



Toukley
Neighbourhood
Centre

ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22

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1. Introduction

1.1. Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Darkinjung people as the Traditional Custodians of the land and waters on which we work with our community. We pay our respects to Elders past and present, and to all future knowledge holders.

Where we gather is, was, and always will be, Aboriginal land.

1.2. About Toukley Neighbourhood Centre Inc. (TNC)

1.2.1. Vision

TNC is the heartbeat of a community that is connected, supported, empowered, inclusive and thriving. We join with the community to share what we can and provide a hand up to those in need, so they can Wullumba-bayn (come back) and join us in delivering our vision.

1.2.2. Objectives

The objectives of the association are:

- To provide safe, inclusive spaces, opportunities, programs, activities, and events that encourage community involvement, interest in planning and volunteering, whereby members of the local community can also participate in the association.
- To provide locally targeted services following best practice principles to achieve a more positive impact on outcomes for vulnerable families, young people, and children within the local community, in a client-centred manner and that reflect current data evidence of gaps and needs.
- To outreach to local preschools, schools, and communities to provide information, advice, and referral services to vulnerable families, where these services do not exist within that local community.
- To seek partnerships with other local service providers to work collaboratively, minimise duplication and increase accessible and appropriate service delivery.
- To evaluate and improve services based on practitioner reflection, evidence, and best practice principles.

1.2.3. Beliefs

We believe that everyone has the right to aspire to achieve the best possible outcomes

- fulfil their future potential
- make the best choices in their own life
- be treated with dignity, respect, privacy, and confidentiality and be valued
- have access to services on a non-discriminatory basis and
- services that are accountable, responsive, and inclusive

1.2.4. Values

We believe in the following values

- Advocacy on behalf of our clients and community, where issues arise.
- Assistance in the relief of food insecurity, support, and social isolation.
- Education by providing informal, referral, advice, and counselling.
- Empowerment for every individual by encouraging them to make their own choices



- Engagement by providing opportunities for consultation and listening to the community.
- Inclusion by actively creating opportunities for the community members to participate, connect including supporting cross cultural connections and relationships.
- Integrity by being honest, transparent, open, and accountable in all that we do.
- Needs based activities and programs that are aligned with TEI.
- Partnership by being committed to working in mutually beneficial and enriching partnerships with the community, colleagues, and members.
- Privacy by adhering to Privacy legislation.
- Research of evidence-based practice and community needs in services for vulnerable and disadvantaged children, young people, families, and community members.
- Respect by being non-judgemental and valuing everyone

1.3. Strategic Objectives and Measurements 2022-25

TNC conducted a strategy session in May 2022 and determine the following objectives and measurements for the next three years.

1.3.1. Positive staff and volunteer wellbeing, where staff and volunteers are trained for and comfortable in their roles

- Staff and volunteer wellbeing survey administered annually and 80% of staff rate satisfactory or higher using 1-5 rating scale.
- 80% of staff rate team development days as satisfactory or higher using 1-5 rating scale.
- 60% attendance at volunteer events.
- Measure staff and volunteer retention rates.
- 100% attendance at IT and security training
- Induction and training manuals updated annually.
- Staff wellbeing survey measures suitability and effectiveness of training.

1.3.2. Positive client and community experience

- 85 % feel satisfied with the service provided, received, or experienced (rating 4 or higher)
- 85% feel an increase or change in knowledge of skills, community structures, networks, behaviours, and practices. (Rating 4 or higher)

1.3.3. Increased fundraising

- Present fundraising strategy to September 2022 board meeting for ratification.
- \$20k Christmas 2022, increasing by 10% annually.
- Apply for 1 new grant per quarter.
- 2 Staff and 2 Board to attend grant writing workshops 2023.
- 4 businesses give in-kind support to the value of \$10k in 2023, increasing by 10% annually.
- Other donations increase to \$12k by end 2023.
- Increase revenue by 10% annually.
- Establish software capability to support direct email marketing.

