



50th ANNIVERSARY OF PROBUS

Key Talking Points

These Key Talking Points help Probus clubs confidently answer questions about Probus when speaking to the Media and potential members.

1. ABOUT PROBUS – KEY EXPLAINER

What is Probus?

- Probus is a network of local social clubs that bring people together through friendship, shared interests and community connection.
- Probus clubs operate throughout Australia and New Zealand, offering members opportunities to stay socially active and engaged.
- Clubs are run by members, for members, with activities reflecting local interests and communities.

Who is Probus for?

- Retirees
- Semi-retirees
- Ideal for older Australians looking for connection, conversation and community involvement - no matter what religious denomination, gender, or cultural background - everyone is welcome.

What Probus is NOT

- Probus is not political
- Probus is not religious
- Probus is not a lobbying or advocacy organisation
- Probus is not a commercial or profit-driven enterprise

2. WHY PROBUS STARTED – 50 YEARS OF HISTORY

- Probus was founded in Australia in 1976 and 1974 in New Zealand-
- Probus was created to ensure people had access to social connection and friendship after leaving the workforce.
- The first Probus club in Australia was established at Hunters Hill in Sydney, and in Kapiti Coast in New Zealand. Both Clubs continue to provide connection, friendship and community for more than 50 years.
- Over 50 years, Probus has grown to include more than 90,000 members across over 1300 clubs
- The benefits of Probus extend far beyond its members, with friends and family benefitting from the positive social connections Probus provides its members.

3. WHY CONNECTION MATTERS

Core Message

Social connection is a key contributor to wellbeing, mental health and quality of life, particularly as people age.

Supporting Context

- Research consistently shows that strong social connections are linked to better mental health, wellbeing and life satisfaction.
- As people transition into retirement, opportunities for regular social interaction can change.
- Community-based social groups provide routine, purpose and a sense of belonging.
- Staying socially connected helps people remain active - socially, mentally and physically.

How Probus Supports Connection

- Probus Clubs are built around regular, face-to-face interaction.
- Members connect through shared activities, outings and conversation.
- Clubs operate locally, allowing people to connect close to home.
- Probus Clubs offer a welcoming environment that supports positive aging.

4. WHY PROBUS MATTERS TODAY

- Communities across Australia and New Zealand are ageing.
- Social connection plays a vital role in supporting wellbeing later in life.
- Probus offers a practical, community-led way for people to stay engaged.
- Probus remains as relevant today as it did 50 years ago, because it adapts to the interests and needs of its members.

Suggested line for media:

“Fifty years on, Probus continues to provide connection, friendship and community at a local level.”

5. 50TH ANNIVERSARY – KEY DETAILS

- 2026 marks 50 years of Probus.
- Since its inception, Probus has helped more than half a million retirees stay engaged and connected.
- Celebrations are taking place through local Club events across Australia.
- A key commemorative event to launch the 50th Anniversary celebrations will be held on 3 February 2026 at Hunters Hill, the location of Australia’s first Probus Club.
- National events also include Government House receptions across Australia, a 50th Anniversary cruise and a National Picnic/Lunch on 1 October 2026 to mark the start of Probus Month.

6. SPOKESPEOPLE & QUOTES

Clubs can use these Key Talking Points when being interviewed or answering questions. A Club's spokesperson will usually be the member quoted in the Club's Media Release i.e. usually the Club President. If a National comment is being sought, the approved spokespeople are:

- Heather Ewart – Former ABC *Back Roads* TV presenter & author
- Silvana Martignago, CEO, Probus in Australia and New Zealand

Example National Quote

“For 50 years, Probus has been about connection, friendship and community. While the world has changed, the importance of people coming together has not.”

7. SOUND BITES (MEDIA-READY)

Spokespeople may use these verbatim:

- “Probus is about friendship, connection and community.”
- “Staying socially connected is one of the most important things people can do as they age.”
- “Probus clubs help people stay engaged and involved in their local communities.”
- “Every Probus club is different, but they all offer the same sense of belonging.”
- “Probus exists to ensure people don't lose their sense of community when they move to a new area or when their work life ends.”
- Since its inception, Probus has helped more than half a million retirees stay engaged and connected.

8. HOW TO HANDLE COMMON MEDIA QUESTIONS

If asked: *“Is Probus political?”*

Suggested response: *“No. Probus is a social organisation focused on connection, friendship and community.”*

If asked: *“Is Probus only for retirees?”*

Suggested response: *“Probus is open to retirees and semi-retirees who are looking for social connection.”*

If asked about ageing or loneliness:

Suggested response: *“Probus focuses on the positive - helping people stay connected, active and engaged through local community clubs.”*

If asked about John Howard attending the Hunters Hill event:

Suggested response: *“The event recognises the history of the first Probus club. Attendance is about marking a milestone, not politics.”*

9. LANGUAGE GUIDANCE – WHAT TO AVOID

- Avoid political or policy commentary
- Avoid alarmist language around ageing or loneliness
- Avoid framing Probus as a response to a “crisis”

Keep messaging:

- Positive
- Community-focused
- People-centred

10. QUICK FACTS (OPTIONAL FOR MEDIA)

- Founded in Australia in 1976 and in 1974 in New Zealand
- Operates across Australia and New Zealand
- More than 90,000 members across over 1300 clubs