

Annual Report: Supporting Families and Strengthening Community

The Philip Street Communities and Families Precinct continue to be a welcoming and inclusive hub where families, individuals, service providers, and community groups come together in a supportive parkland setting.

The Precinct provides a unique opportunity for collaboration—bringing services together in one accessible location to reduce barriers, strengthen connections, and improve outcomes for our community. By co-locating organisations and fostering partnerships, the Precinct enables people to access the support they need, when they need it, in a respectful and family-friendly environment.

History and story of Philip Street

The Philip Street Communities and Families Precinct was developed through a strong collaborative approach involving Gladstone Regional Council, The Salvation Army Gladstone, Gladstone Area Promotion & Development Limited (GAPDL) – Communities for Children, and the Queensland State Government.

The Precinct is designed to:

- Support families and individuals through accessible services
- Encourage collaboration between service providers
- Create a safe, welcoming space for community connection
- Improve pathways to information, resources, and early intervention support

This shared approach ensures services are coordinated, responsive, and centred on the needs of the community.

Services Available at the Precinct

A diverse range of services operate from the Philip Street Precinct, supporting families across all stages of life.

Gladstone Regional Council – Community Partnerships team

Council's Community Partnerships team acts as a central point of contact for community members, providing access to:

- Community Development support
- Community Investment program
- Community Leasing program
- Sports and Recreation initiatives
- First Nations Liaison Officer
- Program Support team
- Gladstone Region Volunteering
- Community Services Directory

The team play a key role in strengthening community capacity and connection.

Gladstone Region Neighbourhood Centre

The Community and Neighbourhood Centre offer a central access point for information, referrals, and support, including:

- Emergency relief providers
- Financial counselling and financial education
- Health and wellbeing services
- NDIS and Aged Care services

- Tax Help Program
- Substance abuse support services
- Community activities and resources

The centre supports individuals and families by helping them navigate services and access practical assistance.

The Salvation Army Gladstone

The Salvation Army operates community services from within the Precinct.

- 12 consulting rooms for organisations and service supports
- Delivering the Connect/Doorways Program

Services provided include:

- Emergency relief and food bank access
- Holistic case management
- Financial relief
- Social inclusion programs
- Faith-based pathways for those who choose to engage

These services provide practical support while promoting dignity, stability, and long-term wellbeing.

Gladstone Region Communities for Children

The Communities for Children program supports children and families from diverse cultural backgrounds, focusing on early intervention and prevention.

The program assists:

- Parents and carers
- Early childhood professionals
- Families seeking information, resources, and training
- Play area and playgroups

By strengthening early childhood development and family wellbeing, Communities for Children contributes to positive long-term outcomes for children and the broader community.

Working Together for Better Outcomes

The strength of the Philip Street Communities and Families Precinct lies in collaboration. By working together, service providers are better able to:

- Share knowledge and resources
- Coordinate support for families
- Identify emerging community needs
- Deliver integrated, person-centred services

This collaborative model continues to enhance access, reduce duplication, and improve outcomes for individuals and families across the Gladstone Region.

Precinct Vision

A vibrant and evolving space that supports and enhances community wellbeing for all. The future vision of the Precinct will continue to evolve as a cornerstone of community support, with a strength in the focus on:

- Strengthening partnerships
- Enhancing service accessibility
- Supporting families through early intervention
- Building a connected, resilient community

Through collaboration, compassion, and commitment, the Philip Street Communities and Families Precinct remain dedicated to supporting families and creating positive community change.

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 formal advisory group made up of dedicated volunteer members who generously contribute their time, experience, and local knowledge to support the Precinct and the wider community. Committee members represent a broad range of community sectors with lived experiences, bringing grassroots perspectives that help ensure the Precinct remains responsive, inclusive, and community led. Their role is to listen, engage, and advocate—acting as a vital link between the community and Gladstone Regional Council.

