

Embargoed until 3pm, 4 May 2021

Celebrating Connected Communities throughout Australia – Media Release

“Sustainable social connection is a key driver in ending loneliness and achieving greater wellbeing outcomes across Australia. Today, as part of the *Communities Connected* initiative, we’re celebrating the tireless work of community organisations, whose efforts continue to lead to greater connection and support within their communities.

Thanks to a very generous donation from [Andrew Heslop](#), founder and now an ambassador for Relationships Australia’s social engagement campaign, [Neighbour Day](#), we have been able to award an outstanding organisation with a major prize of an LG entertainment system, to enable them to continue vital work in their community”, said Mr Nick Tebbey, National Executive Officer, Relationships Australia.

In late 2020, Andrew was named an [LG Local Legend](#) by electrical company LG, in recognition of his role supporting communities and founding Neighbour Day in 2003. In collaboration with Relationships Australia, it was felt that this amazing prize would be best used by a dynamic community organisation somewhere in Australia whose main focus was on fostering social connection.

[Relationships Australia](#), as a leading provider of services for over 70 years, acknowledges the role of all community organisations across Australia, in rural, regional and remote as well as metropolitan locations, in fostering sustainable connections between individuals and communities.

“All Australians have endured a difficult year, and the most outstanding entries in this year’s *Communities Connected* showcase demonstrate just some of the ways the community organisations have proven invaluable within their neighbourhoods. The initiatives of these organisations, and the resilience and creativity they have demonstrated throughout the pandemic are great examples of the Neighbour Day spirit in action”, said Mr Tebbey.

The *Communities Connected* initiative received a number of brilliant submissions demonstrating how various groups across the country have supported their communities in spite of, and because of, the pandemic.

The most outstanding entry comes from regional Tasmania, where [Live Well Tasmania](#), has fostered connection in northwest Tasmania with an aim to decrease social isolation and improve health and wellbeing. Live Well Tasmania runs a variety of activities for members of its community, using a range of programs across different mediums to bring people together. In addition to its dedicated drop-in service, the centre runs classes, group activities and other initiatives that prove that even a small community can find ways of connecting and supporting each other when times are tough.

On Tuesday 4 May 2021, Live Well Tasmania will be presented with the major prize, generously donated by Andrew Heslop and LG, by Relationships Australia Tasmania CEO Dr Michael Kelly, and Relationships Australia National Executive Officer, Nick Tebbey.

Across the country, countless more stories have emerged of the efforts community groups have gone to support their communities.

An outstanding entry, from Darwin in the Northern Territory, came from [Neighbourhood Watch NT](#), which adapted its delivery model to create free and accessible resources for its community, promoting a range of ways that Territorians could connect in safe, sustainable ways throughout the pandemic.

From Western Australia, we received another outstanding entry from the dynamic group, [Empowering Plantagenet Seniors](#), a Mount Barker-based organisation whose team of volunteers work tirelessly to

support local seniors in a range of crucial ways. From grocery drop-offs through to community gatherings, this group has ensured local seniors remain connected and supported throughout the pandemic, combatting social isolation and enhancing community well-being.

Both Neighbourhood Watch NT and Empowering Plantagenet Seniors have been awarded Neighbour Day prize packs in recognition of their inspirational work.

“Australia is full of amazing stories of connection, and this year’s outstanding entries highlight the important, and often unsung, role that community groups play, often with very limited resources and through the passion and hard work of their volunteers.

“Neighbour Day 2021 was an opportunity to think about social connection in all its forms, and the *Communities Connected* initiative demonstrates that no matter where we are in Australia, there are brilliant examples that can inspire and connect communities – every day”, said Mr Tebbey. While it is crucial that we all heed public health advice (which varies from location to location), we encourage people to reach out to their communities and come together in ways they may not have previously thought possible.

For more information on Neighbour Day and to read more about our *Communities Connected* initiative, head to our website neighbourday.org. You can also follow our [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) accounts and subscribe to [Verandah by Neighbour Day](#).

“The community you want starts at your front door.”™

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Relationships Australia is a leading provider of relationship support services for individuals, families and communities. We aim to support all people in Australia to achieve positive and respectful relationships. We are a community-based, not-for-profit Australian organisation with no religious affiliations.