



# **Annual Report**

2024 - 2025



Minyang nyura wubaliyn?
Nyura yiigu marala barraygu.
Yii Warrimay/Birrbay barray.
Yii nyiirunba barray.
Yii Gathangguba barray.
Gathay nyiirun.

Acknowledgement of Country, Gathang language.

### **English translation:**

What are you doing?
You have come here.
This is Worimi/Biripi country.
This is our country.
This is Gathang country.
Let us go together.

#### Contents

Glossary	2
About us	3
Vision	4
Mission	4
Values	4
Our Story	5
CEO's Report	7
The technology to take us into the future	9
President's Report	10
Our Board of Management	11
Our year in pictures	13
Treasurer's Report	145
Finance Report	16
Ageing & Disability Services	17
Safety Net & Community Connections Report	22
Training & Staff Development	26
Human Resources	28
Financial Counselling & Legal Aid	29
Quality Assurance & Work Health & Safety Report	30

### Glossary

AGM	Annual General Meeting	НСР	Home Care Package
ADS	Ageing and Disability Services	HR	Human Resources
BWNG	Bucketts Way Neighbourhood Group Inc.	NDIS	National Disability Insurance Scheme
Board	Board of Management	OFT	Office of Fair Trading
CEO	Chief Executive Officer	QA	Quality Assurance
CHSP	Commonwealth Home Support Program	RIEP	Regional Industry Education
DAA	Department of Aboriginal Affairs		Partnership
DFV	Domestic and Family Violence	RTO	Registered Training Organisation
DCJ	Department of Communities and Justice	SAH	Support At Home
DSS	Department of Social Services	SBAT	School Based Apprenticeship or Traineeship
EAPA	Energy Accounts Payment Assistance	TEI	Targeted Early Intervention
GWFPAC	Gloucester Worimi First Peoples	WHS	Work Health and Safety
	Aboriginal Corporation		

#### About us

Bucketts Way Neighbourhood Group Inc. (BWNG) is a non-profit organisation providing a variety of essential community services to the people of Gloucester and surrounds.

Since the Organisation's incorporation in 1989 it has grown and evolved, becoming one of the largest employers in Gloucester, and the only local-based provider of many essential services.

Our area of service spans from Limeburner's Creek in the south to Krambach in the east and includes the communities of Gloucester, Barrington, Bundook, Stratford, Craven, Wards River, Stroud Road, Stroud, Booral and Allworth.

#### Our services include:

- In home aged-care funded through the Commonwealth Home Support Program and Home Care Packages (which will transition to *Support at Home* at the end of 2025).
- Disability support services as a registered provider of the National Disability Insurance Scheme.
- Health transport in partnership with NSW Health.
- Cancer Council Transport to Treatment Program help for local cancer patients to reach out-of-area treatment.
- Meals on Wheels.
- Safety Net Program help with the cost of food, medicine, energy bills or fuel to reach out of area appointments as well as information, advice and referral for issues such as homelessness and domestic violence.
- Connections Program support for at-risk community members.

As well as delivering government-funded services BWNG relies heavily on grants and donations to be able to maintain the diverse programs that help fill the gaps in services available to local people.

All logistical aspects of the organisation operate within BWNG's premises at 88 King Street, Gloucester, NSW.

BWNG enjoys partnerships with many other non-profit organisations including Legal Aid NSW, Meals on Wheels NSW, Cancer Council NSW and Financial Counselling Australia.

In partnership with various registered training organisations, we coordinate regular short courses such as First Aid and Fire Safety Training. Our King Street premises also provides a versatile space for out-of-area trainers and outreach programs to operate from, which gives our rural community access to more of the services available in urban areas.

BWNG is governed by a seven-member volunteer Board of Management who are elected at the Annual General Meeting by the financial members of the Organisation.



# Connecting Our Community



Working to connect people with supports & services, enhancing their quality of life.

### Respect

We cultivate professional relationships through respectful communication, and by consulting with people on issues, which concern them.

# Commitment

We are committed to achieving the best possible outcomes for our clients and community.

# Integrity

We conduct ourselves with honesty, acknowledging the trust our clients and community place in us.

## Equity

We operate with fairness and impartiality, consistently implementing transparent processes, which celebrate diversity.

# Independence

We enable our clients and community members to access supports and services, which foster their developing or continuing independence.

#### **Our Story**

- 1989 The Gloucester Neighbourhood Centre was incorporated to distribute some Government funding that had been received by the local council.
- Aged Care services commenced, including transport, Meals on Wheels, social activities and respite care.
- 2002 'The Cottage' at 40 Tyrrell Street was purchased to provide a disability support program.
- 2006 14 Queen Street was purchased to allow the Neighbourhood Centre to expand its services.
- 2007 BWNG partners with Cancer Council NSW to provide the Transport to Treatment Program.
- Having outgrown the Queen Street premises, the Organisation moved to 88 King Street.
- 2014 Upon the retirement of founding CEO Georgine Wise, current CEO Anna Burley took the reins.
  - BWNG participated in the School Based Apprenticeship and Traineeship for the first time.
- The purchase of a wheelchair modified Kia Carnival was made possible through grants funding and an enormous community-led fundraising effort.
- A joint initiative commenced between Energise Gloucester, Power Shop and BWNG to install 30kw solar system on the roof of 88 King Street.
   BWNG registered as an approved NDIS provider.
- 2018 BWNG launched the Blueprint Training Kitchen to provide a rebooted hot Meals on Wheels service to the community as well as training and employment opportunities to local young people. This initiative received the 2018 Innovation Award from Meals on Wheels NSW
- 2019 BWNG successfully applied for an NSW Environmental Protection Authority Organic Infrastructure grant for a community kitchen food trailer to reduce food going into landfill. BWNG's 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary was celebrated with a Colour Run Community Event.
- 2020 Approval was received for BWNG to deliver Home Care Packages, making BWNG the only locally based Home Care Package provider.
  - The COVID-19 pandemic brought unprecedented challenges to the care industry.
- 2021 BWNG took delivery of a purpose-built kitchen for the Meals on Wheels service.
- The launch of the Gathang Revitalisation Project by BWNG offered members of the local Aboriginal community the opportunity to learn the Gathang language, participate in workshops and reconnect with their culture.
- 2023 BWNG was presented with the 'Helping Hand Award' from Meals on Wheels NSW, an accolade presented to a number of members and services each year for their efforts in support of Meals on Wheels.
- BWNG helped mark the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Gloucester's Meals n Wheels service by hosting a lunch in celebration of the local service's founding members and other community members and organisations who had supported the service since its launch in 1974.

  With funding from community group, Energise Gloucester, an inverter and 25.6 kW solar battery was added to BWNG's existing solar system at 88 King Street.
- 32 Denison Street Gloucester purchased to accommodate BWNG's expanding team and allow shopping precinct access to our services for the community.

