

Philip Street Communities and Families Precinct Advisory Committee Annual Report

January 2024 - December 2024



PHILIP STREET
COMMUNITIES AND FAMILIES PRECINCT



GLADSTONE
REGIONAL COUNCIL



Acknowledgement of Country

Gladstone Regional Council would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land, the Bailai, the Gurang, the Gooreng Gooreng and the Taribelang Bunda people.

We pay respect to their Elders past, present and emerging.

Gladstone Regional Council is committed to cultivating a culture of inclusion and connectedness, acknowledging that our communities are richer when diversity is embraced.

About the Precinct

Philip Street Communities and Families Precinct provides a space that brings together community groups and service providers in a friendly parkland setting and offers a unique opportunity to work collaboratively to deliver for our community, enabling access to resources and services. The delivery of the Philip Street Communities and Families Precinct has been a collaborative effort involving Council's Community Partnerships Team, The Salvation Army Gladstone, Gladstone Area Promotion & Development Limited (GAPDL) - Communities for Children, and the State Government Department of Women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Multiculturalism.

Precinct Vision

A vibrant and evolving space that supports and enhances community wellbeing for all.

Precinct Values

- *Wellbeing*: creating opportunities for people to improve their physical and mental wellbeing, to improve health, literacy, and access services they need.
- *Learning*: promoting lifelong learning and assisting children and young people and their families to transition through learning stages.
- *Connection*: creating a sense of connectedness, access to current information and opportunities to building social and cultural capacity.



About the Advisory Committee

The Philip Street Communities and Families Precinct Advisory Committee is a dedicated formal Advisory Group of passionate community members representing different sectors in the community. The Committee offer feedback and advice to Council on strategic planning, management, and service delivery to ensure services, programs and activities are responsive to the community needs.

The design of the Advisory Committee provides opportunity to ensure the voice of our community is captured and channelled to inform the strategic intent of the Precinct and its programs. The Advisory Committee roles target several demographics such as First Nation, Youth, Seniors, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse and Disability. Bringing different perspectives and ideas to the table, their primary function is to channel the 'community voice' into the Precinct.

Committee Membership

2024 was a year of growth for the committee, expanding from eleven members to fifteen. The committee continues to benefit from the diversity and dedication of its members.

In 2024, the committee said thank you and farewell to:

- Cr. Natalia Muszkat – Gladstone Regional Council
- Cr. Desley O'Grady - Gladstone Regional Council
- Supria Singh – Ordinary member representing Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Community
- Jakob Humphries – Ordinary member representing Youth Community

And welcomed new members:

- Cr. Leanne Patrick
- Cr. Mellissa Holzheimer
- Carmen Jen - Ordinary member representing Disability Community
- Desley O'Grady - Ordinary member representing Seniors Community
- Charmaine Bennett - Ordinary member representing Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Community
- Anitha Christopher - Ordinary member representing Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Community
- Ngara Kennedy – Ordinary member representing Youth Community
- Kerry Myers - Ordinary member representing Youth Community

The committee also benefits from its returning members:

- Shakira Campbell – Communities for Children (GAPDL)
- Chris Ford – Salvation Army
- Kylie Lee – Gladstone Regional Council
- Deb Meier-Cuddy – Department of Women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Multiculturalism.
- Kate Dufty – Ordinary member representing the Disability Community
- Maxine Brushe - Ordinary member representing the Seniors Community
- Cecelia Eggmohle - Ordinary member representing the First Nations Community

At the conclusion of 2024, all committee positions are filled. Committee appointments are until May 2026.

Committee Meetings

Committee meetings are held on the third Thursday every second month from 12pm to 2pm in the Ngalill building meeting room.

A summary of meetings held in 2024 are detailed below.

25 January 2024 – Meeting & AGM	18 July 2024
26 March 2024	19 September 2024
9 May 2024	21 November 2024

Key focus areas for the committee in 2024

Advocating for the Precinct

The committee has identified that many community members remain unaware of the Precinct, with some mistakenly believing it to be a retirement village or only accessible by people with a concession card. Additionally, there are community members who opposed the development of the Precinct and continue to harbor negative sentiments towards the facility. A key priority for the committee this year has been to effectively communicate the positive impact of the Precinct and raise awareness of the services it offers.

Providing recommendations for improvements

The committee made several recommendations for improvement of the facility this year, including the addition of key lock boxes for after hour users, better wayfinding signage, and more seating near the Maxine Brushe entrance. The Operations group have been working to implement these suggestions.

Gathering feedback from Precinct users

This year, the committee has been inviting tenants as guest speakers to their meetings to learn about the services that they deliver from the Precinct and gather any feedback that they may have. Speakers have included representatives from The Salvation Army, Regional Housing, and Strong Communities. This has also helped the committee to have a greater understanding of the services available, so that they can disseminate this information to the wider community.

