere to engage with children at a preschool, primary school and high school to produce artwork that described their relationship with their neighbourhoods. They also provide some great tips for how to get involved.
- Mayors and council staff across the country 'virtually attended' the Neighbour Day Countdown snapping a pic with the 2018 Neighbour Day sign.
- NEW Very Neighbourly Organisation [Tweed Shire Council](#), NSW promoted Neighbour Day widely in their LGA, offered incentives to get involved including a prize of a \$500 Weber barbeque - AND catalysed 110 registered events!



- [City of Subiaco, WA](#) NEW [Very Neighbourly Organisation](#) offered \$100 grants, host help packs and cobranded posters invitations, colouring in page, and selfie sign.

- [Neighbour Day Connection Cards](#) are popular and a growing number of councils printed and distributed these as a simple way to help their residents connect with each other.



- Some councils organised community information stalls in shopping centres or parks and invited community, health, fire and rescue and other support services to talk about what they offer. Neighbour Day resources were utilised to promote the event.

- [Greater Shepparton](#) promotes Neighbour Day on its website (as do many other councils!) and in 2018 partnered with the YMCA to offer a free BBQ and skate workshops. They've also developed a terrific [Neighbour Day booklet](#).



- Councils and Shires use social media to cross-promote neighbourly events and information. You can also follow Neighbour Day on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

- [Georges River Council](#) partnered with community housing provider [SGHC](#) to host a Neighbour Day community BBQ and also provide resources to support residents to do their own thing.



- The [Alice Springs Town Council](#) Mayor Damien Ryan (pictured below) is a local Neighbour Day Ambassador and connected with the Alice Springs Neighbour Day Community Working group and Relationships Australia NT. The group sourced a community grant and the Mayor supported the local initiative to work with the



town's primary schools to 'Grow Our Neighbourhood' – [calling for volunteers to assist with tailored seed packets](#), Neighbour Day community plantings, social and mainstream media, and public speaking at school assemblies to discuss how with their family they can safely connect with their neighbours. The Alice Springs Community Neighbour Day group (of which the town council is a member) recently were awarded a Very Neighbourly Community Award where they hosted the national launch of Neighbour Day in Alice Springs.

- Many (!) councils host awards, which recognise the value of neighbourly actions. For example [Very Neighbourly Organisation](#) Shellharbour City Council, NSW again hosted its [Good Neighbour Awards](#) in conjunction with Neighbour Day 2018, and held a 'draw your neighbour' competition for kids under 12 years old.
- For the first time in 2018 Very Neighbourly Organisation [Lane Cove Council](#) sought nominations for neighbours who deserve recognition for their support in the local community as part of Council's Neighbour Day celebrations as part of their '[Love where you live](#)' campaign. In 2017, the program supported Lane Cove Community Chaplaincy, FoodFaith and Lane Cove Rotary with resources, signage, flyers and some giveaways to help their community Neighbour Day (2017) event. The day included music, dancing, BBQ, damper and pesto making, face painting (by Elsa from Frozen!), nail art, learning to make an eco-bag and some large games. The Mayor and organisers made a few short speeches, and gardening expert Meredith Kirton spoke on worm farming in the new community garden. They organised a loop bus servicing the area from the centre of Lane Cove, due to limited parking.
- In 2018 Banyule City offered a \$500 grant for a range of purposes including entertainment, catering expenses, children's activities and hire of equipment AND open up for new applications on 1 December 2018 for Neighbour Day 2019. In 2017, the council partnered with [Relationships Australia Victoria's](#) Kew centre to host a Neighbour Day event: Music and Memories in the Mall, with the focus on reminiscence. Yarra Plenty Library provided activities and resources, including their Hindsight Exhibition that showcased the changing

faces of their senior members. The theme for the exhibition was “What advice would you give to your younger self?” Swinburne University showcased digital storytelling services provided by their Wellbeing Clinic for Older Adults, and Heidelberg Historical Society displayed an interesting range of memorabilia. Music from the 50s was provided by the Blue Ramblers and a fabulous morning tea by the Banyule Age-friendly Champions.

- [City of Kwinana, WA](#) [NEW Very neighbourly organisation](#) has been doing Neighbour Day for a few years now, supporting associations or community groups with grants (9) of up to \$2,000, with smaller incentives (reimbursements of up to \$150) for hosts. They promote Neighbour Day on their website and social media, and for 2017 invested in lamppost promotional wraps. In 2016, they aligned the opening of a new community pavilion with Neighbour Day.

- Each year the [City of Melbourne](#), Victoria Harbour and Knowledge Markets teamed up to bring locals together for an amazing family day out. The [Neighbour Day Docklands Dog Pawty](#) hosted playgrounds, pool parties and pawfect pawty tunes, training, treats and tips doggie activities, puppycinos, stalls and dog behaviour experts. It is a pupstastic (!) way to meet neighbours and their pups at the same time.



- City of Unley, SA offered an events page (2018) where residents could tag their event online and share what they had planned. In 2017, they provided a Neighbour Day page on their website offering Greeting Cards and an Acts of Kindness list; called for nominations for their Great Neighbour promotion; and invited feedback on what makes a good neighbour in their online forum. They also asked residents to tag their Neighbour Day event on the online council map and hashtag with #unleyneighbourday on social media.

- The ACT Government performs some functions that parallel council activities. The Justice and Community Safety Directorate included Neighbour Day in its Property Crime Prevention Strategy 2016-2020, and partnered with Relationships Australia and Neighbour Day to help them meet Objective

1 – Community and neighbourhood connections are strengthened; Action 1.1 Promote national Neighbour Day.



