

On the roads again

by David Yarnall President of the Roads and Services Action Party

Currently, according to Council's own figures 42% of our roads are either failing or terminal. I don't need to remind readers of the terrible roads due to the lack of maintenance and poor construction practices. What has been Lismore Council's reply to this sorry state of affairs? Mayor King, Cr. Chant, Meinicke, Crimmins, Henry, Graham and Hampton voted to cut \$2 million from the roads budget. Yet council surveys confirm that 83% of resident want more money spent on roads.

It gets even worse. For those of us living on gravel roads, funding has not increased since 2001. That's a 35% drop in funding in real terms (accounting for inflation)! Slowly and deceptively our roads budget is being reduced, siphoned off to fund large infrastructure projects such as the two swimming pools in Lismore at a combined cost of \$35 million. Yet road maintenance funding is currently \$2million behind what the engineers require for a basic job. Gone are the third grades on our busy dirt roads, gone are the second grades. In fact, we are lucky to get one grade a year. Who do we have to thank for this sorry state of affairs? The above mentioned councillors, commonly know as 'the six pack'.

But the situation with the poor state of our roads is just a symptom of a greater problem on council. 'The six pack' are not listening to the residents and ratepayers. This has become evident watching the process of the McLean's Ridges rezoning currently before council. Basically, council wants to approve a 65-lot urban-



style development in a rural residential area that will cause a huge infrastructure burden for future councils to fund. Despite the damage the extra traffic would cause to our ailing road network, despite misgiving by the RTA and Rous Water, and despite 205 submissions against the rezoning. Some of the lots will have houses only 15 metres apart in a rural area! Finally, the 'six pack' want to rush this through in the dying days of this council. This has raised concerns from the Dept. of Local Govt. as this council enters the caretaker period where no controversial decisions should be made. The response from Cr. Chant and Graham has been to ignore these many concerns and push ahead regardless.

There are other developments of questionable appropriateness in Dunoon and a huge quarry at Tuckurimba. Now, none of this affects our other rural villages yet. But it could. Areas around all our rural villages have been earmarked for future rezoning. McLean's Ridges is just the start. This is not about refusing all development, but making sure that council follows all its' planning procedures ensuring that development conforms to current community standards. We need to protect our rural lifestyle, our farmland and our rural villages.

As a result of these issues and others David Tomlinson and I, with the help of

many others, have decided to resurrect The Roads and Services Action Party to contest the upcoming council elections on September 13th.

We have a team of seven including myself; Ross McDougall from Dunoon; Francis Sheraton from Lismore; Vicki Smith from The Channon; Tony Roden from Tuntable Ck; Trish Gibson from McLean's Ridges and Tracy Rudd from Dunoon. Unfortunately, David Tomlinson will not be seeking re-election and will be sadly missed as he moves on to more fertile pastures. David has done a splendid job since he was first elected in 1999, being one of the few voices of reason on 'the six pack' dominated council. We thank David for his tireless work and wish him all the best.

We are a community based organisation with no political party affiliations. Our members come from a wide variety of locations in the Lismore area including Dunoon, The Channon, Terania Ck., Tuntable Ck., McLean's Ridges, Tuckurimba and Lismore. Our mission is to change the composition of council. We want to remove the current 'six pack' and aim for a council that listens to all ratepayers and residents not just a few select groups. We want a council that doesn't ignore the rural areas. We want a council that is capable of sound management by curbing waste and inefficiencies.

We want to be your voice on council!

But we will need help, both with skills and funds. If anyone wishes to be part of our larger team by giving a hand then contact either myself on 66886206 or David Tomlinson on 66282074.

Why I'm standing.

by Sue Stock, Greens Candidate for the Lismore City Council Election

I am a local from Nimbin and am standing as a Green for Lismore Council for two main reasons.

Firstly, climate change and all its ramifications on us, our native animals, our forests. is the number one issue. It seems we have less than ten years to make massive cuts to carbon emissions and to make our beautiful planet more climate safe. The Greens are about practical solutions now, not in 2050. Currently, Australians have the highest rate of CO2 emissions per capita on the planet and that doesn't include our exports of dirty coal. We have to change our ways.