Ensuring alignment with community trends and emerging needs

The real strength of the committee lies in its community representatives. Each meeting, the Community Representatives share their observations of community trends and emerging needs within their respective communities. This information informs future activities and service delivery at the Precinct.

Strategic place-making

To ensure that the Precinct continues to be a welcoming and safe place, this year the committee has implemented a Strategic Planning Calendar which identifies key awareness and cultural days that align with the Precinct's values and vision. The Calendar will be a standing item on the agenda in 2025, prompting conversations about how to raise awareness and seek collaboration opportunities on site.

Activities at the Precinct

Community Events

The Precinct values of Wellbeing, Learning and Connection were strongly reflected in the community events that were held throughout the year.

The emphasis on *Wellbeing* was evident in the numerous health and wellness activities, such as the Gladstone Health Expo and the CQ Health, Sport & Rec Expo, which provided individuals opportunities to focus on their physical, mental, and emotional health.

From skill-building workshops to guest speakers, *Learning* was central to many events held at the Precinct. Events such as the Disability Forum and the 16 Days of Activism encouraged the exchange of knowledge and ideas, creating a learning opportunity for individuals of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds.

The value of *Connection* was demonstrated through the events that brought people together, such as the Community Family Fun Day hosted by Strong Communities and End Loneliness Day hosted by the Community and Neighbourhood Centre. These occasions fostered strong bonds among participants, encouraging a spirit of cooperation, empathy, and belonging within the community.

All the events held at the Precinct have brought to life the vision of a vibrant and evolving space that supports and enhances community wellbeing.

Events hosted at the precinct included:

- Disability Forum
- Neighbour Day
- NAIDOC Week
- Dorrie Day
- End Loneliness Day
- Red Nose Day
- Community Family Fun Day
- Gladstone Health Expo
- CQ Health, Sport & Rec Expo
- Gladstone Homeless Connect
- First 5 Forever Superhero Day & Oceans Play Day
- Bee Story & Play Day
- 16 Days of Activism

Close-up – End Loneliness Day

According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2024), just over 1 in 6 (16%) Australians were experiencing loneliness in 2022. An increasing number of people aged 15–

24, have reported experiencing loneliness since 2012. In contrast, the frequency of people aged 65 and over reporting loneliness has been steadily declining since 2001.

In recognition of End Loneliness Day 2024, the Neighbourhood Centre and Community Partnerships team held 'Community Connections at the Precinct' to coincide with the Salvation Army's Kingdom Chat. The team set up board games, ran ice breakers, and encouraged conversations over fresh scones made by QCWA.

The Salvation Army's Kingdom Chat is a free weekly BBQ breakfast & lunch held at the Precinct during the school term with the aim to create a space for people to connect. Some of the work that the Salvation Army do at the Precinct feature in Salvo Story.

