




Speech By
Peter Russo
MEMBER FOR TOOHEY

Record of Proceedings, 16 March 2023

ADJOURNMENT

Chinese New Year; St David's Neighbourhood Centre

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (5.59 pm): Last time I was on my feet I spoke about the Chinese New Year celebrations in my electorate. I mentioned that the members for Bundaberg, Stretton, Mount Ommaney, Bundamba and Pine Rivers happily joined in the festivities. I table a photo of that occasion.

Tabled paper: Photograph depicting members of parliament celebrating Chinese New Year [324](#).

I wish everyone a happy Year of the Rabbit—a year full of prosperity and opportunities, a year full of engaging with your community.

I now would like to speak about a beautiful and wonderful organisation: the St David's Neighbourhood Centre. The St David's Neighbourhood Centre is a fabulous community support organisation based in my electorate. It is one of those centres that have formed across many communities in Queensland. These centres go above and beyond to provide support to those in need.

The St David's Neighbourhood Centre grew from humble beginnings. In the early 1980s, congregation members from St David's Uniting Church agreed that one of their missions was to reach out to their community. They formed a committee to work out where there may be a need. Congregation members went to the local community and connected with people at the local shopping centres. They interviewed them and drew up a list of the greatest needs in the community. They found that the most pressing need at the time was from local mothers keen to access part-time child care. With no government funding, the organisation turned to fundraising to provide the activities and programs to meet the locals' needs.

In the now widely and often repeated words of Kevin Carmody and Paul Kelly's song, from little things big things grow. In 1992 the neighbourhood centre eventually became eligible for government funding for occasional child care. This funding has since been followed by neighbourhood centre, aged-care and disability funding. The organisation has received one-off grants which have allowed it to expand the services, programs and activities it offers to the local community. I was invited to the recent St David's Neighbourhood Centre annual community celebrations. Each year the centre holds an annual celebration to discuss its annual report and also to say thanks to the many volunteers and staff who are the glue that keeps everything together.