1.3.4. Cohesive branding and media strategy implemented

- Branding and media strategy presented to the November 2022 board meeting
- Social media followers or likes of the page/s to increase by 10% annually



1.3.5. TNC continues to have strong community relationships

- 90% pre-pandemic relationships re-established 2022
- Rap Working group formed in May 2023
- 3 new Aboriginal outreach orgs added to NILS program 2023
- RAP formally endorsed by Reconciliation Australia November 2023.
- Attend all Aboriginal interagency meetings
- Attend 80% of all Connect NOW interagency meetings
- 85% feel an increase or change in knowledge of skills, community structures, networks, behaviours, and practices. (Rating 4 or higher)

1.4. Partnerships

TNC maintains relationships with the following organisations:

Organisation	Activity
Food Bank NSW & ACT	Toukley Neighbourhood Centre's Food Care purchases food weekly.
Second Bite	Food Care collects from Coles Toukley and Budgewoi.
Oz Harvest Newcastle	Delivers rescued food on Wednesdays and Fridays to TNC.
Coast Hands	Donation of 30-40 Frozen meals delivered each week.
The Bikers Hand	Donations of non-perishable food staples for our community pantry.
Central Coast Orange Sky Laundry	Provides a weekly mobile van service with a team of volunteers every Friday from 9.30am-12noon. The volunteers wash and dry our homeless clients' laundry using "Tumbles" industrial washing machines and dryers.
Wyong Neighbourhood Centre	Emergency Relief funding from DSS to provide Emergency Relief appointments.
Phoenix Youth Support	Referrals for youth, activities, and events.
Uniting	Supported Playgroup every Tuesday during school terms for 0-6 years and their family.
We Care Connect	Referrals for children and families.
Pop up TNC	Partnership with St. Mary's Primary, Toukley Primary School, Toukley Community Based Preschool, Little Coast Kids (Toukley), Play to Learn Preschool, Gorokan Preschool.
Community Women's Community Health Centre	Evidenced based parenting programs with childcare available.
Lifeline	safeTALK suicide awareness programs.
Central Coast Community Legal Centre	Referrals and outreach for free legal advice appointments.
Monash University Student Placements	Counselling available by appointment.
University Of Newcastle Student Placements	Social Work student placements to support learning and projects of the neighbourhood centre.



Organisation	Activity
Together 4 Toukley Interagency	Partnership of many local key stakeholders who plan community events for children, families and young people in the area. This involves working with Toukley Public School, St Mary's School, Toukley Lionesses and Lions, Wyong Shire Council, Toukley Preschool, Little Coast Kids, Northlakes Toukley Rotary, and Toukley Seniors Centre.
Connect NOW Interagency	Partnership with Benevolent Society Kanwal Hub to convene meetings and work on local gaps, needs and community events with organisations and workers to attend from the North of Wyong area, meetings and events are sometimes held at the Neighbourhood Centre. The "Who is In Your Neighbourhood?" community and information event is held annually during Mental Health Month in October.

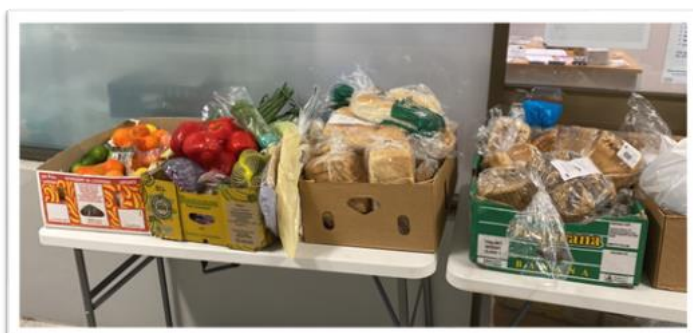
Figure 1. Meals from Coast Hands



Figure 2. Donations from Bikers' Hand



Figure 3. OzHarvest



1.5. Financial Highlights

Toukley Neighbourhood Centre has maintained a very positive financial result for 2022. We have received significant support from community donations, grants, and business sponsorship. Even though the Op Shop was forced to close from the 18th of June 2021, Lakes Food Care continues to provide essential services with a very small team of dedicated volunteers. These social enterprises fundraising efforts continue to positively enhance the lives of vulnerable and disadvantaged people in the local area and provide many volunteering opportunities.

1.5.1. Grants Received

Source	Funding
NSW Government – Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ)	\$150,905



NSW Government – Department of Fair Trading (DFT) • No Interest Loans Scheme	\$108,112
Australian Government – Department of Social Services (DSS) • No Interest Loans Scheme	\$45,750
Australian Government – Department of Health and Aged Care (DHAC) • Community Visitors Scheme	\$38,212
TOTAL	\$342,979

See Financial Statements Attachment 1.

1.6. Chairperson's Report

In June 2022, I accepted nomination from within the Board of Management to take on the role of Chairperson after Bev Hopkins' resignation. I acknowledge and thank Bev for her long history of leadership of Toukley Neighbourhood Centre, and in particular Lakes Food Care. I also thank both Bev and Gail Rixom for their many years of volunteering to support our local community and their contributions to the Board and TNC's various programs.