Salvo Story: Keith's Story

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U4ZSFWUZe0M&t=5s>

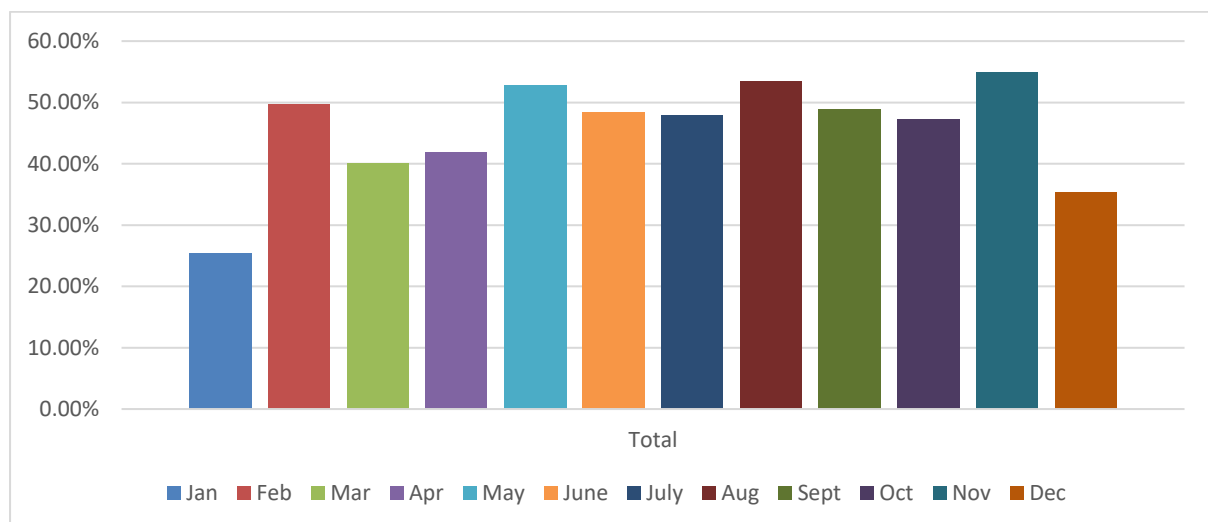
Salvo Story: Vincent's Story

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r6AOCnEBC9k>

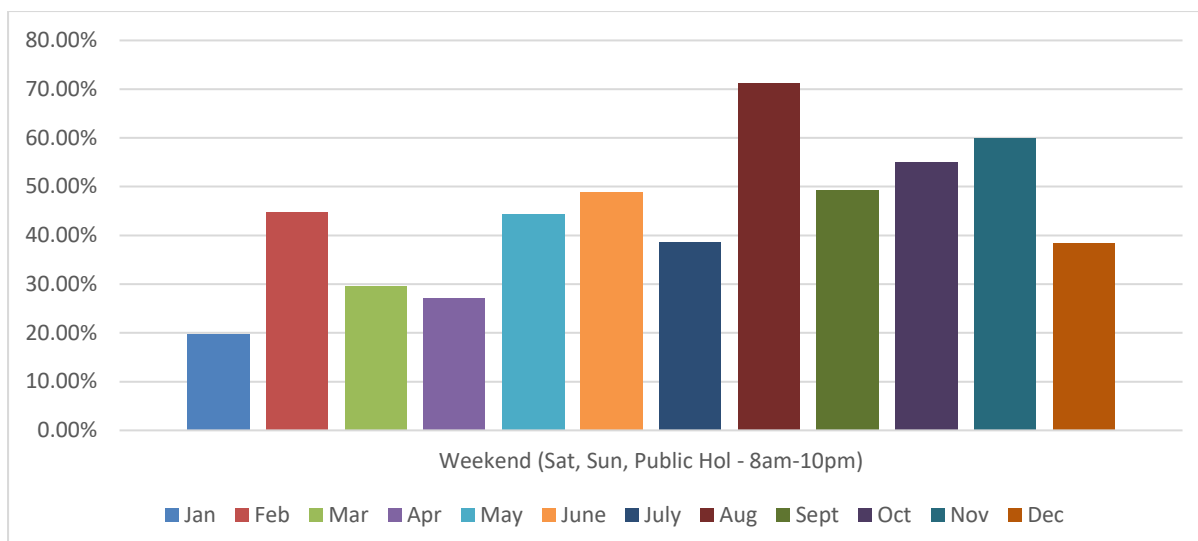
Precinct Occupancy

Maxine Brushe Community Meeting Place

The Maxine Brushe Community Meeting Place has become a well-established community facility, consistently sitting at around 50% total occupancy throughout the year. While this figure might not seem impressive, it is important to note this is based on the hours 8am-10pm, and gaps between service users are inevitable, as most community groups want to meet during peak times such as after school, evenings, or in the morning for community service providers. On a typical day each room will have 2-3 bookings.



A big change this year has been the growth in weekend hirers of the Maxine Brushe Community meeting place. Weekends at the Precinct have become a buzz with small events, markets, regional conferences, mindfulness retreats, and charity days, just to name a few. It has been wonderful to see the community embracing the versatile space and making it their own.



Most impressive is the diversity of service users. Every month, between 45 to 55 groups/individuals hire a meeting room. From social or hobby groups, to faith groups, cultural groups, health and fitness activities, community services and support groups, educational programs, corporate meetings and individual hirers, people come to the Precinct for a plethora of reasons. A member of the Advisory committee warmly remembers an evening at the Precinct when we had the Youth Council running an activity for youth in the greenspace, Gladstone Toastmasters, the Australian Labor Party, and the Philatelic Society in the meeting rooms, and Narcotics Anonymous in the Gumar building, all coexisting peacefully and safely in the same space. The diversity of service users speaks to the consistent effort to make this space as inclusive and welcoming as possible for our community.

Feedback from some of our regular users of the Maxine Brushe Community Meeting Place: *“The Precinct provides an area which is safe, peaceful and pleasant to use which works well for us.” – Gladstone U3A.*

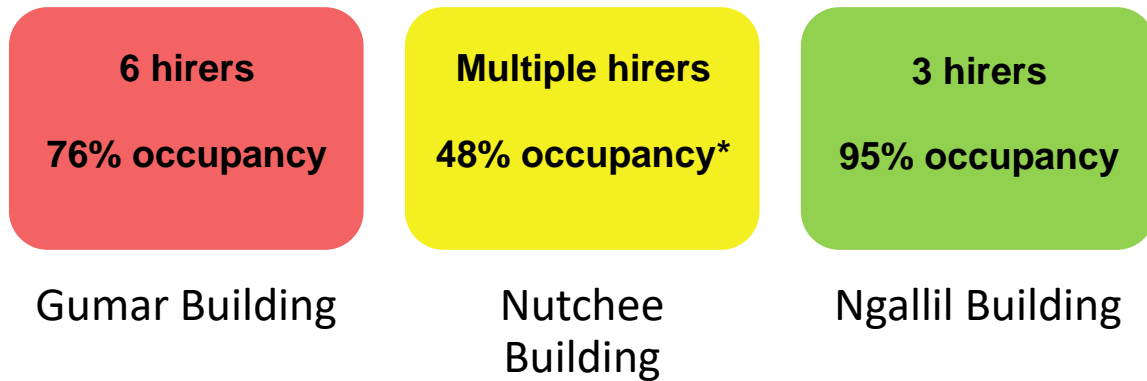
“Facilities are very nice, inviting, and accessible. Visiting members from overseas and around Australia have complimented the Precinct and how great it is.” – Alcoholics Anonymous.