A Neighbour Day working group formed (NGOs, community organisations and ACT Government e.g. Libraries, Police, etc.) to leverage individual and collective resources to develop a cohesive approach to increase social connection in the ACT through engagement with Neighbour Day and developed cobranded ACT tailored resources. They launched Neighbour Day in the ACT on 1 March with special guest speakers the ACT Minister for Community Services, Social Inclusion and Disability, Children and Youth, Rachel Stephen-Smith and the ACT Commissioner for Children and Youth, Jodie Griffiths-Cook AND Constable Kenny Koala.

- [Logan City Council](#) QLD is a long-time supporter and their [#KnowThyNeighbour campaign](#) in 2018 again linked with Neighbour Day. They’ve also shared Neighbour Day ideas on its website #neighboursoflogan and ‘made’ this awesome Neighbour Day house very cleverly using our artwork in 2017 to help promote participation.



- Ballarat Council, VIC Police and local community have supported Neighbour Day for ten years, and [highlighted a local tragedy](#) (two older men died) as a catalyst to get involved and the importance of getting to know and care for your neighbours.
- Banana Shire in QLD in 2017 offered small grants as part of their Community Recovery Support funding to build community capacity and social connectedness. They encouraged applications that supported small or large gatherings, brunch, or BBQ dinners. Residents were encouraged to invite new members of their community.
- City of Willoughby has included Neighbour Day in their Neighbour to Neighbourly campaign. For a number of years they have offered Harris Farm vouchers (\$50) to help get the party started, offered a swag of ideas and tips to get involved, event planning checklists; and links to

volunteering groups, community gardens and Neighbourhood Watch.

- [Hobsons Bay City Council](#), VIC [130 countries of origin; 90 languages; 90 faiths; 1 Hobsons Bay Community!] included Neighbour Day in its celebrations of Cultural Diversity Week (2017). Residents of Altona North were invited to get to know their neighbours whilst enjoying music and food from around the world; with entertainment for the whole family that including face painting, games, a colouring competition with prizes and the book cubby. (2017)
- [Fairfield City Council](#), NSW organised a free community event (2017), collaborating with Fairfield Local Area Command, NSW Police to host an afternoon event for older residents in the mall.

- [Relationships Australia Tasmania](#) joined with [City of Hobart](#) (and others) in 2017 to host a Neighbour Day celebration at a local community centre for older people and [spread the word](#) about building stronger communities.
- The [City of Charles Sturt in SA](#) combined World Poetry Day (2017) and Neighbour Day with a poetry competition and event in the mall. We love this!
- The City of Darwin has previously opened its three swimming pools free to the public and invited them to grab their sun hats, cozzies/speedos/boardies/togs/swimmers/bathers/rashies(!) and a towel, and spend the day keeping cool and catching up with their neighbours.



What people say about the benefits of getting involved ...

“Catching up. Communal well-being is my well-being.”

“I feel hopeful as a result.”

“Our community is more aware of bushfire safety.”

“Our children got to know each other better as well”.

“For my son (whom has a disability) to be well known in his neighbourhood. This we know will keep him safe.”

“I found neighbours who have lived here for 20+ years did not know each other, and that made me feel good about hosting and connecting those people.”

“It gives people reason to connect with their local community.”

“Highlights the importance of looking out for your neighbour and works to alleviate social isolation.”

“It has the ability to take a local area and build a community”

“Provides a date and resources to use to promote the community coming together - particularly new residents.”

“A fantastic conversation starter to approach local people you don't know or have lost touch with.”

“Connections are made and friendships grow as a result plus, the young connect with the more elderly and everyone develops a greater sense of community belonging.”

“This is the first time we have hosted a Neighbour Day party and we were overwhelmed by how many people came. This is the beginning of an annual event in our neighbourhood that will strengthen our community to look out for each other and thrive.”

“I really believe it was a momentous turning point in how my community relates to one another and thinks about ownership and neighbourly responsibility.”

“We had a great BBQ in the park and plenty of food and drink. We found there is a common interest in music!”

“Met some new neighbours and some that have been around for a long time that had never met! Have since popped in for a cuppa to follow up on one lady who lives alone and had never previously come to things in the

street. Catching up with another lady (who is deaf) next week to teach her how to use Facebook so she can join our street group and stay up to date.”

“We held a working bee followed by afternoon tea. We improved the amenity of the street and had the opportunity to discuss a new bridge design with residents all together. We have had a few deaths in the street, so it was an opportunity for members to talk about this and make sure everyone was OK.”

“Getting to know our neighbours, not just immediate ones. Having a great deal of fun. Six families shared the cost of purchasing a log splitter, which is shared among us. The splitter was used for a neighbour in her late 70s to split enough wood for her winter use.”

“Our regional suburb has only 2 schools and only 1 IGA shop and many families don't have transport to get to town. Our public transport isn't as good as many families tend to feel isolated, but holding events like this help bring people together. Such as many families from overseas with younger children were invited to Playgroup and weren't aware of the family group at the school and gave them a new opportunity.”

“I had always wanted to have a great connected neighbourhood but didn't really know where to start. Neighbour Day gave me ideas, tools and an excuse to get on with it. Most people say they have been meaning to get to know their neighbours, but many don't get around to it. Neighbour Day gives a time frame and a sense of urgency.”

Finally... The Neighbour Day website contains resources and guidance to help your community come together. If you have other good ideas, or would like to feed into our understanding of community connection, please provide us with that feedback, and your story.

