

MEDIA RELEASE

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Attention: News Editor

Unit will double Friendship House capacity

Royalties for Regions funding of \$85,000 through the Regional Grants Scheme (RGS) is helping the Rotary Club of Albany East to provide a respite unit for people with disabilities and their carers.

Community Services Minister Robyn McSweeney launched the project on Friday 13 May and noted that Rotary had made a significant contribution to the project through its own fundraising.

Rotary operates the Albany Show chocolate wheel and runs a huge Christmas stocking raffle with the proceeds being available to assist local projects.

The \$300,000 two-bedroom unit, to be built at Emu Point next to the existing Friendship House, is also supported by funding from Lotterywest and the Jack Family Charitable Trust.

Project spokesperson Daphne Cotton said Friendship House quietly provided time out for families and individuals.

“Providing a normal holiday in a normal setting by the sea is an act of honour and respect for carers who are doing such a valuable job looking after people with disabilities, and for people who have experienced significant disadvantage in their lives,” Ms Cotton said.



Rotarians John Dent (left) and Ian Howard watch Community Services Minister Robyn McSweeney turn the earth to start the Friendship House project.

Great Southern Development Commission (GSDC) Chief Executive Officer Bruce Manning said the Friendship House project would increase Rotary's ability to offer respite.

"The new unit will be specifically designed for people with significant disabilities," Mr Manning said.

"The existing facilities at Friendship House can only cater for people with mild disabilities.

"Providing a new unit designed for people with moderate to severe disabilities will help Rotary to double its assistance to families and individuals who are often in desperate need of respite from intense caring responsibilities," Mr Manning said.

The new unit will feature wheelchair access from the driveway to the house and to all areas within the unit, along with shower and toilet facilities suitable for severely restricted people.

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