“We were thrilled to serve a hot Christmas lunch to over 100 participants this year. Hearing their heartfelt appreciation for both the event and our social mornings throughout the year was truly uplifting. Many expressed gratitude for the welcoming and supportive space we’ve created together. None of this would have been possible without the invaluable support of the Philip Street Communities and Families Precinct. The staff at the Precinct have always been very helpful and do their best to accommodate our needs.” – Softly Helping You Inc. (SHY)

Consult Rooms

Across the Precinct, we have 15 consult rooms that are available to hire during business hours, 4 in the Ngallil building, 3 in the Nutchee building, and 8 in the Gumar Building. The Nutchee building also has a program space which is a flexible space that is equipped for playgroups and childminding activities.

Occupancy as of December 2024



* The program space at the Nutchee building is similar to the Maxine Brushe Community Meeting place in that groups hire the room by the hour, and gaps between hirers are inevitable. This results in a lower total occupancy rate than the other buildings.

Collaboration on-site and with the wider community

The Precinct exemplifies the philosophies of place-making, which involves bringing together people, organisations, and disciplines to create positive changes in a place or area. The principle is simple: you get what you plan for and act on. For example, if you plan for, fund, and deliver more roads and car parking, you'll get more cars and, consequently, more traffic. If you build collaborative, inclusive, and safe places, you'll get a collaborative, inclusive, and safe community.

The Precinct is a place that embodies collaboration. Built on a collaborative operating model, it is jointly managed by the Salvation Army, GAPDL Communities for Children, and Gladstone Regional Council. Tenants at the Precinct are also expected to engage in this collaborative model, participating in biannual user meetings and facilitating warm referrals between services. The Maxine Brushe Community Meeting Place is also a place of collaboration, hosting activities such as Interagency Network meetings and Regional Conferences.

The importance of collaboration cannot be understated. As a community we are facing increasingly complex societal issues with finite resources to address them. Collaboration allows for the pooling of knowledge, expertise, and capabilities, helping to create more efficient, sustainable solutions. By combining efforts, we can avoid duplication, optimise resource use, and ensure that interventions are more effective and inclusive. Places like the Philip Street Precinct are essential in creating an environment where dialogue, idea-sharing, and partnerships can thrive. These spaces enable individuals and organisations to come

together, form meaningful connections, and co-create solutions that reflect the collective wisdom and needs of the community.

Data sharing

This year, the Precinct Partners have implemented data sharing with Gladstone Region Engaging in Action Together (GRT), contributing to better-informed decisions for future community initiatives. This collaboration allows for the exchange of valuable insights that help identify local needs, improve service delivery, and allocate resources more effectively. By leveraging shared data, community service providers can pinpoint service gaps, enhance their offerings, and uncover new opportunities for growth, ultimately driving progress and innovation within the region.

Leading the way in collaborative service delivery

The innovative service model and collaborative approach at the Precinct are the envy of other Council's and community groups. We have welcomed many visitors this year including Palmerston Council, Local Government Association Queensland, Social Impact Leadership Australia Program, and Queenslanders with a Disability Network (QDN), to name a few. There are positive signs that the Precinct is beginning to be recognised as a collaborative hub, with closed grant invitations and enquiries from services wanting to get involved.

Conclusion

The Precinct continues to grow as a vital hub cherished by the community. Ongoing improvements are being made to both the facilities and processes, thanks to the guidance of the Advisory and Operations committees. These continuous enhancements aim to optimise the use of the space and create an environment where people are eager to spend their time.

Ultimately, the success of any community-driven initiative depends on the strength of the partnerships and collaborations that support it. The Precinct is a testament to the power of collaboration, demonstrating how bringing together multiple stakeholders with a shared vision can create positive, long-lasting change. By working together, the community can address its most pressing challenges and create an environment where everyone can thrive. It is through these collaborative efforts that we can build a more inclusive, resilient, and sustainable future for all.

Moving forward, the Precinct aims to enhance its impact, ensuring inclusivity and sustainability for our community.



Philip Street

Communities and Families

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