

# The Minchinbury Report

A COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER FROM CHRIS BOWEN – YOUR FEDERAL MEMBER FOR PROSPECT ■ JUNE 2007

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## Minchinbury Playgroup: Fun for all!

Minchinbury Playgroup, the largest playgroup in the Greater Western Zone of Playgroups, caters for families with children under five in the greater western suburbs region. There are five sessions, Monday to Friday mornings at the Minchinbury Community Centre, located in Minchin Drive, Minchinbury, just off the Great Western Highway.

A non-profit community group, the playgroup is run by a group of mums who volunteer their time on the committee each year, working with the dayleaders to ensure playgroup is fun and enjoyable – and not just for children! It's also a wonderful way for local mums to make friends and share ideas.

Playgroup is not a child-care facility, but a way for members to take a break and enjoy morning tea. The venues are warm and cosy during winter, and cool and air-conditioned during summer, thanks to the excellent facilities provided by council. For mums, dads and carers, it's a way to make friends; for children, a chance to interact with other children their own age and experience invaluable playtime. Babies don't miss out, with tummy time, story time and specified toys and mats for the littlies.



Children, parents and carers all enjoy the activities of the Minchinbury Playgroup.

The committee puts together a range of great events, including toy warehouse visits, a discounted book club, bus shopping trip, confectionary warehouse visit and term outings for the groups. Children enjoy activities like craft, painting, playdoh, singing, dress-ups, morning tea, reading and lots more.

Minchinbury Playgroup includes members from a range of suburbs, including Mt Druitt, Colyton, Erskine Park, Rooty Hill, Eastern Creek, Blackett, Emu Plains, Hebersham, Kellyville, Acacia Gardens and Hassall Grove.

There are presently some vacancies for 2007: new members are welcome. The first two visits are free. Session fees are only \$2.50 per week/session payable each term, plus playgroup membership fees, which include insurance and the Totline Playgroup magazine.

**For further information please contact Membership Officer Vanessa McDonald on 9832 7801.**

## Chris Bowen writes...



Welcome to the first *Minchinbury Report*. This report is an important way for me to keep in touch with you about current community events.

On 14 May, a very warm autumn day I held a 'Mobile Office' at Minchinbury Shopping Centre.

Amongst the issues of those residents who attended the mobile office were: a post office, Minchinbury's post code, trail bike noise, and the tip proposal.

While not of all of these issues are Federal Government matters, I am happy to ensure your views are heard by the responsible decision-makers

Thanks to those who completed the community surveys.

If you have a community event coming up, or are part of a local not-for-profit group, and would like some free advertising space, please email me at [chris.bowen.mp@aph.gov.au](mailto:chris.bowen.mp@aph.gov.au)

I will be holding an evening mobile office at Minchinbury shortly to accommodate those who couldn't make the earlier one so stay tuned for the details.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chris Bowen".

**Chris Bowen**  
Federal Member for Prospect



Chris at Minchinbury Shopping Centre at his recent mobile office.



# Tackling red tape

The red tape paperwork burden is one of the biggest difficulties facing small business in Australia.

In recent months Kevin Rudd has made reducing the red tap burden for small business a key policy priority.

Initiatives announced include:

- Bas Easy – Reducing the red tape involved in Business Activity Statements by up to 85%;
- A superannuation clearing house to deal with employee's super paper work;

- A "one in, one out" rule on regulation; and
- An incentive fund for state governments to reduce differences in regulations.

Chris Bowen has a Small Business E-network to enable small business operators to not only receive information about Labor's business policy, but provide comment and feedback – helping to shape Labor's small business policy.

**To subscribe to the e-network just send an email to Chris at [chris.bowen.mp@aph.gov.au](mailto:chris.bowen.mp@aph.gov.au)**



Chris participating in the Pollies For Small Business Program.  
Photo taken by Gene Ramirez and provided courtesy of the Fairfield Champion.

## WHAT'S ON

### AT THE MINCHINBURY NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE

- **Minchinbury Playgroup** meets at the neighbourhood centre from Monday to Friday at 9.15am
- **Modern dance classes** are held on Tuesday and Thursday from 4.30pm
- Anglicare holds **parenting classes** from 5:30pm on Monday evenings

Minchinbury Neighbourhood Centre, Minchin Drive, Minchinbury

**For inquiries or bookings please contact the centre's Norm Walton on 9625 8274.**

## Vaccine to fight cervical cancer

### Important changes to the National Immunisation Program that could affect you!

While not as common as breast cancer in women, cervical cancer can be just as lethal. 1 in 183 Australian women will develop cervical cancer by the age of 75.