Key focus areas for the committee

Committee Membership

- Cr. Leanne Patrick – member representing Gladstone Regional Council
- Cr. Christopher Cameron – member representing Gladstone Regional Council
- Anitha Christopher - Ordinary member representing Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Community
- Kerry Myers - Ordinary member representing Youth Community
- Shakira Campbell – Communities for Children (GAPDL)
- Chris Ford – Salvation Army
- Kylie Lee – Gladstone Regional Council
- Kate Dufty – Ordinary member representing the Disability Community
- Maxine Brushe - Ordinary member representing the Seniors Community
- Cecelia Eggmolesse - Ordinary member representing the First Nations Community

Committee appointments continue and are current until May 2026.

Valuing Volunteer Contribution

The contribution of Advisory Committee members is invaluable. As volunteers, they demonstrate leadership, commitment, and a genuine passion for community wellbeing. Their insights and guidance help shape services and programs that are practical, responsive, and grounded in community need. Council sincerely thanks the Advisory Committee for their ongoing dedication and for being trusted champions of the community voice.

Together, we continue to build the space of the Precinct that reflects, supports, and strengthens our community.

A Voice for the Community

At the heart of the Advisory Committee is a strong commitment to understanding and representing the voices of the community. Members draw on their networks, relationships, and lived experiences to:

- Identify emerging community needs and priorities
- Provide feedback on services, programs, and activities
- Ensure community perspectives inform planning and decision-making
- Advocate for inclusive and accessible outcomes

- Build stronger connections across sectors
- Encourage shared ownership of community outcomes
- Support collaboration between services and community groups
- Create a sense of belonging and shared purpose

This grassroots approach allows authentic community voices to be captured and meaningfully channelled into the strategic intent of the Precinct.

Representation and Inclusion

The Advisory Committee intentionally targets representation across key community demographics, including:

- First Nations peoples
- Young people
- Seniors
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities
- People with disability

By bringing diverse perspectives to the table, the committee strengthens understanding, promotes inclusion, and ensures decisions reflect the lived realities of the community.

The Advisory Committee plays an important role in fostering trust and strengthening relationships between Council, service providers, and the community. Through collaboration and open dialogue, members help by building relationships and strengthening connections. These relationships are essential to the ongoing success and sustainability of the Philip Street Communities and Families Precinct. Committee meetings are held on the third Thursday every second month from 12pm to 2pm in the Ngallil building meeting room.

Activities at the Precinct

Exciting programs the Gladstone Region Neighbourhood Centre have successfully started here at the precinct over the last 12 months. Collaborating with internal and external organisations, community is always at the forefront.

Mindful Mondays was launched mid-year in response to a community suggestion during Neighbourhood Centre Week, after a gap on Monday social activities was identified. What began as a small arts and crafts group with three participants has grown into a vibrant weekly program welcoming up to 18 people. The program offers a safe and welcoming space for community members to connect over morning tea while engaging in creative and meaningful activities. Strong friendships and peer support have developed, extending beyond the sessions themselves. Now largely volunteer-facilitated, participants regularly meet outside the program, including collaboratively planning overseas holidays together.

Move Connect Grow – Seniors Fitness was developed in partnership with a local physiotherapy provider after a need was identified for a free, community-based seniors exercise program. Many older adults were prioritising essential allied health services over preventative exercise, limiting opportunities to improve balance and stability. Delivered by qualified physiotherapists and coordinated by the Neighbourhood Centre, the program combined structured exercise sessions with social connection, morning tea, and informative presentations from relevant service providers. Participants reported improved balance and stability, formed meaningful social connections, and showed strong interest in continuing regular physical activity beyond the program.

Tai Chi was introduced following the Move Connect Grow program in response to participant feedback seeking ongoing, structured physical activity. A local Tai Chi instructor, newly relocated to the area, volunteered her time to support the program. Coordinated by the Neighbourhood Centre and delivered weekly during school terms, the volunteer-led program maintains strong and consistent participation. Participants have built lasting social connections, supporting the program's continued success and sustainability.