There are many things that can be done, both by Council itself and by residents. Here are a couple of examples. A huge percentage (approximately 30%) of household greenhouse gas emissions is from hot water. When I was a Councillor at Leichhardt Council in Sydney, solar hot water systems became mandatory for all new buildings and renovations, and to make this affordable to all, the Council and the Solar hot water supplier provided interest-free loans, so to householders, it was the equivalent of paying that proportion of their electricity bill each time. That was in 1994. We can do this here.

I'd like to see water tanks a requirement on all new buildings, as well as interest-free loans provided for residents' water tanks in both rural and urban areas. I'd like to see greater use by Lismore Council of water tanks on all its properties. It's a lot cheaper than building a new dam.

I'd also like to see Council investigate rate rebates for uncleared forestland as happens in Victoria.

My second main reason for standing in this election is because I feel Nimbin and the villages do not have sufficient representation on Lismore Council and are not listened to by Council. I support better



Motivated. Sue Stock (right) discusses local issues with Corey Summerton on Nimbin's main street.

community consultation that engages and empowers citizens in local government decision-making, such as the establishment of precinct committees.

It is an 80 kilometre round trip from Nimbin to Goonellabah for a Council meeting and village residents need a more devolved structure of decision-making. I would support full Council meetings to be held every second month in the villages. I think Council should consider having a ward system of voting to give the villages more of a say.

Remember, it's important to give preferences so our vote doesn't become "exhausted" and moves on to your next preferred candidates.

Let's see Lismore Council become an innovative Greenhouse leader. Act locally, think globally.

Do You Know Who To Vote For on September 13th?

CAN is a not-for-profit community network which is not aligned with any political parties. We have assessed candidates on their demonstrated commitments on key issues including:

- *Honest and open government*
- *Engaging with local communities*
- *Sustainable and appropriate development*
- *Maintaining our natural environmental assets*



Lismore **CAN** recommends voting from the following candidates:

For Mayor: **Jenny Dowell** | **Vanessa Ekins** | **Frank Swientek**

For the council ballot we recommend you vote for these groups:

Group B – **Our Sustainable Future** Group C – **Roads and Services Party**
Group D – **The Greens** Group F – **Country Labor** Group I – **(Frank Swientek)**

For more details including responses to our candidates survey see: <http://lismorecan.wordpress.com>

DON'T WASTE YOUR VOTE
make sure you allocate as many preferences as you can.

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Written and authorised by R.Dowell, 12 Carramar Dr, Goonellabah



Greens Councillor Vanessa Ekens (left) speaks to Maxx Macted at the Nimbin markets.

Preferences are important

At election time it is compulsory to vote for who you want on your Council. Importantly though, you can also ensure you vote in a way that does not support those you do not want in Council.

Preferences are important, and as simple as voting One, Two, Three and more.

A Councillor is elected on receiving a number of votes equal to or exceeding a quota. Votes in excess of the quota are transferred on to continuing candidates, according to their next preference marked (optional

preferential).

The candidate must obtain a quota to be elected. However, if there are a large number of exhausted ballot papers (those with no preferences for any continuing candidates in the count), it is possible for candidates to be elected without having reached the quota.

Voting One for your favourite person or your favourite party, but not directing your preferences may be a noble thing to do, but may be unwise.

Preferences from your choice of candidate could be useful to get another candidate who is at least some way aligned to your candidate or to your way of thinking elected.

In Local elections if your preferred candidate is not elected and you have not directed your preferences, whatever votes they have received above the quota for a Councillor to be elected are discarded.



OSF candidate Simon Clough and The Greens' Laurie Axtens

In essence, by voting with preferences you get a second, third, fourth or more chances to get someone you prefer elected before someone you definitely do not want elected.

To know the full details of how votes are counted visit the NSW Electoral Commission website: www.elections.nsw.gov.au

Parties in local government?

by Andy Gough, Greens Candidate for Lismore City Council Elections

Graham Meineke and certain other candidates running for council as "independents" have made assertions that "Council is not a place for party politics", inferring that only non-party aligned candidates are worthy of election. I couldn't disagree more.

Candidates belonging to

a party at least have clear and established policies and principles, which a successfully elected candidate would be required to follow. They would also be accountable to the grassroots party members.

The Greens principles are social equity and economic justice, ecological sustainability, grassroots democracy and peace and non-violence. Our policies are available to the public at

www.nsw.greens.org.au

An 'independent' councillor could more easily turn maverick and vote whichever way the wind blows on any given issue. Who will hold them accountable?