# The Five Pillars

### Of BWNG's 2021 – 2026 Strategic Plan











Community

People

Resources

Governance













- Empower disadvantaged communities
- Expand engagement & participation
- Lead local campaigns & social justice
- Support the vulnerable & elderly

- Skilled, cohesive, professional team
- Strong internal communication
- Workforce planning for the future
- Recognition & retention of staff
   & volunteers

- Financial sustainability & growth
- New funding & enterprise opportunities
- Smarter IT systems & innovation
- Commitment to sustainability

- Strong Board leadership & accountability
- Risk management & compliance
- Regular review of Constitution & systems
- Advocacy for safety, quality & community needs

- Build strong community partnerships
- Strengthen membership & engagement
- Amplify community voice on key issues
- Improve communication & accessibility





Measures of Success

- Person-centred services fostering independence & dignity
- Empowering First Nations people & embedding cultural awareness
- Innovation & technology to improve care and efficiency
- Sustainability focus: renewable energy, recycling & waste reduction.

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#### CEO's Report

Another year has come to a close and it's another year that BWNG has continued to grow and evolve to tackle the many matters to ensure the way of life for the Gloucester community.

As you will read the stories in this FY2025 Annual Report, I hope you feel the same things I did: inspiration, pride, and a renewed sense of what's possible when BWNG is guided by the people we support.

Reading and reflecting on the past BWNG annual reports, the consistent conversation piece is about proposed changes in funded government services – now, much closer to being put into place. BWNG is ready, but only on the very limited information at hand. And for those who have worked in community services often say things are never stable – this is very true!

What was to kick off on the 1 July, was the much-awaited changes to In Home Aged care — the *Support at Home* program. Brought about by the Royal Commission outcomes and changes to Legislation, now delayed until the beginning of November, I can assure you that BWNG's unwavering commitment to transform within this landscape is paramount. We will continue to provide a great service to the community that ensures clients will remain at home with support and safety.

During this complex and uncertain period — substantial achievement and contribution to our way of doing has been the investment and the building of systems. BWNG has significantly increased data, technology and digital transformation. The key focus is to streamline our operations and improve service delivery and efficiencies.

With this investment, BWNG is further building the literacy, skills and capabilities of our workforce, through a growing range of courses, training opportunities and online



resources. I am delighted to have this opportunity to express my enormous gratitude for the collective effort of our remarkable team in tackling and building our skill base.

FY2025 saw BWNG achieve full accreditation status in our NDIS registration and programs. We undertook also an audit on the Aged Care services of Home Care Packages (HCP) and Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP). We met the majority of our compliance requirements. We have now met all requirements, but it showed the need to continue to work hard to ensure that BWNG's Quality and Safeguarding practices not only meet compliance requirements, but in many cases need to exceed them.

One very pleasing outcome from the audit process was the feedback and engagement of our clients with the auditors. All auditors commented that feedback on BWNG's services was the best that was ever received for any organisation. We thank all who were involved with the process.

During July 2024, a significant achievement to improve our sustainability efforts and puts a tick against our Strategic Plan was the

purchase and installation of an inverter and 25.6kwh solar batteries. Again, ably assisted by the former Energise Gloucester Inc., BWNG's installation of this system, worth over \$25,000, coupled with the 32kW solar panels on the roof of 88 King St has seen significant savings to our energy costs.

Also, a significant day to day change has been the effort of the Meals on Wheels team in changing packaging that is now returned, cleaned, sanistised and reused. This has saved significant dollars but more importantly reduced waste. Along with other day to day efforts such as aluminium, bottle, container and battery recycling, all make a collective impact and achievement against the BWNG Strategic Plan.

Finally, a program has commenced to purchase hybrid vehicles to complement BWNG's ever growing fleet. Keen to reduce our motor vehicle costs, this effort is expected to reduce our expenses over time.

BWNG's volunteers and staff are nothing short of remarkable. They are clinicians, advocates, problem-solvers, and community leaders – often all at once – working across the area day after day. Their contribution is the quiet engine of our economy and society. It deserves recognition – and it demands real support.

Significantly over the FY2025 period saw changes to the award wages for staff.
Primarily because of the gender undervaluation determination by the Fair Work Commission. As occurs when jobs are predominantly held by women, they are paid less than those held by men, despite requiring similar skills, effort, and responsibility. BWNG has ensured that we have met the regulatory requirements for our staff.

Workforce sustainability is also imperative – and nowhere is the challenge sharper than in a rural area. BWNG has re-imagined the task and the parameters of funding models and

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added what can be achieved in a small community like Gloucester. What emerges is a portrait of ingenuity and hope: a workforce that is the backbone of providing support to our predominantly older residents.

My sincere thanks to our leadership team for their efforts nurturing our dynamic culture and to every one of our dedicated staff and volunteers across all elements of the BWNG ecosystem for their passion, creativity, skill and dedication to our vision and mission. We especially value our key government supporters and partners who aid in funding and other supports to ensure BWNG delivers the programs within the community.

This steadfast support has been vital to our growth and more importantly, enhanced the positive impact we are able to have on the Gloucester community.

These stories show something far richer: grassroots leadership, lived experience, codesign, and community resilience that shapes how care is delivered and received at every life stage

To our valued BWNG Community, on behalf of the Board of Management I am pleased to present our FY2025 Annual report.

### The technology to take us into the future

#### **Introducing CompliSpace**

This year the Organisation's focus has been following up from audit (July to March) and the purchase and implementation of a quality assurance system.

BWNG has invested in a comprehensive compliance and risk management system called *Ideagen CompliSpace*.

For providers of home care services, Ideagen CompliSpace delivers complete transparency and oversight across their policies, staff compliance training, compliance actions, data capture and reporting.

The system is made up of three websites:

Assurance: This system manages all our risks, such as complaints, incidents, risk registers and reports. The assurance system will assist BWNG to meet the Aged Care Quality Standards evidence requirements on demand. The system operates our continuous quality assurance processes and provides BWNG with internal audit tools to continually monitor BWNG's adherence to the Quality Standards.

**Policy and Procedures** system called *Complicare*. policies and procedures that are kept up to date with changes in the law and

best practice and are distributed from a central platform. In our industry there are over 250 laws, regulations, codes and guidelines that are all reflected in the policy and automatically updated when change occurs.

Staff now have access to BWNG policy and procedures via technology. Staff can check their requirements that include safe work procedures, how to support clients and what and how to do various tasks.

**Learning:** Staff compliance training delivered via a state-of-the-art learning platform where BWNG can manage all staff learning, including our own bespoke company training and thirdparty training. Learning courses mapped to policies with related quizzes to validate understanding. All training is centralised and manages BWNG staff Induction and professional learning. All new staff receive onboarding that includes the latest updates in the laws in our sector. The system allows us to assign the training from a large library of training items, track, manage and report on all staff learning that demonstrates their skills and understanding of supporting their clients and the relevant requirements to perform their job.



#### Policy

Know what's required.

We provide key policies contextualised to an organisation's circumstances that cover the who, how, when, what and why of each policy.



#### Learning

Understand what's required.

We provide associated learning and development to help staff understand the policies and their obligations.



