

News from Western Sydney Community Forum

Forum Flash

9 March 2010

Stronger Voice for Western Sydney Forum a Great Success.



The Stronger Voice for Western Sydney Forum was a resounding success with over 80 people attending. The day began Jeremy Goff (WSROC) providing 'inside' information on the 'Power of Lobbying'. This was followed by Peter Rogers (WESTIR) giving participants an interesting and informative insight into the changing trends and demographics in Greater Western Sydney.

This was followed by a group activity where participants identified what were the 'big issues' for Western Sydney. A diverse range of ideas and views were put forward by the various groups who then used a 'fresh Ideas' brainstorm on what strategies could be embarked on to bring about change.

The main issues and goals identified were:

Issue	Goal
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Invisibility of our Assets• Rethinking Work and Transport• Community Image• Promoting the Diverse Identity of WS• Access & Equity for Carers'• Education• Need to work together to work the system	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Positive Image - Enhance Stronger Voice for WSSustainable and for local people in new industriesPromote harmony within and outside communityAchieving a Positive Identity/Image of WSMeeting Carers' NeedsEmpowering WS communityHighly skilled/networked/knowledgeable workers in advocacy
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creating a community that values education and lifelong learning• Western Sydney Stereotype• Lack of Shared Identity (Stereotyping)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Pathways to employmentTurn it aroundShared Western Sydney identify

In the afternoon Kerry Nettle spoke on *Strategies for Successful Advocating* and participants found the practical approach very useful. The day ended with a panel giving us their successful advocacy stories. A participant's feedback:

'Great diversity of topics but feeding into the ultimate goal of advocacy. Seeding thoughts for action.'

WSCF is collating all the presentations and input from the forum and this will be made available through our web site. So watch this space for more updates!

CLOSETHEGAP

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people can expect to live shorter lives than non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait people of Australia up to 17 years was a reason to form a national coalition of 40 organisations to demand equality. Close the Gap coalition started a campaign to improve Indigenous health in 2006.



The campaign attracted huge public support and, the Australian Government announced in November 2008 a \$1.6 billion commitment over the four years to improve Indigenous health.

59.1 % of Aboriginal population of Sydney lives in Western Sydney and we are aware that there are some projects running under the “CLOSETHEGAP” Program. Western Sydney Community Forum in conjunction with Blacktown City Council is organising a 2 hour event on 26th of March in Mt Druitt to see what are the current programs or future plans to reduce the gap in life expectancy.

The information about the event is on our website www.wscf.org.au or can be obtained by calling Semra Guler on 9687 6974 or sending an e-mail to semrag@wscf.org.au

WSCF Growth Centres Study Tour

On Feb 12 this year WSCF organized a study tour of the North West and South West Growth Centres of Sydney www.gcc.nsw.gov.au . The purpose was to give people the chance to see and experience the changes that are happening in the growth centres so that it informs their discussions and participation in the planning processes.

Thirty-five people came on the bus and we looked at the new developments, the planned areas and the transport infrastructure that is being built and is planned in the Growth Centres. Department of Planning staff came with us and resourced the study tour with information and commentary.

The people who came were a mixture of local government workers, academics, community workers, state government workers and community advocates.



In the North West we visited the new town centre at Rouse Hill <http://www.rhtc.com.au/RHTC/default.aspx> , spoke with the Town Centre General Manager and the Green Transport Coordinator, Sue Wiblin. We used some of the new bus transitway infrastructure to

Parramatta and we saw the planned development areas in Kellyville and Riverstone.

In the South West we visited the South West Rail Link construction site at Glenfield and the new housing estate at Oran Park <http://www.oranparktown.com.au/news/media-releases/sydney's-biggest-residential-development-gets-underway.aspx> . We were given a talk about the Oran Park development by the General Manager of the site. We also visited the new planned areas at Turner Rd and Edmonson Park, the area planned as a major town centre at Leppington and the Narrellan Town Centre, which is already a focal point for the South West developments.

Because we received a positive response from the participants, WSCF will consider repeating the tour in future years which will enable us to see the changes to the Growth Centres as they progress and give other people opportunities to participate and learn about the Growth Centres.

As a result of our study tour WSCF is developing a number of policy suggestions to be submitted to the relevant people.

Training Directions Network (TDN)

The TDN at its strategic planning day on February put forward some suggested changes.

- Participants agreed to have two meetings (longer) per year. This was recommended as “strategic pauses” where participants could share with other TDN members their issues and improve their training practice in the long term.
- TDN participants to identify priorities for the year 2010 and this is a list of the themes
 - a) Aboriginal workers and training
 - b) Learning organizations
 - c) What we should expect from trainers and consultants (MOUs, fees, location, costs)
 - d) Copyright and intellectual property
 - e) Professional standards
 - f) Workforce issues - how to train people from different backgrounds (CALD, gender, age - diverse audience)
 - g) E-learning

Joke Spot

A conclusion is the place where you got tired of thinking

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