We are greatly appreciative of our committed staff members who have worked in challenging circumstances over the past year – juggling the COVID-related constraints, the difficulties of the Hedor St building and the growing support needs of our community. Without our staff, TNC could not support our community as it does. I would like to particularly call out our Executive Officer, Bronwyn Barnes, and Centre Administrator, Susan, for their dedication. I'd like also to recognise Jodie, who has recently stepped up to manage Food Care, and who has helped improve the procedures and vibe of the store.

We are also grateful for the volunteers who give up their time to help our local community. Volunteers are essential for us to provide the services we do, whether directly in service delivery or in helping us raise funds through the social enterprises.

We have spent the last few months implementing greater rigour in our governance, with assistance from Justice Connect who have provided us with a "health check". We are presenting an updated Constitution to the Annual General Meeting for ratification. The key changes to this relate to:

- Modernising the objectives of the association
- Allowing electronic attendance at meetings
- Changing committee (Board) member terms to three years and setting a maximum consecutive term of nine years
- Making the committee responsible for appointing office bearers
- Making the Constitution aligned and compliant with DFT and our registered charity requirements.

In May, the Board and members of staff participated in a strategy planning workshop for the next three years. There was an air of excitement and enthusiasm from participants, and I look forward to working with them to guide strategy development and achievement. These goals are detailed in Section 1.3 above.

Bronwyn Evans
Chairperson, Board of Management



2. Staff Reports

2.1. Toukley Neighbourhood Centre Programs, Activities and Events

During the first few months of the financial year, we were in lockdown again and this time the staff were working remotely due to local travel restrictions for LGA's to reduce the spread of Covid-19. The staff, volunteers and Board of Management worked very hard to continue providing all the essential and crisis services and programs to help support our community. Lakes Food Care continued to operate following Covid-19 safety and with very limited volunteers. As a non-essential service, the Op Shop remained closed during this time, unable to fundraise for much needed resources to support the community.

The highlights of the past year included the team of staff and volunteers working together on developing a new website and TNC organisation logo with a local graphic designer. The story included working from the 'heart', with our hand on our 'heart', being the 'heart' of our community and reaching out to others in need of support. Our new vision developed further during our Strategic planning sessions in May 2022 with the Social Impact Hub.

In November 2021 we received \$40,000 of Covid-19 funding from DCJ to help provide online shopping deliveries for families isolating for 2 weeks with a Covid-19 diagnosis. This funding helped to deliver extra services during a critical time for vulnerable children and families, including casual and part-time workers feeling the financial stress unable to access emergency payments.

Central Coast Council had made repairs to the Hedor St building over the past 12 months, and we were permitted to return in mid-November. This was the second time we had packed up everything and moved all the office staff, furniture, and resources and just in time to prepare for the Christmas Hamper support for the local community.

Figure 4. Christmas Hamper Support



During December 2021, we provided over 150 boxed Foodbank hampers, over 100 Christmas Goodie Bags, 100 x \$25 Coles vouchers and over 350 gifts to vulnerable children and families with some significant financial donations from Coles Lake Haven, Bendigo Community Bank in Wyong, The Lions Club of Toukley, Commonwealth Bank Lake Haven, TNC fundraising and some very generous community members donations. Wiseberry Heritage provided 100 eco shopping bags to pack our Christmas goodies and festive treats. The value of this incredible wave of community support total is about \$13,750.

Vaccination policies came into effect during January 2022 and as the demand for services and support increased, the need for looking after the health and wellbeing of staff and volunteers increased as well. We needed to continue monitoring the safety processes and procedures when we slowly returned to face to face delivery and small group activities.

After 6 weeks in the Hedor St building the staff reported feeling unwell again and started to have more and more time working remotely. The Board actioned more intensive mould and Volatile Organic Compound (VOC) testing to address these issues returning once again with Central Coast Council.

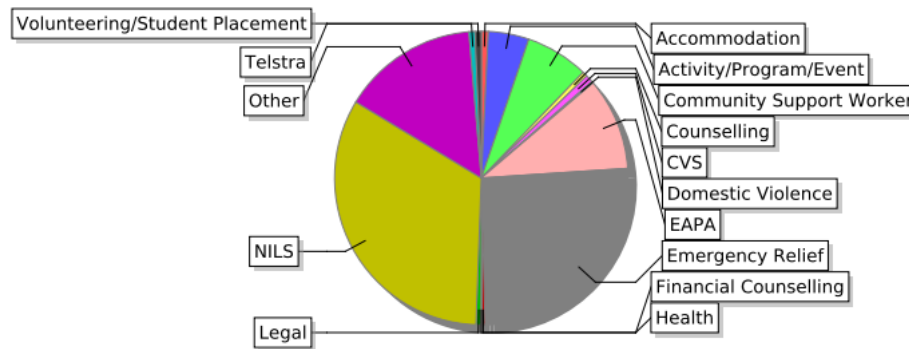
The report results were alarming, and the Board signed a lease for an office in Victoria Ave. The staff team packed and moved and unpacked for a 3rd time in 18 months during the April School



holidays. We were able to work with clients from the new site in early May once the air conditioning was installed.

