



TERM 2, 2026 NEWSLETTER

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OUR MISSION

Crossenvale Community House aims to **engage** the local community in providing **resources** and necessary **services** to fulfil the community's potential to **achieve** their aspirations.

OUR VALUES

Participation - Inclusion
Ownership - Empowerment
Advocacy

HOUSE RECAP

The weather's cooling, the footy is back and the leaves are just starting to fall... We must be back around to another Term 2!

In this edition, take a look under the hood of some new and restarting programs, including some very exciting news about our *Fill-a-Bag* campaign!

You also get to discover what we have planned for the term, and see how you might get involved. Keep your eye on our backyard as there may be some changes in the not too distant future.

FILL-A-BAG CAMPAIGN UPDATE

In 2025, Rob and the Committee of Management developed the Fill-a-Bag program. Given the increase in food relief participation across 2025 (up 74% between February and November 2025), it was a vital step in reducing the burden the food relief program has on our budget and developing community connections to feed our people.







Given the annual cost of providing the program, a per bag costing of \$759.50 was set, meaning that thirty sponsored hampers would cover our entire food relief expenses.



A sneak peak in a bag, and some of the hampers / meals that are lovingly made with food relief items

The Committee of Management set the humble goal of securing funding for ten hampers. I am pleased to say that by the end of Term 1, we have achieved that goal! We are absolutely over the moon that businesses, community organisations, private groups, and families have all heard the call and joined the cause.

We thank our Inaugural Sponsors in 2026:

- Rotary Club of Echuca Moama 
- Shine Bright Community Op Shop 
- Latte Lane / GluntenFree4U 
- Echuca Workers 
- Anonymous Community Group 
- John & Gwen Howe 

We look forward to working with our new supports and developing new connections in our community. If you, a group you are a part of, or someone you know may be interested in how you can Fill-a-Bag, contact Rob using the details on the backpage.

Fill a bag of food for your community

By Ryan Bellingham

Businesses and community organisations can join the food relief effort locally by teaming up with their peers to fill a bag for Crossenvale Community House.

After seeing substantial growth in demand from families seeking food hampers, ballooning from 16 per week to 30 by the end of last year, manager Rob Foran crunched the numbers.

Accounting for the cost of food, transport and packaging, Mr Foran landed on an annual cost of \$759.50 per bag, with the house open for 50 weeks of the year.

"That's what we're asking for to be able to fill a bag," he said.

Between Echuca Workers, Shine Bright Op Shop, the Rotary Club of Echuca-Moama, and Latte Lane, seven bags have already been pledged this year.

"We've got 23 more hampers to fill. That's 23 more families we can support with this funding, and it'd be lovely if we could get that going as soon as possible," Mr Foran said.

Recent data from Healthy Loddon Campaspe



A new campaign is calling on businesses to support those experiencing food insecurity. Pictured are Echuca Workers' Damien Dimech, Latte Lane owner David Cunningham, Echuca-Moama Rotary Club president Richard Carlson, Echuca Workers' Jordan Simpson, Shine Bright Op Shop's Jade Rourke and Carrie Leach, and Crossenvale Community House manager Rob Foran.

Photo: Ryan Bellingham

found food insecurity had nearly doubled in its catchment since 2019. Around 150 meals leave the Crossenvale kitchen each month, supporting the growing number of people struggling with the cost of living by subsidising their food bill. While the community house is glad to support

those in need, Mr Foran hoped the new campaign would free up resources to address other important issues. By covering the cost of the food relief program, more government and grant funding can be directed towards social inclusion, education and development activities.

"If we can fill all 30 bags, then we can run some really vibrant programs," Mr Foran said. "We can redeploy those funds to do stuff like tackle the loneliness epidemic that Australia is facing at the moment."

The community house currently runs two craft groups, a gardening club

and a public morning tea, alongside cooking and food handling classes each term.

Mr Foran thanked the businesses and groups that had already contributed to the campaign, and said he looked forward to hearing from more. "It makes our life here 1000 times easier every

time we get one of these bags filled," he said. For more information about the campaign and how to join, email crossenvale@gmail.com or phone Mr Foran on 0459 049 474. Anyone in need of food relief is welcome to visit Crossenvale Community House at 28 Boothman St, Echuca.

WHAT'S ON IN TERM 2, 2026?

MONDAY

Food Relief Prep 9am-10:30am
Women's Group 11am-1pm

Food Relief 10am-4pm



Bookings essential for most of our programs due to space. Please use the details at the end of the newsletter to nab your spot.

Start dates for each program vary. Drop into the house or check our socials for more details.

WEDNESDAY

Mosaic with Vivid 10:30am-2pm
Lookin' to Get Cookin' 11am-2pm

Got a Program Idea? Come have a chat with Rob!

