

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

At the frontline of the housing crisis in the Inner West

Sydney, NSW, 8 February, 2016

Newtown Neighbourhood Centre seeks community support for their First Response Program that ensures that anybody who is homeless walks away with a clear path to getting a roof back over their head.

On any given day, at least 10 people who are at risk of homelessness come to Newtown Neighbourhood Centre (NNC) looking for help. They may be dealing with domestic violence, drug or alcohol addiction, and/or various mental health issues.

In 2011, the NSW Census found there were almost 30,000 homeless people across the state and this is expected to increase due to the housing crisis.

Erica Rees, First Response Homelessness Worker said, "Sometimes all it takes to get somebody a place to live is to simply take the time to get to know them and write a letter of support. Often it takes more, but either way we give them a plan and a sense of hope during what can be a very frightening time."

Thanks to the generous donation of \$10,000 raised by the Newtown Locals at Newtown Festival 2015, combined with the generosity of festival goers at the gates, NNC has been able to continue the First Response Program which would otherwise have closed last year.

In order to keep the service running, and prevent people being on the streets, more funds are required.

Liz Yeo, NNC CEO said, "while support from the Festival has enabled us to continue in the short term, we are now asking people to contribute to our crowdfunding campaign 'First Response' to keep the program running. We need \$80,000 per year to run the service and to keep people from sleeping rough."

"People are noticing a rise in the number of people living on the street and it's making them uneasy not knowing what they can do," she said.

"By contributing to "First Response" you know that you are putting your money into a local organisation with almost 40 years experience and one that works directly with people who are doing it most tough in our community."

You can give through Chuffed at <https://chuffed.org/project/first-response-program>

For more information

About NNC

Newtown Neighbourhood Centre exists to create a more inclusive, resilient, vibrant and self-reliant community. We are a not-for-profit incorporated association serving Sydney's inner western suburbs. Our vision is to achieve a just community that includes and acts.

NNC is recognised as one of the lead agencies in Sydney for keeping people off the streets and welcomes recent news that its specialist Boarding House Outreach Service will continue to be funded by the NSW government.

NEWTOWN NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE

The First Response Program is a specific initiative in response to the growing needs seen firsthand as a result of the housing crisis across Sydney. First Response is not government funded and will rely on the support of the community if it is to continue.

www.newtowncentre.org

02 9564 7333

About Newtown Locals

A collaboration of Newtown restaurants and bars designed to showcase its homegrown offerings.

www.newtownlocals.com

Contacts

Erica Rees, First Response Homelessness Worker

Liz Yeo, CEO: 0403 441 159

Julian Lee, Marketing and Communications: 0403 013 366

ENDS