Toukley Neighbourhood Centre provides over 6000 information, referral and support enquires annually. This chart represents the breakdown of various types of enquiries with Emergency Relief, Food Assistance, Electricity & Gas bill help (EAPA) and No Interest Loans. This year the demand for Emergency Relief, Food Assistance and Client support has increased dramatically and

Enquiry Statistics for June 2021- July 2022



Emergency Relief Statistics for June 2021- July 2022

Assistance Breakdown By Site				
	DSS Emergency Relief	Other Grant Funding	TNC Self- funded	Total Value
Toukley NC	\$30,427.24	\$15,023.01	\$29,691.73	\$75,141.98
Total Value	\$30,427.24	\$15,023.01	\$29,691.73	\$75,141.98

The total value of our annual financial and material aid support was \$75, 141.98, this included contributions from TNC fundraising, one off Covid-19 funding, DSS funding from our partnership with Wyong Neighbourhood Centre, generous community donations and other community partnerships.

Thank you to the Board of Management volunteer team for their ongoing governance of the organisation, thank you to all the amazing volunteers who are devoted to the fundraising success at the Op Shop and providing the rescued food program at Lakes Food Care to empower the community to address food insecurity for vulnerable and disadvantaged community members. Thank you to the reception volunteers and program volunteers for their adaptability moving once again to various sites and helping to support valuable activities like playgroup, Kidzspace, Community Café, workshops, activities, and events. The volunteer contribution to the organisation is significant and one volunteer helping for 15 hours a week for 49 weeks a year totals 15 x 49 x \$30 p/h = \$22,050. TNC has over 60 regular volunteers and student placements in various roles and this value to the organisation achieving outcomes for the community is over \$1.3 million dollars!

Figure 5. Program partnerships with Phoenix Youth Support and Orange Sky Laundry



To the TNC staff team, Susan, Anne-Marie, Bonnie, Wendy, Kalmain and Jodie, your resilience, dedication, and inspiring work whilst dealing with workplace health and safety issues, managing the increased community need and the challenges of moving premises has not affected the caring and adaptive way we continue to work with our vulnerable children, young people, families, and community.

*Bronwyn Barnes
Executive Officer*

2.2. Toukley Neighbourhood Centre No Interest Loans Program

This year from July 2021 - June 2022 has been another very challenging year for everyone. Being in Lockdown from July to mid-October, Wendy and myself had to again work from home, and our Volunteers were not able to continue to help.

We were excited to be able to move back to the "Blue building" in November, but this was short lived with both of us becoming very ill again due to the mould issues returning.

Late in 2021, we applied for funding to employ an Indigenous worker and we were successful, Kalmain Foresheew started as our Aboriginal NILS worker in January and settled into the team quickly.

Due to the building not being repaired and still causing illness we all did more working from home before moving into another commercial premise in Victoria Avenue where we started working together as a team from around May 2022.

Despite all the challenges and disruptions, the NILS team has had another very successful year with 1051 loans issued to all over NSW to the value of \$1,074 257 and 217 from the local area.

I would like to thank Wendy and Kalmain for their commitment and dedication during this challenging time. Without them we could not have achieved the excellent outcomes for clients using this program and their added contribution to the amazing reputation and continued success of TNC Wyong Shire NILS.

*Susan Crossley
Centre Administrator & Nils Manager*

2.3. Community Visitors Scheme

Although there were major lockdowns in the first half of the financial year and reporting period, our volunteers continued to maintained contact during the lockdowns with their residents using digital methods, phone calls or mailing letters and cards.

A highlight this year was the launch of several professional videos promoting CVS volunteering and showing the valuable connection between volunteers and residents.

Some volunteers have become wary because of all the changes and extra safety required when visiting their resident e.g., rat testing, face masks and in some facility's protective glasses or a face shield as well. Volunteers must visit in their resident's room, no more joining in group activities and some still must book in for their visit.

Our volunteers really enjoy taking knitted gifts like blankets, knee rugs, beanies, and shawls to their residents. These knitted items are provided by the Wild Woolies and other donations from local knitters in the community.