Food Relief 10am-3pm



All people over 18yo are welcome at our activities as members of Crossenvale Community House.

TUESDAY

Garden Club 9am-11am
Cuppa & Chat 11am-1pm
Lookin' to Get Cookin' 11am-2pm

Food Relief 9am-4pm

Room Hire is available for businesses and community organisations. Please call the house to find out more!



THURSDAY

Community Meals 10am-1pm
Crossenvale Craft It 11am-2pm

Admin Support 9am-2:30pm

Employment Support

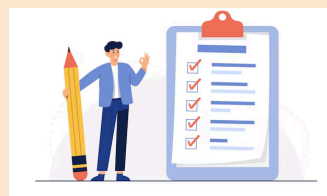
- Resumes & Cover Letters
- Applications
- Interview Skills

IT Support

- Basic Computer Troubleshooting
- Printing (10c B&W / 20c Colour)

Forms Support

- Housing
- Services Australia (Centrelink)



LOOKIN' TO GET COOKIN' - COOKING GROUPS STARTING ON TUESDAY AND WEDNESDAY

Lisa is putting out the call to come together and cook for our community. Sourcing produce and meat from our FoodBank and Foodshare partners, coupling it with produce from our Community Garden, we really want to showcase what you can do with food relief items. Only a minimal amount of items will be store bought, guaranteeing that if (WHEN!) there is a meal you love, you know you'll be able to replicate it at home.



Kitchen concentration and some of the delicious meals we've created

In Term 2, we're *Lookin' to Get Cookin'* on Tuesdays and Wednesdays in order to:

- Increase the ready-to-go, frozen meals for Food Relief,
- Supply meals to the Community Meals on Thursday, and,
- Provide meals for other activities as they require.

Lisa has got an idea of what she would like to cook over the course of the term, but all ideas and input are welcome. If you want to get involved, contact Rob using the details on the backpage.



CROSSENVALE CRAFT IT CAPERS

Wendy has had a super successful first foray into running programs at Crossenvale. In Term 1, the *Crossenvale Craft It* group tackled scrapbooking, letter decorations, wax candlemaking, jewellery making, amongst other small activities.



Wendy supporting Maureen to create the perfect bracelet

With so many tasters in Term 1, Term 2 is going to focus on Winter Warmers. Jelly Bean Beanies will be the first project, and will be suitable for the beginner and the more advanced knitter. Wendy says, 'the basic pattern is a perfect for the beginner, and extra flourishes can be added for those who've been knitting their whole lives. The idea is to create items for your family and the neighbourhood, especially as it gets colder.



Jelly Bean Beanie... Looking snug as a bug!

If you want to get involved in *Crossenvale Craft It* in Term 2, you can pop in on Thursdays from 11am-2pm or contact Rob using the details on the backpage.

KEEP OUR DOORS OPEN UPDATE

While it was unfortunate that CCH could not be directly involved, NHVic's 'Day of Action' in February was a success, with hundreds packing the steps of Parliament House in Melbourne to let our state members know that more needs to be done to keep the 400 houses in the state thriving. The day was said to be one of celebration, with houses peacefully putting forward our shared case.



Congrats to those reading from other houses who were able to attend!

While we have campaigned hard, and Peter Walsh MP has handed over our KODO Postcards to Minister for Carers and Volunteers Ros Spence MP, then intention of the current government is to keep funding in line with inflation. Given the ongoing, and now rapidly rising, cost of living and fuel, we will continue to lobby that the currently allocated funds fall below what will be required to sustainably operate some sites at their current levels.



Sarah, Leanne and Rob handing Peter Walsh MP our KODO Postcards.
Thanks to Peter and his team for their continued support.

RESOURCES FOR RESIDENTS

Community House Library

While you're at the house learning, meeting friends or picking up some food relief, make sure you check out our mini-library. With books for the young and young at heart, there'll be something to entertain and inspire.



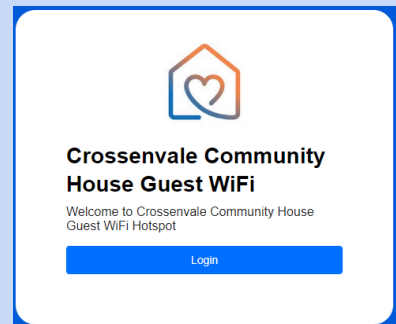
Have old books you're not going to read any more?

Don't let them just sit there collecting dust! We'd love you to donate them and give others the chance to experience the thrill and adventure of reading? We will take books of all shapes and sizes for every age.

Free Wifi

From your laptop or mobile device, click on **Crossenvale Guest Wifi** and follow the prompts. You can then find a space inside or chill out in the garden while getting your online needs sorted.

