



Strength next door

CAMPAIGN |
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COMMUNITY leaders and politicians have backed Messenger Community News' fresh push for stronger neighbourhood networks, saying it will help save lives.

The *Know Your Neighbour* campaign, launched last month for the second year, aims to bring communities closer and reduce social isolation, particularly among the elderly and new migrants.

As part of the campaign, the *City North Messenger* is running a competition to find Adelaide's best neighbour, with the winner announced in the March 31 edition.

Council on the Ageing Seniors Voice chief executive officer **Ian Yates** said the campaign played a crucial role in enabling elderly residents to remain active and involved in their communities.

"At times of crisis such as heatwaves or falls or other health challenges, this initiative could

save lives and will certainly make a difference," he said. Premier **Mike Rann** encouraged people to keep an eye on their elderly neighbours, particularly during heatwaves, or just "pop by for a cup of tea".

"Getting to know who you live near helps develop a stronger community that benefits us all," he said.

Opposition Leader **Isobel Redmond** said if more South Australians took the time to know their neighbours, people would feel more connected to their local community. "For the elderly and people who live alone, the reassurance that someone is next door in case of an emergency is important," she said.

Lord Mayor **Michael Harbison** said busy careers and the rise of single-occupancy households had led to a breakdown in community bonds.

"Communities are very mobile these days . . . so that's why initiatives like Messenger's are very valuable," he said. "It could be as simple as waving to an elderly person on the way home – as the old saying goes, the best way to have a friend is to be one."

Police Commissioner **Mal Hyde** said people who were worried about the welfare of their neighbours should contact police "so we can assist if needed".

"Neighbours caring for each other is something police encourage."