#### Assurance

Do what's required.

We provide an assurance workflow management tool and associated content and templates to ensure that key elements of an organisation's policies 'come to life'.



#### Reporting

Prove (and improve).

High-quality reporting enables enhanced decision-making and sets the platform for continuous improvement within your organisation.

#### President's Report

It seems that the year has only begun and here we are at reporting time again. It has been a year of great change both within BWNG itself and in sphere of work in which the Organisation functions.

There are exciting and innovative times ahead, the roll out of the new *Support at Home* program has fore shadowed a shift in the sector. For clients, providers, carers and workers. As with any change there is a need for a great volume of work to be done. This work has been ongoing for many months now, starting with lead time for the proposed start date of the new system in July this year. While the roll out didn't go ahead at that time the work at BWNG didn't stop. With the new start date of November, the preparations have, if anything, moved on to a greater level of input to ensure workforce and client preparedness.

As always, the team at BWNG have met the challenges head on, what needs to be done to ensure our clients transition to the new order of things is being done with thoughtfulness, dedication, consultation and much hard work. Everyone has been doing their very best to ensure the transition goes as smoothly as possible.

There have been some staff structure changes, and the Board of Management fully supports the direction in which BWNG is heading. There have been exciting developments in organisational expansion. These new pathways will be of great value, not only to our clients, who are always at the forefront of decision making, but the whole community.

My thanks go to the wonderful staff of BWNG, from CEO, Team Leaders, office staff of all the various teams, Support Workers, field staff and of course our other amazing staff, the "Staff of Volunteers". You are a very special group of people I hear many beautiful



comments when I'm do my volunteering duties, each one should be proud indeed of your contributions. They mean a great deal in the lives of our clients.

I will make special mention of our dedicated, tireless, innovative and ever vigilant CEO Anna, we are extremely fortunate to have you at BWNG. Your knowledge base in a wide range of critical areas is invaluable. The vision and passion you show for BWNG is something to be admired and respected. It is certainly not only a 'job' to you.

To the members of BWNG Board of Management a heartfelt thanks to you all, you're an intrepid but discerning group of people. Working together as we look to the future of BWNG is a great pleasure, your careful consideration of new ideas and pathways ensures the stability and longevity of the Organisation. I look forward to continuing to work together as the new, exciting, challenging and I'm sure sometimes surprising developments come to fruition.

It is pleasure for me to be involved with BWNG, and I hope I am lucky enough to continue this involvement long into the future. I am eager, excited and delighted to see where we go from here.

#### Our Board of Management

The Board of Management plays a vital role in the effective governance of Bucketts Way Neighbourhood Group Inc. (BWNG). As a non-profit organisation, BWNG relies on the Board to uphold the highest standards of integrity, transparency, and accountability. Board members are responsible for guiding the strategic direction of the Organisation, ensuring sound policies are in place, and providing oversight to support the delivery of quality programs and services. Their leadership helps BWNG stay true to its mission and values, fostering trust and connection within the communities we serve.

Introducing our Board of Management:



Robert Sparke
Treasurer
Board Member
since 2017

'Tree-changer' Robert has an extensive and varied employment history within the retail and franchising sector from large multinational organisations to owner-operated outlets.

Since retiring to
Gloucester, Robert has
become involved in a
number of local social and
community services
organisations including the
Men's Cancer Support
Group.

Robert is well-versed on the issues facing local people, such as cancer support and men's health.



Julienne Huntriss
Director
Board Member
since 2022

As a born-and-bred local Julienne is well-connected within the Gloucester community, bringing a wealth of local knowledge, and an understanding of issues affecting our area to her role on BWNG's Board of Management.

Additionally, Julienne holds qualifications in Business Administration and Aged Care and has a strong background in health care and residential aged care.



lan Parks
Director
Board Member
since 2021

As a retired Mechanical Engineer and experienced Draughtsman, Ian has a keen technical understanding and a sharp eye for detail.

Ian is a member of the local Ulysses Motorcycle Club, has a long involvement with Scouts Australia, and is an active community member.

We are proud to acknowledge and extend our heartfelt thanks to BWNG's FY2025 Board Members: Donna, Jodie, Robert, Vicki, Ian, Beverley, and Julienne. Each member has generously contributed their time, skills, and commitment to the ongoing success of the Organisation. Their dedication to ethical leadership and community wellbeing strengthens BWNG's foundation and ensures we remain responsive to local needs. Your service is deeply appreciated and truly makes a lasting impact.









Vicki Harris Secretary Board Member since 2022

As a retired small business owner Vicki understands the challenges faced by business operators in regional and rural areas.

A committed
Volunteer, Vicki hosts
an annual Community
Christmas Luncheon
for anyone spending
Christmas on their
own.

As a 'can-do' woman raising awareness and action on many community issues including drought and disaster recovery, and social isolation, Vicki has been recognized with Australia Day honours.

Bev Fagan
Director
Board Member
since 2020

Bev is a long-serving member and office holder of the Lions Club of Gloucester.

In 2016 she received the James D Richardson Honour Award for her community service within the Club.

Bev also has a strong background in the finance and banking sector, with extensive experience in senior leadership roles.

Bev has also served the Australian Electoral Commission as the officer in charge of state and federal polling booths.

Jodie House Vice President Board Member since 2017

Jodie is a serving paramedic with NSW Ambulance, and has been awarded for her work with the service.

As a mother with young children Jodie is in tune with the experiences and pressures of working mothers and families within the Gloucester area.

Jodie is also involved with many Community, Disaster and Health advisory roles, and is a member of several local sporting committees.

Donna Kemp President Board Member since 2016

Donna has experience working with young people, with a focus on education and special needs. She participates with local and regional committees for children and family support.

As a proud Worimi woman, Donna is involved with several local Indigenous organisations and regularly give the Acknowledgement of Country address for BWNG.

Donna is an active member of the Country Women's Association (CWA) both as a member of Gloucester CWA Evening Branch and as a member of the State CWA Social impact committee.

#### Our year in pictures



#### **INDIGENOUS SHIRTS LAUNCHED**

**July 2024** - we unveiled a new polo shirt for our staff to wear, featuring a design created by Charlie Clarke, who's design was the winning entry in our NAIDOC Week 2023 shirt-design competition.



#### **MEALS ON WHEELS DAY**

August 2024 - we celebrated National Meals on Wheels Day with cake, and once cut by delivery volunteers Julienne and Sharon, we had the pleasure of sharing it with all clients receiving Meals on Wheels that day.



#### **ANNA'S 10-YEAR MILESTONE**

**September 2024** - Anna Burley, CEO of BWNG marked ten years of service at the helm of the organisation.



#### SAFE DRIVER ASSESSMENTS

**October 2024** - Support Workers undertook safe driver assessments with Peter Judd of *All Age Driving Tuition* driving school, to enhance driving skills and promote safe driving practices.



#### CONSUMER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**November 2024** - BWNG's consumer advisory committee members Helen, Synthia and Lyn held their first meeting.