After a strong community campaign, the Commonwealth Government has decided to fund the cervical cancer vaccine, Gardasil®, for girls and women aged 12 to 26 from the start of 2007.

The cervical cancer vaccine took 2006 Australian of the Year, Ian Frazer, 15 years to develop and could prevent 70% of cervical cancer.

As part of the National Immunisation Program, Gardasil® is being funded by the Federal Government, commencing in the 2007 school year for:

- An ongoing target group of 12 and 13 year old girls in a school-based program, generally delivered in the first year of high school;

- A catch-up group of 13-18 year old girls in a largely school-based program.

Women aged 18 to 26 will be also able to access the Gardasil® vaccine through their local GP from June-July 2007.

Women seeking to have this vaccination should contact their local GP for more information.

**If you would like a Fact Sheet on Gardasil® and the National Immunisation Program, please contact my office on 9726 4100.**

# The drug 'ice': What you and your family can do about it

**Over 100 parents and teenagers turned out to a public forum on the illicit drug 'ice' held by Chris Bowen at Smithfield RSL on Wednesday 18 April.**

'On the street it's known as crystal meth or 'ice'. But whatever you call it, methamphetamine is a dangerous drug, being stronger, more addictive, and more dangerous than heroin,' Chris said.

'Ice is a potent form of methamphetamine, almost 80% pure in some cases. It's a very different drug to what's been out there before.

'That's all the more frightening because it's considered fun, a party drug, aimed squarely at young people.'

The forum included special guest speakers Dr Gilbert Whitton, Drug and Alcohol Specialist at Sydney South West Area Health Service, Beaver Hudson, a Clinical Nurse at St Vincent's Hospital and 'BJ', a former ice addict.

The number of arrests for methamphetamine use and trafficking has shot up from 3900 in 1996-97 to more than 10,000 in 2004-05.

'Enough is enough – we must act before ice gets totally out of control,' Chris said.

Kevin Rudd and Federal Labor are committed to tackling

the ice epidemic, facing the problem with a plan that includes:

- Working to ban the importation of ice pipes and other drug paraphernalia under the Customs Act (at present there is no such ban);
- Working with State and Territory governments to make it a criminal act to sell pseudoephedrine to minors (pseudoephedrine is a major ingredient in speed and ice); and
- Tailoring existing national education programs on illicit drug use, specifically targeting young people and ice.

Locally, it is important that young people and parents are informed about what this drug is and what it can do.

**For a copy of the 'ice' information kit please contact my office on 9726 4100.**

## Chris in Canberra

These are the speeches that Chris has made in Parliament recently:

- Climate Change – 31 May 2007
- Workplace Relations Bill 2007 – 30 May 2007
- Volunteer Small Equipment Grants Program – 29 May 2007
- Tax Laws (Small Business) Bill 2007 – 24 May 2007
- Second Sydney Airport – 24 May 2007
- Tax laws (Personal Income Tax Reduction) Bill 2007 – 23 May 2007
- Tax Laws (2007 Budget) – 23 May 2007
- Tax Laws (2007 Measures No.3) – 23 May 2007
- Vietnam: Human Rights – 21 May 2007
- Tax Laws (2007 Measures No.2) – 9 May 2007
- Budget 2007-08 – 9 May 2007
- Superannuation Laws (Budget Co-contribution measures) – 9 May 2007
- Tax Laws (2006 Measures No.7) – 29 March 2007
- Corporations and Financial Services Committee: Report – 29 March 2007
- Trade Practices Regulations – 28 March 2007
- Broadband – 28 March 2007
- Liberal Democratic Party – 26 March 2007
- Australian Crime Commission Committee: Report – 26 March 2007
- Human Rights: Vietnam – 26 February 2007
- Iraq – 26 February 2007



**If you would like copies of any of Chris' speeches in Parliament please phone 9726 4100 or go to [www.chrisbowen.net](http://www.chrisbowen.net)**



At the 'ice' forum: (left to right) Chris with Dr Gilbert Whitton and Beaver Hudson.

# Do Not Call Register finally up and running

EVERYWHERE I GO, FROM EVERYONE I TALK TO, I HEAR STORIES OF PEOPLE RECEIVING UNSOLICITED TELEMARKETING PHONE CALLS IN THEIR HOMES.

Labor has been calling for a government-sponsored Do Not Call Register for over two years.

Before the Federal Government came on board and introduced the Do Not Call Register, the Australian Direct Marketing Association (ADMA) ran its own register, which some of you may have already signed up to. If you wish to continue to opt out of telemarketing calls then you will need to sign up to the new Do Not Call Register.