Be sure you know exactly what your candidate stands for before giving them your vote. It had better be something a bit more substantial than "I love Lismore".

Local identity endorses Council candidate

"I believe Simon Clough of the "Our Sustainable Future Team" will be very able to represent Nimbin's interests as a Councillor in the new Council", said Diana Roberts former Councillor and Secretary of the Nimbin Community Centre Inc. "Simon was at the original Aquarius Festival, he has lived on a "sustainable" community for over 20 years and has been active in the communities movement during that time", she said. "Nimbin's core values are also Simon's and I believe he will be open to and supportive of any issues we may wish to take to Lismore Council in the future."

The Our Sustainable Future (OSF) is a local community based party not connected to any of the major political parties.

"If elected I am committed to regular community consultation in Nimbin. I'm acutely aware that many people in this area feel excluded from the Council. I know there are pressing issues in Nimbin involving Council and I'm committed to the resolution of local issues to the satisfaction of all interests in the community," said Simon. "Teaching mediation at Southern Cross Law School I've had long experience in managing conflict and facilitating community groups. These are skills I'm particularly keen to bring to Council,

both in the Council Chamber which needs to be more collaborative and in Council's dealings with its various communities which are often characterised by suspicion and mistrust", he said.

More generally OSF is concerned about the impact of rising oil prices and climate change. "Essentials like petrol, food, water and quality agricultural land will become scarcer and more expensive", said Simon. "Lismore City Council's 'six pack' does not even acknowledge these issues let alone take leadership," Simon said.

The OSF team has many local initiatives to reduce the impacts of peak oil and climate change. Critical to this is building resilient communities. In Nimbin we would like to:

- Support Nimbin's commercial precinct as a social, business and service hub. The less people need to travel the better.

- Preserve the rural amenity
- Protect important environmental areas
- Support local indigenous initiatives
- Support local Nimbin groups – a small donation from council goes a long way
- Encourage more buses to service the rural community, using low emission fuels;
- Farm produce processed, used and sold locally wherever possible;
- Support locally owned and operated small businesses
- See more on-site waste systems, sustainable building and sustainable agricultural systems.

"We are committed to the Lismore Council area being a national model of a low carbon use community which will create huge potential for post carbon employment. Nimbin in many ways has taken the lead on these issues. It is absolutely time to take this message out to the wider community" Simon concluded.

Koala-friendly Candidates – who are they?

"The importance of elected representatives in effective environmental stewardship cannot be underestimated. It is a matter of considerable disquiet that none of the six local government authorities in which Friends of the Koala operates has in place a Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management." – Lorraine Vass

The five questions posed to candidates by Friends of the Koala were:

- What is your position in regard to the development of a Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management for the whole of [your] local government area?
- What is your opinion about extending [name of LGA's] Tree Preservation Order into rural and residential areas, and/or a Tree Preservation By-law to protect marginal koala habitat that is not covered by SEPP 44?
- What consideration do you think should be given to koalas in regard to subdivisions, road building and traffic management in [name of] local government area?
- Are you prepared to support Friends of the Koala by advocating koala conservation issues and measures with your peers and colleagues in State and Federal governments? Please give your reasons.

• How important do you consider koalas are to [your] community? What reasons do you have for thinking this?

Candidates have been rated as Koala Friendly, or Friendliness Conditional.

On the basis of their response this is how the candidates shaped up:

Lismore City Council

- Gianpiero Battista, Leader, Action Now (Group A)
- Simon Clough, Leader, Our Sustainable Future Party (Group B)
- David Yarnall, Leader, Roads & Services Group (Group C)
- Vanessa Ekens, Leader, The Greens (Group D)
- Jenny Dowell, Leader, Country Labor Party (Group F)
- Graham Meineke, Leader Independents (Group G)
- John Chant, Leader, Independents (Group H)

See www.friendsofthekoala.org for listing of all LGAs



Retiring councillor Ros Irwin and former councillor Diana Roberts supporting 'Our Sustainable Future' candidate Simon Clough in his bid for election to Council

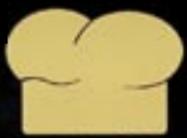
SIMON SAYS: vote for
 * a responsive ethical Council
 * stronger, resilient communities
 * sustainable, low carbon development
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Authorised by Simon Clough of 90 Beardwood St. West, Lismore Heights Ph 66242894

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Mondays 9.30 – 11.30am at Nimbin Community Preschool, Cecil Street, Nimbin

Stuck for something to do with the kids on a Monday morning? Thinking about the transition from toddler to teenager? Or just want to check out your local preschool from the inside?