#### THE BWNG GIVING TREE

**December 2024** – the BWNG Giving Tree received generous donations especially from Gloucester Men's Shed, Ray White Gloucester and Regional Australia Bank Gloucester, allowing us to distribute 125 gift parcels.

MidCoast Council collected gifts and pantry items.

Thank you everyone who got involved!



#### **HAPPY NEW YEAR**

January 2025 – Meals on Wheels Volunteers Vicki, Marj, Cheryl and Jenny welcome the new year.



#### FOOD PREP SKILLS WORKSHOP

**February 2025** - After school workshops commenced teaching food preparation skills to Gloucester High School (GHS) students. This was delivered in via a partnership between BWNG's *Connections Program* and GHS and is funded by BWNG and *Regional Industry Education Partnerships (RIEP)*.



#### **IGA LOYALTY CARD PROGRAM**

**March 2025** - Through Lovey's Grocers (IGA Gloucester) Loyalty Card Program BWNG received a cheque for \$1,368.26.

Thank you, Lovey's IGA Gloucester and all IGA customers who chose to support BWNG through the Program.



#### WORK EXPERIENCE STUDENTS

**April 2024 -** BWNG was pleased to again participate in Gloucester High School's work experience program, hosting four students including Hailee, Olivia and Dakota, pictured.



#### **EXTREME WEATHER EVENT**

**May 2025 –** Gloucester and the Mid Coast experienced widespread flooding, road closures and communications outages due to an Easterly Trough Low.

This was a major challenge as many team members were flooded in, telephone and internet connections were intermittent, and many roads remained closed for weeks. A landslip to the south effectively cut the town off for weeks.



#### **FLOOD DONATION**

June 2025 – Survivors R Us and Pacific Swift Transport deliver six pallets of donated goods to BWNG to be distributed to local people affected by the May flooding.

#### Treasurer's Report

I am pleased to report a profit of \$534,514.00 for the year ended 30 June 2025.

The net profit has declined and was 2.3% below the prior year. The small decrease in reported net profit is driven by a slightly higher increase in expenditure compared to the higher revenues recognised.

The increase in expenses is attributed to higher wage costs and the general inflationary increases of the National Economy. The careful management and control of overall costs have once again delivered an exemplary result for the Organisation.

As of 30 June 2025, our retained earnings is \$3,288,688 putting BWNG in a strong position to deal with the major changes to the Aged Care industry looming in November.

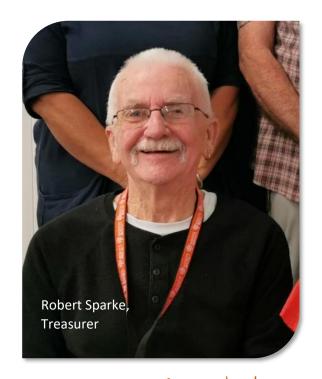
We have been preparing for the new Aged Care program for the last 12 months and still waiting for clear direction from Government.

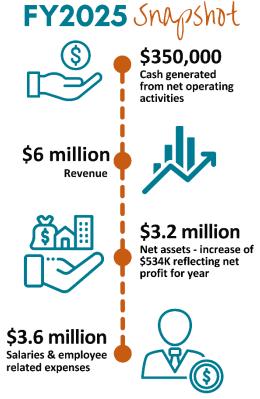
The current Net Cash equivalents at the end of the financial year are \$539,723 maintaining a strong position to deal with the expected changes through cost control and planning.

FY2025 was like most years, challenging, increasing the workforce to cope with the increase in aged care places as well as preparing for major changes to the aged care act.

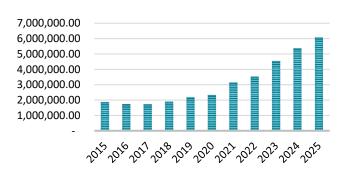
Once again is gives me great pleasure highlighting the driving force behind Bucketts Way our CEO Anna Burley, her leadership of BWNG is exemplary, with the backing of Corporate Services Team Leader Kerry Davis-Marsh with her finger on the financial pulse, and the team they lead to deliver the services we offer at BWNG.

Thank you, Anna, Kerry and the whole team, for your service and dedication.





#### Revenue Comparison \$



#### Finance Report

The past year has had a significant focus on the new Aged Care Act that is imminent, which will introduce new financial and prudential standards, a huge amount of time and training on this, coupled with the readiness activities and groundwork needed to navigate the pending changes, resulting in implementations of new systems and changes to existing ones. A focus this year on outsourced consultancy around some of these areas.

The ongoing review of the Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services industry continues to challenge the delivery of services, coupled with the associated compliance demands and funding uncertainties.

Through all the challenges, the financial year resulted in:

- 350k cash was generated from net operating activities.
- Revenue of \$6.0m, including government subsidies and grants \$5.58m was received.
- Net increase in financial assets of \$700k.
- Salaries and employee related expenses totalled \$3.6m
- Depreciation totalled \$67k.
- Cash and Cash equivalents \$539k.
- Net Assets totalled \$3.2m
- BWNG's surplus was approximately 8% of total income.

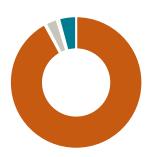
Finishing the year with some growth once again. This year there was considerable investment into properties that will build on the services being delivered for and to the local community.

In final, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to Finance team for their ongoing hard work and to the CEO and Board of Management, for their invaluable support and guidance, which have been instrumental to another successful year



#### Total Revenue \$6,065,510

- Funding
- Employment Incentives
- Brokerage
- Donations
- Other



### **Total Assets** \$4,485,752

- Financial Assets
- Cash & Cash Equivalents
- Property, Plant & Equipment
- Trade & Other receivables



### **Total Expenses** \$5,530,995

- Employment
- Other Operational
- Client
- Food & Merchandise Supplies



#### Ageing & Disability Services

#### **Aged Care**

FY2025 has been one of growth, adaptation and preparation as we continue to deliver quality aged care services to our community.

With the new Aged Care Act and the *Support* at Home (SAH) program set to commence in November 2025, our focus this year has been on training, preparation and adaptation. Staff have participated in multiple workshops, webinars and information sessions to ensure we're ready to implement these significant reforms with confidence.

As more information about *Support at Home* has become available, we have placed great emphasis on keeping our clients, families, contractors, and stakeholders informed. Our goal has been to help everyone understand the upcoming changes and how their care will continue under the new system.

Demand for our services continues to rise, with hours of care delivered through aged care funding increasing by 17.6% compared to the previous financial year. This is to be expected as our electorate (Lyne) has the second-oldest aged demographic of any electorate in NSW, and housing and cost of living prices continue to force retirees out of more metropolitan areas.

Our Consumer Advisory Committee held their first meeting in November. The voluntary committee is open to BWNG clients and their representatives and will provide a vital role in enhancing our services by providing advice and feedback from clients to our Board of Management. We welcome the opportunity together to make a positive impact in the lives of our clients.