## Which numbers can I list on the Do Not Call Register?

You can list your Australian fixed line and mobile numbers on the Register, provided the numbers are used primarily for private or domestic purposes.

## How does the register work?

Under the Do Not Call Register legislation, telemarketers can check

their calling lists against the Do Not Call Register. If a telemarketer calls a number on the Do Not Call Register, they may be in breach of the Act, and may face penalties.

## When will calls start to reduce?

It may take up to 30 days for individual telemarketing agencies to recognise your registration, and stop calls to your number.

## Will it stop all telemarketing calls?

Registering your telephone number on the Do Not Call Register will not stop all telemarketing calls to your number. There are some exemptions (see [www.donotcall.gov.au/consumerfaq.cfm](http://www.donotcall.gov.au/consumerfaq.cfm)) which enable certain public interest organisations to make telemarketing calls, including charities, religious groups and registered political parties. You can also still receive calls from market researchers.



For more information or to register your phone number, simply go to [www.donotcall.gov.au](http://www.donotcall.gov.au) or call Chris' office on 9726 4100 for an application form.

You can download an application form by going to [www.donotcall.gov.au/Media\\_Releases/english\\_applicationform.pdf](http://www.donotcall.gov.au/Media_Releases/english_applicationform.pdf)

## Labor's new national broadband network: Faster internet connections for Prospect

**Bowen backs ALP plan  
for faster internet links**

Fairfield Champion 4 April 2007

Labor has announced a \$4.7 billion investment in partnership with the private sector to establish a national broadband network.

The new national broadband network will connect 98% of Australians to high speed broadband internet services, delivering speeds up to 40 times faster than most people can currently access.

Labor's broadband network will ensure every house and business in the Prospect electorate will have access to high speed broadband.

Plenty of households in the local area do not have access to the existing ADSL broadband.

The benefits of the network include:

- Slashing telephone bills for small business;
- Enhancing business services such as teleconferencing, video conferencing and virtual private networks;
- Providing high definition, multi-channel and interactive TV services.

The national broadband network will be rolled out over a period of five years.

'I am pleased that Labor's national broadband network recognises the problems of the existing slower, broadband network, and will deliver high speed broadband to 100% of households and businesses in the local area,' Chris said.

# The Rats of Tobruk

'A CHANCE TO HONOUR SOME REAL AUSTRALIAN HEROES.'

**CHRIS BOWEN MP,**  
Federal Member  
for Prospect

INVITES YOU TO  
A FILM SCREENING  
OF THE  
DOCUMENTARY

## "TOBRUK"

WITH SPECIAL GUEST  
PETER FITZSIMONS

AND VETERANS OF  
THE BATTLE OF TOBRUK

6PM, MONDAY, 2ND JULY

SMITHFIELD RSL – NEVILLE STREET  
CNR CUMBERLAND HIGHWAY, SMITHFIELD



**HURRY – Limited seating**

Please RSVP by emailing [carole.field@aph.gov.au](mailto:carole.field@aph.gov.au)  
or ringing Chris Bowen's office on 9726 4100.

## MINCHINBURY SAFETY COMMITTEE: ALL WELCOME

**A committee meeting will be held to develop a new safety program, similar to the old Neighbourhood Watch scheme.**

There will be a representative of Mt Druitt local police present to discuss concerns in the community and programs that can be implemented.

7pm , 27 June 2007 , **Minchinbury Community Centre,**  
Minchin Drive, Minchinbury

All residents are encouraged to attend.

## Financial hardship

Data from the Insolvency and Trustee Service Australia – the federal government agency responsible for the administration of personal insolvencies – shows, since 1999-2000:

- Personal insolvencies have doubled in the worst hit areas of Sydney;
- Personal insolvencies are also up dramatically in Western Sydney, rising 83% in the inner-west and 71% in the outer-west; and
- Insolvencies in the Blacktown region are up 99%.

The dramatic rise in personal insolvencies comes after reports of a dramatic surge in families being forced to access their superannuation savings to keep their heads above water.

Figures released show a staggering \$135 million of people's superannuation savings were released early in 2006 to help them cope with day-to-day financial hardship.

In light of these figures, it is extraordinary that the Prime Minister would claim: 'Australian working families have never been better off.'

In particular, household budgets are being hit by rising petrol prices, high childcare costs and spiralling mortgage repayments caused by eight consecutive interest rate rises despite John Howard's promise to keep rates at record lows.

It's figures like this that show the economy is not as rosy as the Government would like us to believe.