Tech and Tea were delivered in partnership with the local libraries during Seniors' Week, supporting older adults to build confidence using computers and smartphones while strengthening social connections. Participant and facilitator feedback identified strong demand for both beginner and intermediate sessions. In response, the program will continue in the new year with options to suit all skill levels.

Picnic at the Precinct was a small-scale community event featuring live music and "come and try" activities, including yoga, Zumba, Latin dancing, and seniors exercise. The event increased awareness of local programs at the Philip Street Precinct, strengthened connections between community members and service providers, and supported efforts to reduce social isolation.

Welcome to the Region Morning Tea – Babies Edition was delivered in partnership with the Community Development Team to welcome and support families new to the region. The event celebrated 54 newborns, each receiving a mayor-signed certificate and a handmade gift created by local QCWA groups and churches. The initiative strengthened partnerships with community organisations, including QCWA Tannum, Calliope, and the Gladstone Anglican Church, and connected families with local services, playgroups, and social groups. The event supported early connection, community inclusion, and reduced social isolation for families with young children.

Other Supported Programs / Events – Outcomes & Key Details

The Neighbourhood Centre supported local organisations including P2P, Catholic Care and Roseberry QLD by hosting and facilitating community events at the precinct and surrounding areas, strengthening local partnerships and increasing community engagement. The Centre also continues to support community-led initiatives that promote social connection and reduce loneliness. This includes partnering with *Fearless and Confident* to provide a venue for monthly mother's groups, creating opportunities for peer support and connection to local services and information.

From February 2026, the Centre will support *Te Roopu o Nga Moemoea* to deliver a 16-week New Zealand Māori Cultural Workshop. The program will provide hands-on cultural learning focused on traditional Māori art forms and taonga, supporting cultural understanding, identity, creativity and community connection in a culturally safe and inclusive environment for participants of all backgrounds and abilities.

Gladstone Region Youth Council highlights for 2025 included:

In 2025, the Gladstone Region Youth Council delivered several key initiatives with strong community impact. This included the development of a Sun Safety campaign addressing the region's high melanoma rates, featuring a digital mascot "Sunny" and the slogan *SPF is my BFF*, and advocating for practical infrastructure outcomes such as the installation of sunscreen dispensers at Tannum Sands Beach and a UV index indicator at Agnes Water Main Beach through a Central Queensland Health grant.

The Youth Council increased its visibility and engagement by launching an Instagram profile and representing local youth at the Art Science Innovation Festival, contributing to discussions on the region's future vision for 2100. International connections were strengthened through Council's

Friendship City Agreement with Melito Pól, Ukraine, via a youth book exchange and shared Spotify playlist.

Capacity building remained a focus, with members completing advocacy and leadership training with YLab. The Youth Council also supported local youth initiatives by mentoring participants in the Neighbourhood Centre's Connected Youth program and contributed to improved community accessibility through the installation of an accessible drinking fountain at Lions Park, Boyne Island.



