

RESPONSE TO CONSTITUENT

ASKED BY: Dr Rosalie Woodruff MP

ANSWERED BY: Minister for Education

QUESTION:

I've been contacted by many residents of Kingborough, students of the U3A, regarding the sudden closure of the old Kingston Primary School car park on Hutchins Street.

U3A is a volunteer-run organisation for retired and semi-retired people with around 400 local members and 41 courses that have been run there. When a section of the car park was deemed unsafe, U3A participants were advised to use free parking in surrounding streets and in Channel Court.

This is a huge barrier for a significant number of people who have mobility issues. They can't access classes provided for social and physical wellbeing. This site is leased from the Department of the Environment. Repair of the car park is urgent.

What is the time frame for repairing the safety issues and reopening the car park?

What support will be offered to U3A members unable to participate and can they have conversations directly with the department?

ANSWER:

Thank you for sharing your constituent question in Parliament on 10 September 2025 regarding the closure of the Kingston Learning Centre (KLC) carpark at the site of the old Kingston Primary School site which is owned and managed by the Department for Education, Children and Young People.

I am deeply mindful of the impact this closure has had on valued community groups, and I recognise the disruption the closure has caused. These concerns are being carefully balanced with the need to ensure public safety, which remains the highest priority.

My office has been liaising regularly with the Department for Education, Children and Young People and the Kingston U3A group about this matter. Our aim has been to reach a solution which provides access to the car park whilst also mitigating safety risks.

I am pleased to advise that the Department has confirmed a section of the carpark will be re-opened on Monday, 29 September 2025, allowing access for valued community groups while long-term solutions are explored.

I am advised that Libraries Tasmania will also engage directly with community users through a consultation session to be held on Thursday 7 October. This will provide an opportunity for stakeholders to share feedback on the revised arrangements and help inform longer-term planning.

In relation to your query around who U3A members could reach out to about the closure, all community groups have been able to contact the Kingston Library via kingston.library.meeting.rooms@libraries.tas.gov.au if they had queries or concerns about the closure.

I know that the KLC is an important space for community groups including the U3A and is highly valued by the local community.

Thank you again for your query and advocacy for the groups accessing these facilities.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jo Palmer'.

APPROVED/NOT APPROVED

Hon Jo Palmer MLC
Minister for Education

Date 25/9/25