The anticipated winter surge of COVID-19, Influenza A and other respiratory impacted our community toward the end of this reporting period, but not to the levels seen in recent years. We prioritised infection control



in the interests of the health and safety of clients and staff, asking clients to keep us informed of travel, or visitors from out of area.

While staffing is a major and ongoing challenge across the aged care industry, workforce shortages are most severe in rural areas like Gloucester. The aged care sector has been experiencing a significant workforce shortage for several years, and it's considered one of the top risks to service delivery nationwide. High levels of staff turnover and competition from other care sectors (such as health) are ongoing challenges.

This year we set ourselves the goal of getting the most out of the technology we have invested in. We have put extra training, and set-up into ensuring we are using our client management system to its full potential to streamline operations, improve compliance and better support both staff and clients.

Growth and improvement are only possible through change—and change requires adaptation. We extend our sincere thanks to our clients, team members, community partners, and supporters for embracing new technologies and working alongside us as we continue to evolve.

#### **Disability Services**

In addition to aged care reform, our team has navigated updates to NDIS legislation introduced in October 2024. We continue to work closely with participants and support coordinators to ensure BWNG services align with participants' goals and the latest policy requirements.

BWNG's group activity centre known as *the Cottage* is looking refreshed after being repainted over the holiday shut down period.

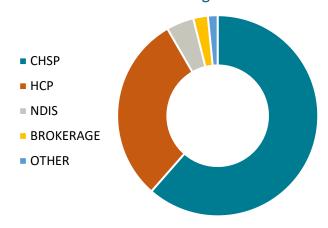
Hours of support delivered through NDIS funding have increased by 22.2% from the previous financial year.

Participants have enjoyed plenty of community engagement activities this year, as well as short term accommodation and active excursions of their choice.

Cottage Participants also enjoyed spending time with the next generation of Support Workers when we hosted Gloucester High School students Jack for *Try a Trade Day*, and Hailee, Olivia and Dakota for a week of work experience.



#### How Clients are Funding Their Care



#### **Nursing**

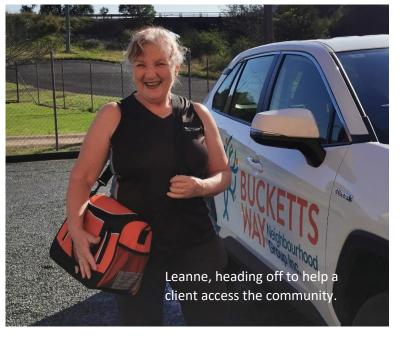
Nursing services increased by 3% compared to the previous financial year, with the majority of support provided relating to wound care.

As part of our ongoing duty of care and commitment to improving clinical outcomes, our nursing team continues to conduct regular clinical assessments and reviews to ensure the best possible care for our clients.

In staffing, we welcomed Michael Andrews into the role of Nursing Coordinator, following the departure of Bec Whitton, who had been with us since 2020.

Support Workers Wendy and Caroline undertook specialist training to provide wound care, expanding our capacity to meet client needs. We also welcomed Student Nurse Tegan on a temporary basis to assist with health reviews and clinical checklist assessments.

This year, our clinical focus has been on continence care. We have conducted continence assessments and adapted tools developed by the Brightwater Care Group (2018) with the goal of helping older people maintain continence health. The impact continence has on both mental wellbeing and social connection has been well documented.



#### **Transport**

BWNG's transport program helps eligible community members with barriers to transport reach medical appointments, attend out-of-area cancer treatment and access the community in which they live.

BWNG's Health Transport Service is supported by NSW Health, and helps community members attend medical appointments, either in the community in which you live, or further afield.

These programs rely on the generosity and dedication of Volunteer Drivers who use their own vehicle to transport clients to their appointments.

A special acknowledgement goes to Rob Butcher, Don Noble, and Kathleen Kernahan, each of whom volunteered their time on more than one hundred days throughout FY2025 — an outstanding contribution to our community.

#### **Transport to Treatment Program**

Cancer treatment often requires repeat visits over an extended period of time to facilities which may be far from home. Treatment such as radiotherapy can require daily attendance for up to six weeks.

A partnership between Cancer Council NSW and BWNG provides assistance for people

affected by cancer to reach treatment in NSW.

In FY2025 we are again pleased to have renewed our partnership with Cancer Council NSW for the provision of this vital service.

This financial year, through the Transport to Treatment Program Volunteers travelled 44,725 kilometres over 209 trips to help 31 local cancer patients reach treatment that is not available locally.







#### Meals on Wheels

Meals on Wheels continues to be a cornerstone of BWNG's services, ensuring that older residents and people living with a disability have access to nutritious meals, companionship, and a reliable connection to the wider community. Under the dedicated coordination of Jo Poidevin, our Meals on Wheels service has once again demonstrated the difference that care, consistency, and community spirit can make in people's lives.

Need for the service has increased dramatically on last year, with the number of clients, and the number of meals served increasing by 24% and 16% respectively.

This financial year we proudly delivered:

- **5,464 hot meals** providing comfort, nourishment, and routine for those who rely on us.
- **2,608 home-made desserts** offering not only nutrition but also the joy of something sweet.
- **1,196 frozen meals** ensuring flexibility and choice for clients who may need a meal at any time.
- More than 1,000 newspapers delivered alongside meals, keeping people connected and informed.
- **94 people supported with meals** each person receiving not just food, but also social connection and a sense of belonging.
- **12 dedicated volunteers** the heart of our service, giving their time generously pack, deliver, and connect with clients.

Beyond the numbers, Meals on Wheels is about connection. For many of our clients, the arrival of a meal is also a friendly check-in and a reminder that the community cares. Jo has led the service with warmth and dedication, supporting volunteers and building strong relationships with clients to ensure their needs are met with respect and dignity.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to our volunteers, whose commitment and kindness make this program possible. Their contribution goes far beyond food delivery, it is about friendship, safety, and trust.

A core responsibility when operating a food service for vulnerable people is maintaining an audited Food Safety Program to identify and manage potential food safety risks. Each year, BWNG's program is independently audited by the Department of Primary Industries (DPI).

In the FY2025 audit, BWNG once again achieved an 'A' rating—the highest rating possible. This outcome reflects the exceptional care, diligence, and responsibility shown by our team in every aspect of food handling and service.

Remarkably, BWNG has now maintained this top accreditation for eight consecutive years. This consistent achievement is a testament to our unwavering commitment to the highest standards of safety, quality, and client wellbeing.

A shout-out of appreciation to our dedicated Cooks for producing nutritious meals in accordance with Meals on Wheels Guidelines.

Looking ahead, BWNG is committed to strengthening our Meals on Wheels service, exploring ways to expand reach and increase choice, while continuing to provide the high level of care our community deserves.



#### **Eating With Friends**

An off shoot of Meals on Wheels, BWNG's *Eating with Friends* is a monthly tradition of a group lunch at a local eatery.

The get-together is a great way to maintain social connections, form new friendships and support local businesses.