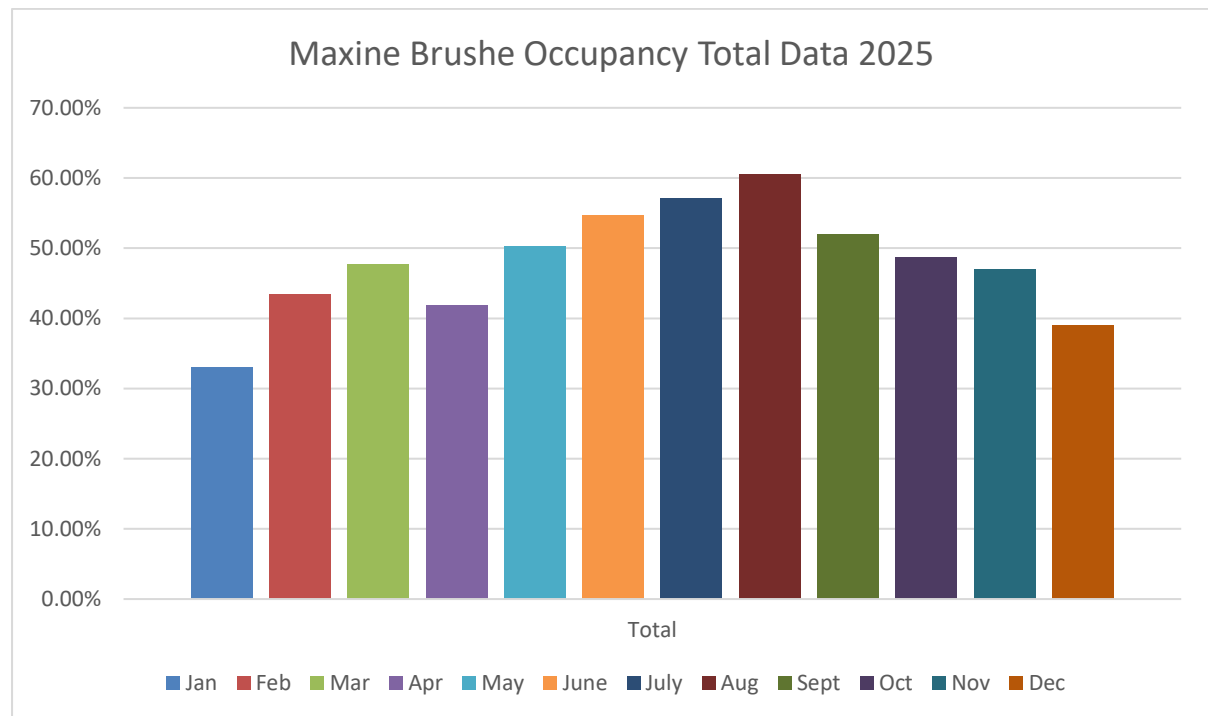
Over the past year, several infrastructure upgrades were delivered to improve accessibility, inclusion and user experience at the Philip Street Communities and Families Precinct. Enhancements included the installation of acoustic curtains in the Maxine Brushe meeting rooms to better support people with sensory needs, new outdoor seating to support visitors waiting for rooms or using the space during breaks, and wheelchair-friendly seating in the playground and BBQ area. Wayfinding and visibility were also improved through new building signage and the installation of flags marking the entrance to the Maxine Brushe meeting place.

Council's commitment to accessibility and inclusion was further strengthened through the endorsement of the Access and Inclusion Action Plan 2024–2027 in June 2024. In alignment with this plan, the Precinct continues to be developed as a safe, welcoming and inclusive space for all community members. In September 2025 the Precinct hosted Council's first Access and Inclusion Annual Forum, creating a valuable platform for community input, collaboration and shared learning.



Throughout the year, the Precinct also supported cultural events that celebrated diversity and connection, including Dorrie Day. This work is guided by strong governance, with community representatives on the Advisory Committee ensuring lived experience informs planning and decision-making.