Come along to a new playgroup, starting next term, Monday 13th October and join in the fun. Open to all children 0 – 4 with accompanying parents or responsible adult.

Playgroup starts at 9.30 am with outside play on the bikes, swings, in the sandpit or with any of the many craft activities set up. Then come indoors for fruit time (please bring one piece of fruit per child), and enjoy

All in a day's play at Nimbin Community Preschool, Cecil Street, Nimbin.

sitting in a circle sharing and chatting.

Finish the morning with more play, possibly inside amongst the amazing dress ups or building the biggest race track / tower ever! The possibilities are endless, a fun caring environment guaranteed! Then head home when the pre-schoolers prepare for lunch, about 11:30 – 12pm.

We look forward to seeing you one Monday, or every Monday – whatever works for you and your family. Participation is on a casual basis and fee is by donation. Any enquiries please call Kathy 6689-1203.

Nimbin's Little Olympics



While the spotlight was on the international sporting competitions in Beijing, there were plenty of athletic feats on show at Nimbin Central School at their annual Primary Athletics Carnival.

The day featured track and field events, with cheer squads and podium finishes.

Event manager and Assistant Principal Di Whitney said, "The students were exceptional athletes, and were certainly very proud winners, displaying their winning ribbons with pride."

Winners who qualify, go



on to represent the school at PSSA district competitions.

Though the Gold House certainly shone in track events, Green House ended



up as the overall winner this year.

"Thanks to the parents and students for their excellent support," said Mrs Whitney.

The Heywire competition is up and running

Young people from regional and rural Australia 16-22 years of age are invited to submit a story in text, audio, pictures or moving images about their life issues and experience. Entries are open until 3rd October.

Winning stories are selected from each of approx. 41 ABC regions around Australia. These stories will be produced by the ABC and broadcast either on national ABC Radio, ABC Online and/or ABC TV.

Winners are also invited to take part in the all expenses paid Heywire Youth Issues Forum, to be held at the



Australian Institute of Sport in Canberra in February '09.

The ABC will work alongside the winners to help produce the pieces that will finally be broadcast on the ABC, so Heywire is not about being the best writer or media maker. Heywire is absolutely about being passionate about issues and ideas and communicating them in such a way that people will take notice.

Heywire is multi-media.

Heywire is about young people telling their story in the best format for them. They can choose any of the following:

- Audio: a written piece up to 400 words in a style suitable for radio - or an MP3 up to 3 mins long.
- Video: up to 4-minute video. It could be shot on the best camera possible, or on a mobile phone. The quality does not matter. It is the idea and how that is conveyed.
- Text: up to 1500 words in-depth piece to be published in our zine and on our blog
- Still Shots / Art: a series of 25 images/photos which tell a story

The emphasis is still on producing material that is engaging, creative and true. It is still about personal experience and opinion, not fantasy.

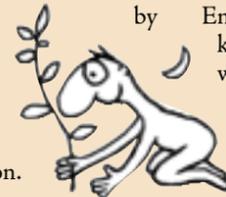
The Heywire website is the heart of the competition. Everything is on the web - entry info, entry forms, story samples, the poster, the postcard, the lot - all there for you and others to download - go to <http://abc.net.au/heywire>

Patricia's Tree-planting

by V. Stott

Children love to plant a tree seedling, and then to return any time in the future to see the growth.

At the base of the Nightcap Range they have the opportunity, in a project started by Patricia Lafleur. She is reclaiming a steep lantana-laden hill on the MO where she has acquired a share. This planting of 2000 trees links up with other creekside regeneration. Although lacking a government



raingauge, this upper reach of the valley is the rainiest spot in the state, a place of spectacular beauty where many rare specimens already thrive. Local nursery experts supply the missing specimens.

A transect line to survey spontaneous native regeneration has shown a pleasant resilience of nature. The lolly was provided by EnviroFund Australia, thank you kindly, and the work is associated with the local LandCare.