Eating with Friends was sorely missed during the COVID-19 lockdowns. FY2025 is our first full year back and we have had a great attendance to every date through the year.

#### Farewell Bluey

BWNG is pleased to announce that Bluey the Mobile Coffee Cart has found a new home and will soon be relocating to Gloucester Creatives.

BWNG secured Bluey in 2018 with the help of a NSW Environmental Protection Authority Organics Infrastructure Grant of to divert short-dated food from landfill and assist community members facing food insecurity.

Under BWNG's Food Services program *Bluey* has played a unique role in our organisation, providing training opportunities and realworld food service experience to trainees and local young people, representing BWNG at events and markets, and even visiting seniors in residential aged care.

We are pleased to see Bluey go to a good home plus help a recently established local organisation grow.





### Sub Branding Launched for the Connections Program

A project that has been in the wings for a while finally came to fruition in FY2025. BWNG's services are diverse and varied, and a brand voice that resonates with the target audience of one program may not work for another.

We have designed a unique brand voice and logo to better connect with the target audience of the Connection Program, which is:

- Aboriginal children, young people families and communities.
- Children and young people at risk of disengagement from school, family and community.
- Young parents with known vulnerabilities, who are experiencing a number of hardships.
- Children and young people affected by a mental health condition.

The circle, arches and lines represent a meeting place. BWNG's tree at the centre of the meeting circle represents BWNG's role as a central hub—a place where people come together, connect, and grow.

The mandalas draw inspiration from Indigenous weaving and dilly bags, symbolising shared creation, cultural strength, and the idea of taking away something meaningful from each interaction.

The new sub-branding incorporates a softer, more colloquial tone, with the aim of making community members in need of support feel welcomed without judgement.

#### Safety Net & Community Connections Report

#### Safety Net Program

We offer a vital safety net for community members facing tough times by providing support with bills, food, information, advice, and referrals to other local services and organisations.

In FY2025, we provided over \$100,000 in financial assistance and emergency food relief. During this period, we held more than 280 appointments with residents, offering both direct support and referrals based on individual needs.

Thanks to our partnership with The Salvation Army, we're able to offer additional help with food, fuel, and pharmacy costs for those experiencing financial hardship.

Additional support available through the Safety Net Program includes:

Energy Accounts Payment Assistance (EAPA) Scheme – A NSW Government initiative that provides energy vouchers to eligible residential customers experiencing short-term financial hardship that makes it difficult to pay current energy bills.

**BWNG's Food Pantry** – Our food pantry operates Monday to Friday from 9am to 4pm at our office located at 88 King Street, Gloucester NSW 2422. The pantry offers free food to anyone in need.

Referrals to Other Services – Many individuals who access our Safety Net Program are seeking short-term support to manage unexpected challenges, sudden changes in living arrangements, or a loss of income. Others may need more sustained assistance to get through a difficult time. We provide a connection to external services and agencies that provide the additional support needed to take the next step forward.

Christmas Hampers – This year, we were once again able to distribute Christmas hampers to community members doing it tough. The hampers were gratefully received and offered a welcome lift during the festive season.



We are incredibly thankful to the local businesses, community organisations, and individuals who regularly donate to our pantry. A special thanks goes to our local Woolworths, whose generous ongoing contributions make a real difference.

#### **Community Connections Program**

Our Connection Program is designed to work with the community to link people with services, provide support and facilitate referrals. Our funding body, NSW Government Department of Communities & Justice (DCJ), we have a focus on Targeted Early Intervention (TEI). Which has an emphasis on Aboriginal children, families and communities, 0–5-year-olds, children and young people at risk of disengaging and young parents experiencing hardships. We are focused on Community Strengthening – activities that build cohesion, inclusion and wellbeing across all communities, and empower Aboriginal communities.

#### Gathang revitalisation

BWNGs Gathang language program came to an end in June 2024. Initially launching in January 2022 Gathang workshops were hosted by BWNG for two and a half years. Gathang is the traditional language of the Worimi, Biripi, and Gringai people, and it has been an honour to play a role in its resurgence. Since staring out with BWNG workshops this year has seen our community gain four Certificate III in Gathang qualified members (via Muurrbay Aboriginal Language and Culture Co-op), and two others qualified at a Certificate I level. We are so proud of their achievements and to have contributed to revitalising the Gathang language in the Gloucester area over the past three years.

Beginners Gathang is now being taught by those qualified. And the local Aboriginal community is continuing with its passion for Gathang revitalisation. The Gathang language now also makes a regular appearance in schools and special events which has been amazing to see.

#### Youth

In April, we had the pleasure of welcoming three students from Gloucester High School for work experience. They embraced the opportunity with enthusiasm, staying busy and gaining hands-on exposure across a variety of roles and departments within BWNG.

We're excited to share that two of the students are now exploring school-based traineeships with us — a testament to their positive experience. A big thank you to Hailee, Dakota, and Olivia for being part of the BWNG team.

2024 saw the continuation of the *SistaSpeak* program at Gloucester High. The program is designed to assist young women in developing positive relationships, teaching them to respect themselves and others around them, and be proud of their Aboriginal identity. Some activities the girls have been involved in included Yoga (thanks to Yoga instructor Sonja Duncan who generously donated her time and skills), mural painting, bushtucker activities and hearing from various guest speakers.

Weaving lessons are continued at Gloucester High School. This year the groups are learning how to weave their own baskets. From these groups GHS now has five girls confident in teaching bracelet weaving to other students and at NAIDOC events.

Connections Program Officer Amber has also supported several youth excursions, including a NAIDOC cultural expedition and an Aboriginal Youth Dance Workshop. By providing transport and supervision, two students from Gloucester High School were able to attend the workshop at *Murrook*, where they formed meaningful connections and deepened their understanding of culture.

BWNG attended the Connect Gloucester Jobs Fair and Careers Expo at the Gloucester Recreation Centre. Organised by RIEP the event was focused on allowing Gloucester High students to connect with a range of employers, businesses, and educational facilities.





#### NAIDOC 2024

NAIDOC Week 2024 saw us once again collaborate with the Gloucester Worimi First Peoples Aboriginal Corporation (GWPFAC). Together, we supported our community in coordinating a range of events that celebrated and honoured this year's powerful theme: "Keep the Fire Burning! Blak, Loud & Proud."

The Gloucester Family Fun Day was a fantastic celebration for people of all ages, bringing the community together to honour and enjoy Aboriginal culture. The event was once again a huge success, with a strong turnout and a great atmosphere throughout the day.

On Friday night, GWFPAC hosted a gathering for the Aboriginal community. The evening included NAIDOC event setup, a shared meal, and meaningful yarning about community and culture.

A new addition to this year's NAIDOC 2024 celebrations was the "Loud and Proud Door Display" competition. Local businesses were invited to decorate their shopfronts in celebration of NAIDOC Week. Congratulations to Paula from Milady Salon, whose vibrant and creative display took out the top prize!

Our main street came alive with colour and pride, thanks to the many thoughtful and eyecatching contributions from local businesses — a true testament to the community's spirit and support for NAIDOC Week.