Figure 6. Volunteer recognition and knitted blankets



Our volunteers have lost more residents in this 6-month period than any period since COVID-19 pandemic began, and aged care facilities have not always communicated that the resident has passed which causes unnecessary distress when it became known. Our older volunteers have been slow to recommence face to face visits due to their own health concerns. It has been difficult to recruit new volunteers during this time because of immunisation requirements, uncertainty of lockdowns, health, and safety restrictions to visit at a facility, volunteers ageing, petrol prices, grandparents needed to look after grandchildren for parents working from home and potential volunteers concerned for their own health. Referrals have also been very slow due to demands in the aged care facilities with staffing and families adapting to all the changes for the residents.

Anne-Marie Moon
CVS Co-ordinator

2.4. Reconciliation Action Plan (Reflect RAP)

The Toukley Neighbourhood Centre Reconciliation Action Plan was first endorsed by Reconciliation Australia in September 2019. The Reflect RAP was current until October 2020 and with the interruptions from the Covid-19 pandemic there was a 6-month extension to complete the actions and deliverables well into 2021. The RAP Working group has not been able to meet with the Covid-19 disruptions and the 3 moves in 18 months however we have continued our learning journey as individuals, as a team and as an organisation. We have continued to report and work on the actions represented in the first plan. Bonnie continues to provide information about significant dates in the calendar for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Bronwyn attended an Aboriginal Employment Workshop in June 2021 and Susan attended workshops in Cultural Awareness and Aboriginal Employment in September and October 2021 with Lindsay Stanford from Blakworks. As part of our new Strategic Plan, our goal is to start developing a new RAP in 2023.

Bonnie Merz
Aboriginal and Community Support Worker

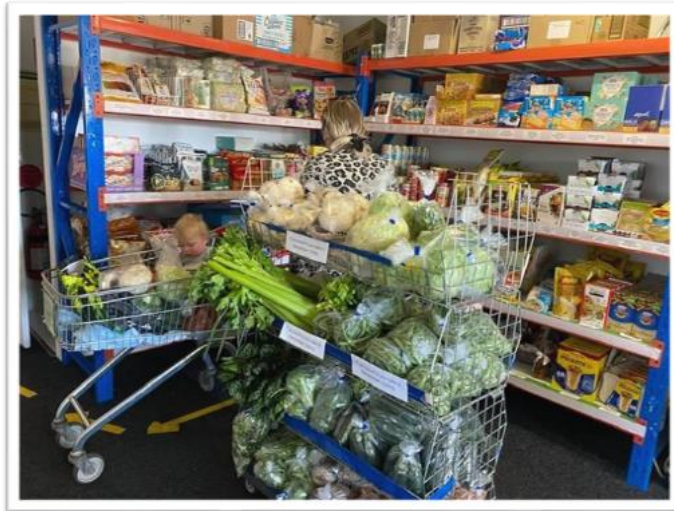
Bronwyn Barnes
Executive Officer

Figure 7. Mural painted by artist Colin Miller featuring inspiring Leaders in our local community.



3. Social Enterprise Reports

3.1. Lakes Food Care Program



The affordable grocery store is located at 199 Main Rd Toukley and continued to operate with limited volunteers as an essential service all throughout all the lockdown periods. TNC staff were also required to help support the Volunteer Managers meet the customer needs, online shopping orders and increased demand during this time.

A huge thank you to the team of hard-working volunteers including Bev, Gail, Carol, Cathy, Brian, Steve, Gary, Anna, Juanita, Pam, Stephanie, Rod, Ben, Angela and casual and part-time staff members Kristie and Jodie.

In May 2022, the Lakes Food Care Team received the Neville Royal Service Above Self Award at the Northlakes Toukley Rotary Club's Business and Community Awards night. The team also received \$500 for the program due to the dedication and appreciation of their volunteer service.

3.2. TNC Op Shop



The Op Shop was forced to closed from Monday 28th June 2021 when NSW was forced into Lockdown. The volunteers continued to self-isolate until reopening later in the year.

The Op Shop subcommittee comprising of Liz and Annette continued to work with the Volunteer Manager Pam and the team of volunteers, Judy, Ann. G, Ann. J, Dorothy, Wendy, Lyn, Regina, Karen, Tanika, Yvonne, Kaylene, Glenys, Alan, and with Anne-Marie's support to advertise, recruit and induct new team members.

The fundraising profits raised from the Op Shop continues to support programs such as Client Assistance, Crisis Food Vouchers, Community Café, Frozen meals, Kidzspace art & craft supplies and community events like Reconciliation Week and the Starr Cup.





Toukley Neighbourhood Centre

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