Patricia, who knows the forest very well, is an unsung saint. If you are interested, please contact her on 6689-1313.

Driving School now servicing Nimbin

Lismore has a new Driving School, **Driving Ambition**, owned and operated by Rick Lauf, that will allow Nimbin residents to get those all important P's with a minimum of fuss and stress.

When Rick's two eldest teenage children recently needed to apply for their drivers licences, he discovered a need for more driving instructors prepared to work at times and locations that suited students' busy lives.

Rick operates from Lismore to Nimbin, Mullumbimby to Bangalow. He will come to you, saving students the time and hassle of travelling to a regional centre for a lesson. Rick's brand new Suzuki SX4 has dual controls for safety, and is fitted with instant fuel consumption data, providing students with feedback on their driving efficiency. Rick Lauf has many years of driving



experience, covering vehicles from buses (at 20 Rick was Sydney's youngest bus driver) to motorcycles, sidecars and trucks. He is fully accredited and trained, and will give night time driving lessons.

With his understanding and patient manner, the most nervous learner will gain ample confidence and ability to tackle our busy and potentially dangerous roads with safety, and achieve their driving ambitions. Rick Lauf can be contacted on 6688-4449.

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Sk8park working bee



Photo: Marcus Mantschiff

The last Saturday in August saw the first 2008 working bee with local residents, boardriders and tradesmen 'chipping in' to keep the wheels rolling at Nimbin Skatepark.

Addressing community concerns, the first two truckloads of tyres were removed. A 2006 recommendation of the Council-appointed Sk8 Park Working Party, the tyres were installed to lessen the drumming effect from the steel subfloor area. Qualified acoustic sampling in 2007 concluded that the tyres at the north and south ramps and those stacked into the

spine made only a marginal difference. Coupled with the challenges of maintenance access to the sealed subfloor, these tyres were earmarked to go.

The tyres wedged into the void of the 400mm flat have performed as expected, dampening vibration between ramps. Further discussions with builders and welders are underway with the next working bee earmarked for Saturday 13th September. There will be more tyres to remove and some plans to help steer future progress.

Acoustic products will be applied and fitted, however as funds are limited, the

creativity of experienced builders and tradespeople is being employed to find engineering solutions. You can support the project with your helping hands on the day or with donations to the Friends of Nimbin Skatepark www.sk8park.nimbincommunity.org.au or BSB: 802-222 Acct#: 22266557

The Friends of Nimbin Skatepark and Nimbin Community Centre Inc (NCCI) thank all those who came along on the day and the local businesses who graciously fed us and supplied the necessary coffee at smoko time.

Solar roll-out comes closer

by Natalie Meyer

On Thursday 14th August a community meeting was held at the Nimbin Town Hall regarding the NNIC Solar packaging Scheme. Around 60 people were at that meeting. We endeavoured to contact everyone who had made contact with us to register an interest in the scheme, prior to the meeting being held.

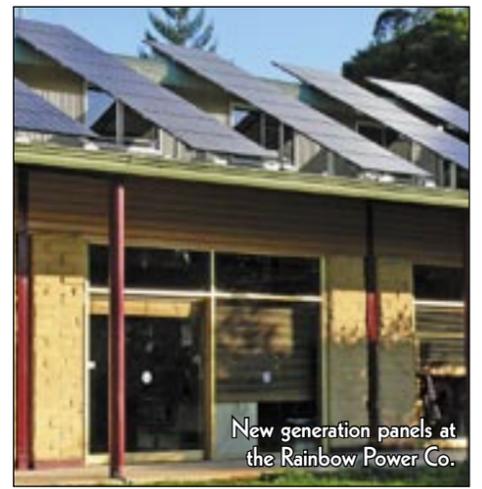
At the meeting the various options were put to the community members present. Reps from Rainbow Power Co attended to answer technical questions and present the details of their offer. RPC then left the meeting and the community members present voted **unanimously** to proceed with the offer made by RPC, subject to further negotiations re the price.

The outcome is that we have signed up with RPC and their final offer is \$2890.00 total up-front cost for a 1kw grid-feed system (after rebate and RECs).

To find out all the details about the final deal and how we arrived at that deal, and to obtain the 2 x forms which must be filled out and returned to NNIC asap, please drop into NNIC at 71 Cullen Street, Nimbin and grab the Update and the forms, or else contact us at nimbinnic@yahoo.com.au with your correct email details and we will email them to you.