Once again, we hosted a colouring competition for primary-aged children and younger. The finished artworks were proudly displayed in main street businesses to help promote NAIDOC Week. This year, we invited older youth to design the colouring templates—and the results were incredible! We received three deadly designs that truly stood out.



#### Cuppa and Company - Community Café

In May 2025, we launched an exciting new initiative — *Cuppa and Company*, a free fortnightly morning tea for over 65s. Introduced in Term 2 as a pilot program, its early success has led us to extend it through to the end of 2025.

The program serves a dual purpose: offering a welcoming social space for seniors while providing students with valuable, hands-on work experience in a supportive environment.

Through *Cuppa and Company*, students are developing essential employability and life skills, including:

- Time management
- Teamwork
- Customer service
- Problem solving
- Communication in both casual and professional settings
- Cooking and meal preparation
- Basic budgeting
- Meaningful engagement with older community members

The growth in students' confidence has been remarkable, and their skills have noticeably improved across all areas. The positive feedback from café guests has been overwhelming and speaks volumes about the students' dedication and development.

This program has been made possible thanks to the support and funding from the Regional Industry Education Partnerships (RIEP).

#### Cooking 101

Another program we introduced this year is Cooking 101 — a weekly after-school cooking class for students from Gloucester High School.

Run by BWNG, the program supports a small group of young people as they prepare a nutritious meal to take home for their families. All ingredients are provided at no cost, ensuring the program is accessible to all participants.

Launched as a pilot in Term 2, Cooking 101 has proven successful and will continue through to the end of 2025.

The goals of the program include:

- Teaching basic cooking skills and meal preparation
- Providing a healthy, homemade meal for the family
- Developing communication and teamwork skills
- Introducing basic budgeting by breaking down the cost of meals
- Encouraging students to recreate meals at home for their families

To support this, students receive copies of all recipes along with detailed cost breakdowns. At the end of each term, they're given a specially created recipe book to take home, helping build their confidence and showing families how affordable home-cooked meals can be.

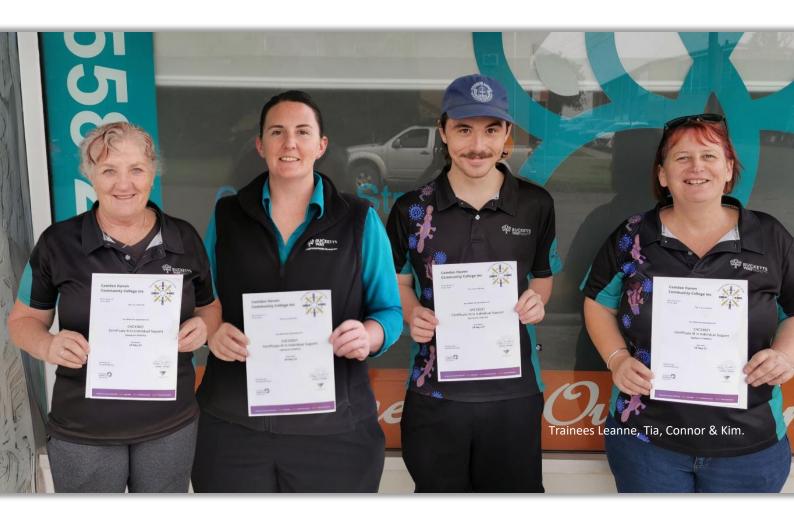


#### **Training & Staff Development**

BWNG continues to focus on growing our workforce to meet the needs of our clients and to strengthen our organisation.

To achieve this BWNG provides our staff with:

- Traineeships a traineeship provides on the job practical learning and study days either face
  to face or online. This year BWNG supported six staff who undertook studies in Certificate
  III Individual Support, Certificate III Community Services and Diploma of Human Resource
  Management.
- Internal training BWNG has introduced a new online platform known as the Ideagen Platform. The training that is available supports the staff to learn and understand many areas of the Aged Care Quality Standards and NDIS Standards. This platform provides a wide range of short courses that helps them learn and apply new skills required to deliver a quality safe service to all our clients.
- Internal Competencies Staff now gain competency for high-level high-risk care tasks
  required. To achieve this, staff undergo the theory aspect of the task and are then required
  to demonstrate the skills required. This year BWNG has trained staff in basic wound care,
  using a hoist and sling, using suppositories, assisting with medication, using compression
  garments, dysphagia and mealtime management and administration of eyedrops or
  ointment.





#### Spotlight on a Trainee:

BWNG takes pride in supporting staff to grow and develop whilst working in the Organisation. Often the staff start off in a position at BWNG, undertake Vocational Training and obtain certificates that can then lead to a promotion in the Organisation. This year, we focus on Tia.

**Tia Borham**: Tia is a Gloucester local who attended the local high school until she completed year 12. Tia is a mother of three young children aged four, nine and 12, and has strong local connections in Gloucester.

Tia's previous employment history was in retail and as a teacher's aide for students with disabilities. Tia had no formal qualifications.

Tia's first position here was in Safety Net (providing welfare support for disadvantaged people) and administration duties in a part time capacity. Tia had the skills and abilities to perform varied tasks in a very busy office environment. Tia adapted very quickly to the wide skill level to undertake multiple services and administration as required. Tia soon commenced early in 2023 as a Trainee in Business Administration Certificate IV.

Tia has always displayed a keen interest in learning all she can about BWNG and very quickly became a valued team member. Tia's keenness to undertake and complete her studies was evident from her first unit of study. Tia required very little support and as a mother of three children managed to complete her Certificate six months ahead of schedule. Tia gained the qualification in November 2023.

Once Tia had completed her certificate, an internal position became vacant – Administrative Assistant to the Ageing and Disability team. Tia was successful in her application for this position.

After a month in the position Tia decided that gaining her Certificate III Individual Support would be of great assistance to her new position, so Tia undertook to become a Trainee Support Worker and commenced her studies in 2024. During this time Tia gained skills on the job working with our clients. In April 2024 Tia applied to become an Ageing and Disability Services Connector with BWNG. This position was another career milestone for Tia. Tia was responsible for all the NDIS clients' assessments, reviews, budgets, risk assessments and coordination of the day-to-day activities for these clients.

Tia completed her Certificate III Individual Support studies in October 2024.

In 2025 Tia applied for the position of Home Care Package Officer & Disability Services Coordinator and secured the position and continues to work in this position.

Congratulations Tia on your achievements and determination to improve your knowledge and skills whilst working 30 hours per week, raising a young family and completing two traineeships and qualifications.

#### **Human Resources**

2025 has been a year of significant transformation for our Human Resources (HR) functions. The introduction of the new *Support at Home* reforms and the Aged Care Act required us to adjust how we plan our workforce, maintain compliance, and support our staff.

BWNG has also experienced an increase in demand for services, driven by an ageing population. We have been focused on developing and retaining a well-trained and well-supported workforce to meet this growing need.

