



## **Australians prepare to celebrate their community on 10<sup>th</sup> annual Neighbour Day**

Neighbours across the country are getting ready to celebrate their communities with barbecues, street parties and other local events for Australia's Neighbour Day on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2012, the national event's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

"Neighbour Day has evolved to become Australia's annual celebration of community and it's all about building connections between residents wherever we choose to call home," said Neighbour Day founder and Australia Day Ambassador Andrew Heslop.

"Councils and shires have also become involved by organising festivals, open days and community activities in parks and other public spaces.

"Knowing our neighbours creates safe, inclusive and sustainable communities. Not only does that help to break down the barriers of loneliness and isolation but it provides reassurance there is someone to call upon during a local emergency or disaster," Andrew said.

Founded in Melbourne in 2003 following the eventual discovery of the lonely death of an elderly woman two years earlier, Australians in urban and regional areas have embraced the day with no incentive other than a shared belief in safe, resilient and sustainable communities.

There are five principal aims –

1. Strengthen communities and build better relationships with the people who live around us.
2. Create safer, healthier and more vibrant suburbs and towns.
3. Promote tolerance, respect and understanding.
4. Break down community barriers.
5. Protect the elderly, the vulnerable and the disadvantaged.

"Neighbour Day brings together the people next door, across the street or on the next farm. How you celebrate is entirely up to you and your neighbours – it could be a street party or barbecue, or it could be as simple as a cup of tea and a slice of cake ... or a cold beer," said Andrew.

"There are no costs to participate in Neighbour Day and by visiting the website [www.neighbourday.org](http://www.neighbourday.org) you can download a free kit containing invitations, name tags, posters and a 'how to' guide. It's everything you need for a successful Neighbour Day at your place," added Andrew.

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