Time is of the essence if we are to take full advantage of the rebate scheme...so if you want to be a part of the offer you need to get in quickly.

If you previously registered and have not



heard anything from us, this means we have been unable to make contact with you. Please contact us again urgently to obtain the full update and the forms. Please provide a correct email (preferred) or postal address.

NNIC acknowledges the Lismore Climate Care Solar Roll Out team – and in particular Gordon Fraser-Quick and Laurie Axtens for all their support and assistance.

We also acknowledge BBE and in particular Marisa Demspey for the considerable time she spent on negotiating with us and also providing a great deal of information to us.

And finally we acknowledge the Nimbin Community for being a part of our efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reduce reliance on the grid, so good on all of you!

Chamber Chat



Dr Wendy Sarkissian

by Kara Forsyth

A very interesting gathering for the August NimCoC meeting held at the Rainbow Café on the 19th.

Our persistence with Council issues is finally bearing fruit, with the recent lighting enhancement of the Pedestrian Crossing at the northern end of town and other initiatives finally back underway with Council now clearing some administrative hurdles and being back on the case, which is great to see. We appreciate the co-operation the Lismore City Council has provided to date and we look forward to their continuing assistance in making Nimbin a better place to live and to visit.

There has been a lot of discussion over recent

months about a town forum and the value that might provide in crystallising a vision of what Nimbin might look like a little bit into the future. We all know what an incredibly diverse and talented community that we live in, so it should not be a surprise to learn that we have Dr Wendy Sarkissian living here. Wendy is a community engagement expert with a lifetimes experience in making towns better places to live and with a particular focus on sustainability. Visit www.sarkissian.com.au for a better understanding of Wendy's background and projects. Wendy presented for us a stream of the various models of Town Forums with which she has had experience, what we can hope to achieve and how we might benefit

from the hard work and effort that goes into such a project. It really is a very exciting prospect and we look forward to co-coordinating with as many local groups and individuals as we can to get the project running in the near future. Stay tuned.

We also had a large number of attendees who had come to voice their concern in relation to heavy handed policing strategies and the effect this is having on deterring visitors and creating a wider public media image for Nimbin of drugs and police and the consequent commercial and economic costs of these tactics. The Chamber is certainly concerned at any attempt to decrease Nimbin's appeal as a friendly, happy, trouble free place to visit and it is unfortunate that we continue to get such widespread media coverage highlighting all of the wrong aspects. Studies have shown that most people don't visit Nimbin just to buy drugs and we certainly look forward to highlighting all of the wonderful, unique and positive aspects of our little community and what we have to offer the rest of the world. Which is plenty.

Next meeting is on the 16th September. See you there.

Nimbin Safe Community Project

by Amara Bartlett – Safe Community Project Worker (Shared with Maire Barron)

The workshop for women held on 13th August, "Creating a Safe Community" went really well. It was great to connect with local women to talk about community development, empowerment and social change, and how we can create what we need for ourselves. The main thing that came out of this workshop was the need for a regular women's group, and any women interested in being a part of this can contact me at the Neighbourhood Centre on 6689 1692 for more info. If any one is aware of a low cost and private space that would be suitable for a women's group, please let me know.

If you missed out on being part of this workshop, I will be running another workshop for women on Monday September 15th, from 10am - 2pm at Birth and Beyond. This will be called "Empowering Communication". Conflict resolution skills, assertiveness, effective communication, nonviolent

communication, nonverbal communication, emotional intelligence, playful communication and interpersonal conflict will be discussed and practiced. Be prepared to learn some great new skills that will change your life and the way you relate to others.

The Safe Community Project will be drawing to a close at the end of October after three years of promoting safe relationships and community safety in Nimbin. The "Empowering Communication" workshop will in fact be the last women's workshop that will be run from this project, so

if you want to see more of this kind of thing in Nimbin, please support this workshop so we can show our funding body that you want more!

Please RSVP to Amara at the Nimbin Neighbourhood and Information Centre 6689-1692 by Wednesday 10th September. This workshop is free, with a yummy lunch and morning tea provided at no cost. Hope to see you there.

The Nimbin Neighbourhood and Information Centre's Safe Community Project is an Australian Government Initiative and is steered by the Nimbin Domestic Violence Committee.

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