Recruitment has remained a key priority, with multiple job campaigns underway, partnerships with training providers to help upskill our workforce, and new initiatives developed to attract and retain staff. Employee functional assessments will soon be introduced as part of our ongoing commitment to promoting health, safety, and wellbeing in the workplace.

A key milestone for HR this year was the full implementation of Employment Hero (an all-in-one HR, payroll, and benefits platform). This technological development has streamlined onboarding, enhanced record keeping, and strengthened compliance oversight. Staff can now access their own documents and update personal information directly, making processes faster, more efficient, and significantly reducing manual administration.

By streamlining systems and investing in our workforce. We are committed to building a resilient and people-centred workplace at BWNG

To better support our organisation, a new role - Executive Assistant for the CEO – has been introduced, with the aim of strengthening leadership capacity and organisational efficiency.

In the year ahead, HR will continue to prioritise recruitment, retention, and compliance. A key focus will be preparing for the ongoing changes and ensuring our



workforce is well equipped to meet any new requirements while sustaining the high-quality services our clients and community rely on.



#### Financial Counselling & Legal Aid

#### **Financial Counselling**

Financial Counselling at BWNG is a fortnightly outreach service provided by the Mid North Coast Financial Counselling Service via the Kempsey Neighbourhood Centre. It is funded by the State and Federal Governments (OFT and DSS respectively)

Financial Counselling is a free, confidential and independent service that provides information, support and advocacy for those in the Gloucester region who may be experiencing financial hardship.

This service also offers assistance with:

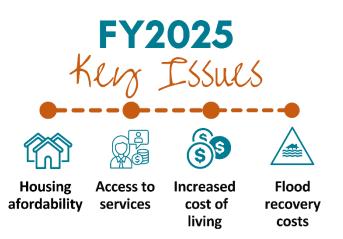
- Credit and debtors' rights
- Bankruptcy information
- Budgeting
- Referrals to appropriate agencies
- Financial literacy information

The FY2025 has again proved challenging for the Gloucester Community.

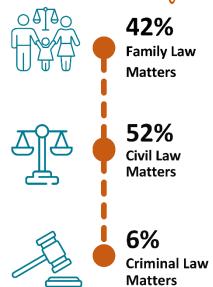
A number of clients have reached out for budgeting assistance in order to adjust to increases in the cost of living. Also, there has been an increase in elderly residents seeking debt relief due to renting in the private market, which in many cases consumes 50% of their income.

Mortgage stress is a key driver in terms of financial hardship in the Gloucester community over the past 12 months. It is hoped that recent interest rate reductions will assist in alleviating this issue.

Towards the end of the reporting period, numerous clients accessed the service with issues relating to the Mid Coast flooding in May 2025 and the impact this event has had on their financial wellbeing.



# Legal Aid FY2025 Snapshot



#### Legal Aid

Legal Aid NSW runs a regional outreach clinic at BWNG on the first and third Monday of each month, giving people who face barriers to legal advice and representation an opportunity to get support.

The clinic is staffed in by practicing solicitor Eddie Roux from Legal Sphere Taree.

This past financial year, participation in the Gloucester clinic has increased significantly, with 50 clients accessing legal assistance through the service, a dramatic increase on last financial year's total of 19 clients.

#### Quality Assurance & Work Health & Safety Report

#### Work Health and Safety (WHS)

BWNG remains committed to the health, safety and welfare of our workers and others who may be affected by our work. Our WHS Committee meets on a regular basis with seven meetings held over FY2025.

We've now moved to our new assurance system for incident reporting (both client and non-client related). Team members complete incident reports on the job using electronic forms. This enables us to act in a timely manner to keep people safe and prevent recurrence of the incident. The information compiled through incident reports also identifies trends, allowing us to put controls in place to prevent incidents from occurring.

Our Compliments and Complaints Form is now available electronically for the staff and volunteers to complete.

Over FY2025 BWNG experienced a decrease in workers compensation claims. There were at total of four workers compensation claims lodged during FY2025.

#### **Quality Assurance**

BWNG has implemented 34 Continuous Improvements since purchasing our new system. Quality Assurance is how we make sure our work is safe, consistent, and up to standard every time.

Think of it as a safety net that helps us check the way we work, not just the final result. BWNG's quality assurance (QA) program is a plan that an organisation uses to deliver consistent, safe, and reliable services that meet the required standards (laws and regulations).

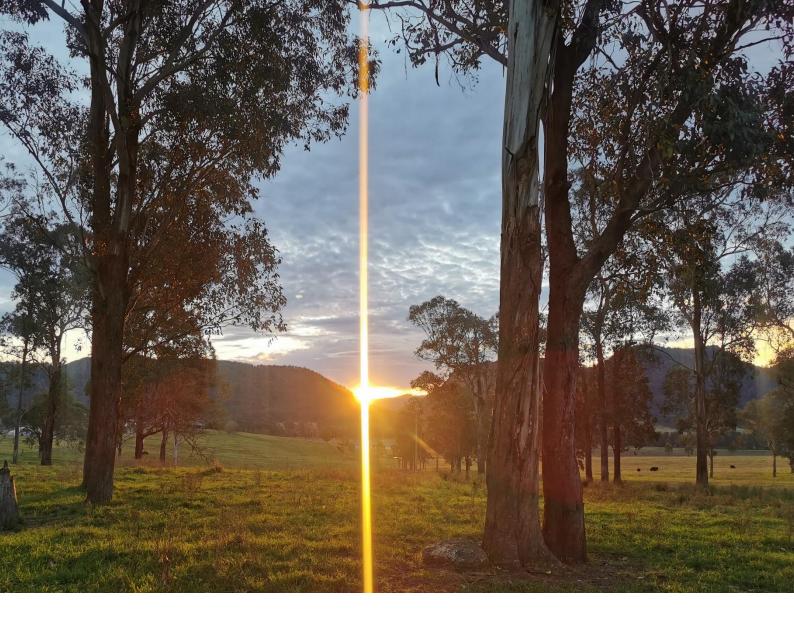
#### Why do we use QA?

- To give safe and reliable services or products
- To meet legal and industry requirements
- To keep staff and clients safe
- To improve how we work



#### It's about:

- Standards and Rules clear expectations for how tasks should be done.
- Checklists and Procedures guides to help staff follow the right steps.
- Reviews and Audits regular checks to see if things are working well.
- Feedback & Improvement learning from mistakes and finding better ways. Improving what and how we do things, checking the process, not just the result – making sure things are done the right way each time consistently, no matter who does the process.
- Setting clear rules and standards so everyone knows what good quality looks like. Providing training that ensures we all have the right skills and knowledge to work within these standards and rules.
- Reviewing and improving regularly checking the work and making changes if something can be done better. BWNG continues to make improvements in all areas of operation, reviewing all of our processes on a regular cycle and adding to the tools that we need to provide safe quality services and supports.





bwng@bwng.org.au | www.bwng.org.au PO Box 101 | 88 King St | Gloucester NSW 2422
Ph: 02 6558 2454