Maxine Brushe Community Meeting Place - Occupancy Total Data 2025

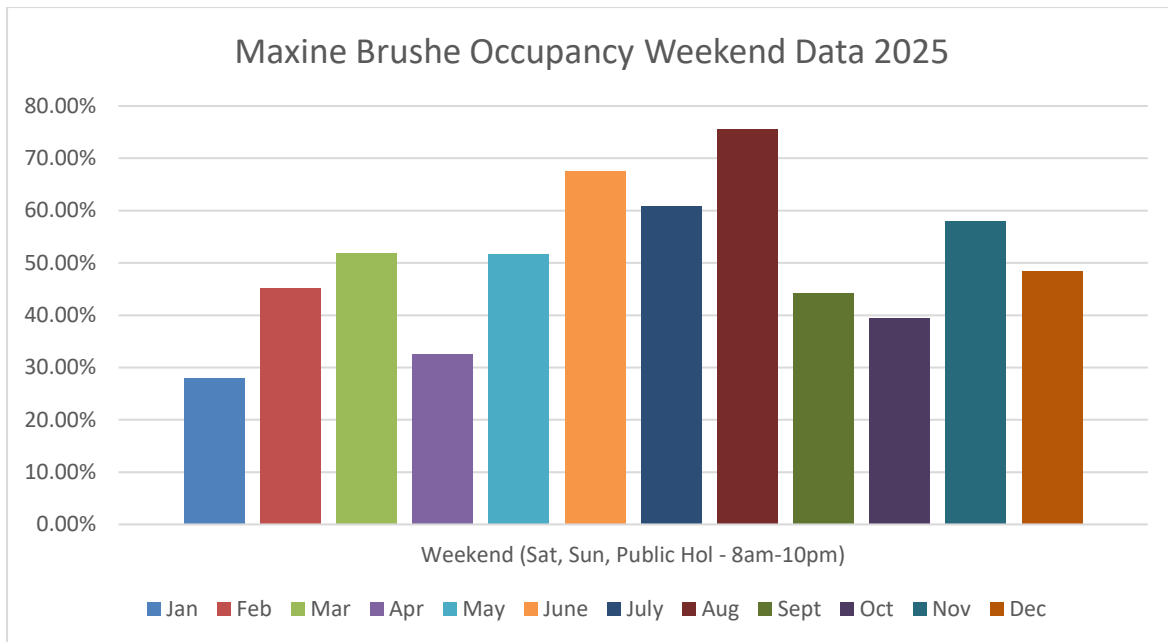


Overall Occupancy Trends

Total occupancy for Maxine Brushe in 2025 showed a clear seasonal pattern, with steady growth through the first half of the year, a mid-year peak, and a gradual decline toward year-end.

Occupancy began the year at a relatively low level in January (around 33%), increasing consistently through February and March. After a brief dip in April, utilisation rebounded strongly from May onward, reaching its highest levels during the winter months. August recorded the peak total occupancy at approximately 60%, reflecting the strongest demand period of the year. Following this peak, occupancy declined through September to November, before dropping more sharply in December (around 39%), aligning with seasonal slowdowns and holiday impacts.

Overall, the data indicates solid mid-year demand, with opportunities to improve utilisation during the early and late parts of the year.



Weekend Occupancy Performance

Weekend occupancy (including Saturdays, Sundays, and public holidays between 8am–10pm) followed a similar but more pronounced pattern, with higher peaks and greater variability than total occupancy.

Weekend usage started lower in January (approximately 28%), rising steadily through the first quarter and showing strong growth from May onwards. Demand accelerated rapidly during winter, peaking in August at approximately 75%, the highest occupancy recorded across all measures.

After August, weekend occupancy declined in September and October, before a notable rebound in November (around 57%), suggesting renewed late-spring demand. December remained relatively strong at approximately 48%, outperforming total occupancy for the same period.

This pattern highlights weekends as a key driver of utilisation, particularly during peak seasonal periods, and suggests potential for targeted programming or pricing strategies outside peak months.

Conclusion

The Precinct continues to strengthen its role as a vital and valued community hub, shaped by the needs and aspirations of those who use it. Guided by the Advisory and Operations Committees, ongoing improvements to facilities and operational processes are ensuring the space remains responsive, welcoming, and fit for purpose. These enhancements are focused on maximising utilisation while fostering an environment where people feel encouraged to connect, participate, and belong.

The success of any community-led initiative is rooted in the strength of its partnerships, and the Precinct stands as a clear example of what can be achieved through collaboration. By bringing together diverse stakeholders around a shared vision, the Precinct has become a place where differences are respected, challenges are addressed collectively, and meaningful, long-term outcomes are realised.

Looking ahead, the Precinct remains committed to deepening its impact, with a continued focus on inclusivity, sustainability, and community wellbeing. Through ongoing collaboration and shared stewardship, the Precinct will continue to evolve as a space where everyone can thrive, today and into the future.