If you have problems getting online our staff and volunteers are more than happy to help!



Food Relief

Our food relief program turns your \$2 donation into 2-3 days worth of delicious food. Hampers contain bread, milk, fresh produce and pantry staples, as well as a few goodies.



Our Awesome Partners

We thank Foodshare Bendigo and the FoodBank for their support on behalf of food relief programs everywhere.

Share the Dignity and Hygiene Supplies

Please speak to Rob or our volunteers should you need feminine hygiene products, condoms, or any other hygiene supplies. We also have dignity bags for women who have recently become homeless or are escaping violence.



PROGRAM UPDATES

Food Relief

Three Days per Week - Year Around
Monday-Wednesdays, 10:00am-3:00pm
Come in to get your pantry staples, fresh produce, frozen meals and more.



*Women's Group

Fortnightly - First session 27/4
Mondays, 11:00am-1:00pm
Come join us for morning tea and some craft projects as we celebrate our second year. Lisa has some great ideas to kick off the year, with your input valued.

Mosaics with CCH and We Are Vivid

Weekly - First session 28/4
Wednesdays, 10:30am-2:00pm
After completing an Aboriginal and Australian Flag mosaic, as well as Winter Echuca-Moama Winter Blues Festival guitars in 2025, the team will continue their mosaic madness in 2026. Keep your eyes peeled for a start date.



Crossenvale Craft It

Weekly - First session 23/4
Thursdays, 11:00am-2:00pm
Wendy joins our team of volunteers to provide your weekly craft outlet. Jelly Bean Beanies will be the starting point in Term 2.

Lookin' to Get Cookin' NEW

Twice Weekly - First session 28/4
Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11:00am-1:00pm
Help us get healthy, delicious home-cooked meals out into our community. Join our cooking group, learn new skills and make new connections.



PROGRAM UPDATES (cont.)



***Community Meals NEW**

Weekly - First session 30/4

Time: Thursdays, 10:00am-1:00pm

Pop in and grab a home cooked meal to eat with the group or take home. We would love for you to stay and chat!

Garden Club

Weekly - First session 28/4

Time: Tuesdays, 9:00am-11:00am

We're back up and running again! Tend to the garden over a cuppa, and enjoy a little bit of dirt therapy. Also, come pick from our garden 24/7 when you want to bulk up your meals at home.



Cuppa & Chat

Weekly - First session 28/4

Time: Tuesday, 11:00am-1:00pm

Changing to Tuesdays! Come in for morning tea and get involved in a puzzle or quiz.

***Thursday Admin Support**

Date: Thurs, Year Round

Time: 9am-2pm

While we can do the odd job here and there, Thursday is still the dedicated day to sit down with Rob for forms help, employment support and computer needs.



*Bookings Preferred

GET INVOLVED AT CROSSENVALE

BECOME A MEMBER

Becoming a member is super easy. We'll help you fill out your application and, once approved by the committee, you become a member!

What does it mean to be a member of Crossenvale Community House?

- You are part of an awesome community organisation that includes members, volunteers, committee of management and staff,
- You are welcome to join activities as a participant,
- You have the right to vote and have your say at Committee of Management meetings.

BECOME A VOLUNTEER

Want to be heard AND contribute more to the Crossenvale community? Then volunteering might be for you!

We are looking for generous people who have some spare time and an interest/passion that they can share. Once you've completed our induction, we'll support you in your role and provide free training. You'll be building our community's capacity, your self-confidence and your resume.

JOIN OUR COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

Learn the finer details of governance and operating a community group from Crossenvale and Echuca-Moama's expert committee of management team. Don't just have your say, but be part of making decisions that shape the future of Crossenvale Community House.

To become a member, a volunteer, or to join our committee of management team, please see Rob for a copy of the paperwork and to discuss the process.

DATES FOR THE CALENDAR

APRIL

3-6

Easter Period

Christian holiday to recognise the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.



ANZAC Day

Honouring the sacrifice and service of service people across Australia and New Zealand.
army.gov.au/about-us/history-and-research/traditions/anzac-day

25

MAY

10

Mother's Day

Recognising and celebrating the role that mothers and female caregivers play in people's lives.



National Sorry Day

This day gives people the chance to come together and share the steps towards healing for the Stolen Generations, their families and communities.
reconciliation.org.au

26

JUNE

8

King's Birthday (Victoria / NSW)

Public holiday to observe the King's birthday (actual date is different, but the day is unchanged for consistency).



Apologies for missing any dates that are significant to your culture, religion or beliefs. Please share them with us as we would love to know more.



**WE LOOK FORWARD TO
SEEING YOU SOON!!**



Contact Us



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CrossenvaleCommunityHouse



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