



## **Activities which support or are supported by the Waiters Union**

The Waiters Union mobilise many volunteers to participate in many local community groups - which may or may not identify with Waiters Union. Waiters Union people were involved in setting up the Queensland edition of The Big Issue, a national newspaper sold by homeless people as an employment-generation project. And Waiters Union people are right now involved in coordinating the inner-city inter-church Room in The Inn crash beds pilot program for homeless women at risk in Brisbane.

Some of the activities which support - or are supported by - the Waiters Union include:

1. *An annual planning day* - a day of planning attended by around twenty to thirty people.
2. *Network gatherings* - three-hour networking gatherings of twenty people held every six weeks.
3. *Coordinating meetings* - one-hour co-ordinating meetings of five to ten people every week.
4. *Ongoing involvement with Aboriginal people* in association with Aunty Jean, a local aboriginal leader.
5. *Ongoing involvement with refugees and refugee claimants* in association with the West End Migrant and Refugee Support Group, Refugee Airfare Loans Scheme, the Refugee Sewing Group, the One World Singing Group, and E.P.M (Ethical Property Management) - a Refugee Workers Cooperative.
6. *Ongoing involvement with people* in public housing, boarding houses, and hostels who are struggling with mental and emotional distress in association with A Place To Belong.
7. *Ongoing involvement with global justice issues* through Servants, TEAR, and the Micah Challenge.
8. *Ongoing involvement in and support for alternative local economic ventures* such as Justice Products, Ethical Property Management and a backyard chook co-op.
9. *Bristol Street House* - a structured household of people with a commitment to learning about and practising community involvement with marginalised local residents, giving support in the form of friendship, assistance with living skills, conflict resolution, advocacy, etc.
10. *Community meals* - a fortnightly evening meal in a local church hall, usually attended by about forty people who bring food to share. The majority live in local supported accommodation hostels; some, who were relocated from their accommodation in West End as one of the consequences of the gentrification of the area in recent years, travel from as far away as Carindale to attend. The meals includes low key recreational activities – such as board games.
11. *Community picnics* - four times a month a picnic or similar outing is arranged for 10 to 25 people who live in supported accommodation locally and at Carindale.

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12. *Community transport* - using a mini-bus and private cars, two people are rostered each week to provide transport to and from an evening service at St Andrew's Anglican Church, South Brisbane, for about 20 people who would otherwise have difficulty attending.
13. *Community fellowship* - an evening service held at St Andrews Anglican Church, South Brisbane, for about forty to fifty people, that provides people - particularly those who do not usually have the opportunity - with the opportunity to contribute to a church service, through leading, presenting, praying, sharing and so on.
14. *Community Orientation Course* - an intensive live-in course focusing on practical community involvement within a Christian community development framework with many of the more marginalised local groups and individuals. Courses are held for two weeks mid year and at the end of the year, involving about a dozen participants each time.
15. *Project Hope* - a support network for church-based community workers in south-east Queensland, involving a discussion group each six weeks attended by 20 to 30 people and an annual retreat attended by about 45 people.
16. *End of year camp* - a weekend camp attended by around 50 adults and children.

### Activities auspiced through the Community Initiatives Resource Association

Activities the Waiters Union has auspiced through the Community Initiatives Resource Association include:

1. *The Kurilpa Pay the Rent Group* - a small group committed to building relationships with local Indigenous people on terms that do justice to an objective view of the history of colonisation.
2. *The West End Refugee Support Group* - an active group which sponsors and settles refugees, some under the Commonwealth Community Refugee Resettlement Scheme. Activities include meeting with individuals and families, liaison with government departments, a fortnightly sewing group attended by about a 12 women and their children, and one or two group outings per year for about 30 people.
3. *Hazara Ethnic Society* - the Hazara are a persecuted minority from Afghanistan . We auspiced a \$10 000 grant to the Hazara Ethnic Society to better resource itself with office equipment and to provide the Hazara community in Brisbane with English literacy and numeracy classes.
4. *The Reading and Writing Group* - an ongoing learning opportunity for people with disabilities living in local hostels, boarding houses and housing commission units to learn literacy, numeracy, and basic survival skills - from cooking to computers.
5. *West End Youth Initiative* - this was a joint project between the Queensland Program Assisting Survivors of Torture and Trauma, the Mercy Family Services and Project Micah to involve young people in the development of leadership and peer education skills, and to develop a community that is more attentive to the needs of its young people.

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6. *Local Needs Project* - a project conducted by the Greenslopes State School Parents & Citizens Association to identify and meet the needs of people of non-English speaking backgrounds amongst students and their families.
7. *Chill Out Programme* - this project supplemented the Local Needs project, which identified a lack of school holiday recreation options for students of non-English speaking backgrounds.
8. *Passion Fruit Seeds Project* - we auspiced an earlier Connect Youth Action project, Seeds 2, assisting young artists to develop micro-enterprises. Passionfruit was a showcase at the Brisbane Powerhouse, also organised by Connect, of the artwork produced following Seeds 2.
9. *Unemployed Persons Advocacy (Unempa)* - we auspiced a grant to Unempa to purchase a new photocopier.
10. *Simple Options for Sustainability (SOS.)* - we auspiced Spiral Community Hub, then a local unincorporated group, to run a project producing an ethical consumer guide for West End .
11. *House Centre* - a shared workspace and community resource centre located in a large old house at 69 Thomas Street, West End. We rent the premises, sub-let office space, and make meeting facilities available. Some of our co-tenants over the years have included:

TEAR Australia  
Bicycle Queensland  
Christian Blind Mission  
Ethical Pest Management  
Community Praxis Cooperative  
Sustainable Gardening Services  
Business Ethics Research Centre  
House of Freedom Christian Community  
Feral Arts Association Youth Video Project  
Anglicare "A Place to Belong" Mental Health Project  
Queensland Baptist Care Community Development Training Team

Other community groups who have used the House Centre as a meeting place include:

Project Hope  
Catholic Worker  
Justice Products  
Feminists for Life  
West End Men's Group  
Self Harm Support Group  
The Refugee Sewing Group  
Torres Strait Islanders' Choir  
Refugee Airfare Loans Scheme  
West End Housing Cooperative  
West End Refugee Support Group  
Atomic Oz Street Theatre Troupe  
Cultural Heritage Education Programme

12. *Community Bus* - we own a Toyota Hiace twelve seater mini-bus which is available for use by not-for-profit groups and individuals for community-based activities. It is regularly used for community meals, community picnics, community fellowship and other activities, and has also been used by:

# The Waiters Union Activities

Red Cross  
 Open Minds  
 Wattle League  
 Brisbane Youth Service  
 Queensland Baptist Care  
 Vegetarian and Vegan Society  
 Brook Street Recreation Centre  
 Community Orientation Course  
 Spiral Community Hub Cooperative  
 Jubilee Community Care Association  
 Anglican Refugee & Migrant Services  
 Benarrawa Community Development Association  
 Brisbane City Council Community Development Team  
 Queensland Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma  
 Individuals organising activities for disadvantaged people from the local area (e.g., canoeing trips)

