BUCKETTS WAY Neighbourhood Group Inc.

Annual Report

2025 - 2026





Minyang nyura wubaliyn?	What are you doing?
Nyura yiigu marala barraygu.	You have come here.
Yii Warrimay/Birrbay barray.	This is Worimi/Biripi country.
Yii nyiirunba barray.	This is our country.
Yii Gathangguba barray.	This is Gathang country.
Gathay nyiirun.	Let us go together.
Acknowledgement of Country, Gathang language	English translation



Contents

About Us 3

Our Vision, Mission and Values 4

Our Story 5

The Five Pillars 6

CEO's Report 7

President's Report 10

Our Board of Management 11

Treasurer's Report 12

Finance Report 13

Our Year in Pictures 15

Ageing & Disability Services 17

Safety Net & Community Connections 22

Outreach services 26

Safety, Quality & Workforce Development 27

BWNG Training Awards Night 29

Investing in our Community's future 30

Glossary

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

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 surrounding areas.

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, Waukivory, Stratford, Craven, Wards River, Stroud Road, Stroud, Booral, Allworth and numerous other small localities in between.

Our services include:

- In home aged care funded through the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) and *Support at Home* (SAH).
- Disability support services as a registered provider of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).
- Health transport – in partnership with NSW Health.
- Cancer Council Transport to Treatment Program – help for local cancer patients to reach out-of-area treatment.
- Food services including Meals on Wheels – in partnership with Meals on Wheels NSW.
- 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
- Financial Counselling Australia.

In partnership with various registered training organisations, we coordinate regular short courses such as First Aid and Fire Safety Training.

Our location at 88 King Street also provides a versatile space for community groups, out-of-area trainers and outreach programs to operate from, giving our rural community access to more of the services available in urban areas.

In addition to 88 King Street BWNG operates the *King Street Centre* at 47 King Street, which offers comfortable professional spaces for out of area health and wellbeing practitioners.

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.

For more information on BWNG or any of our projects and services please visit our website www.BWNG.org.au

Our Vision, Mission and Values

Vision

Connecting *Our* community.

Mission

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

Values

Respect

We cultivate professional relationships through respectful communication, and by consulting with people on issues that 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 that foster their developing or continuing independence.

Our Logo

Our logo represents connection & growth between our organisation, our clients & the community. The entwined tree trunk & outstretched branches embody a sense of kinship.



Our Story

1989 The Gloucester Neighbourhood Centre was incorporated to distribute some Government funding that had been received by the local council.

2000 Aged Care services commenced, including transport, Meals on Wheels, social activities and respite care.

2002 'The Cottage' at 40 Tyrell 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.

2012 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.

2016 The purchase of a wheelchair modified Kia Carnival was made possible through grants funding and an enormous community-led fundraising effort.

2017 A joint initiative commenced between Energise Gloucester, Power Shop and BWNG to install a 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's 30-year anniversary was celebrated with a free community colour run event.

2020 Approval was received for BWNG to deliver Home Care Packages (HCP), making BWNG the only locally based HCP 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.

2022 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 for our efforts in support of Meals on Wheels.

2024 BWNG helped mark the 50th Anniversary of Gloucester's Meals on Wheels service.

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.

2025 BWNG purchased 47 King Street and opened it as the *King Street Centre,* improving access to health and wellbeing services in Gloucester by providing affordable, professional spaces for local practitioners to deliver their services.

2026 29 Denison Street Gloucester was retrofitted to become a second administrative space for our expanding team and to allow more convenient access to our services for the community.

BWNG 2022 – 2027 Strategic Plan

The Five Pillars

BUCKETTS WAY Neighbourhood Group Inc.

Your local organisation helping locals

1. Community

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

2. People

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

3. Resources

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

4. Governance

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

5. External Relationships

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

Our commitments

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

Measures of success

- Positive community impact
- A skilled, supported and sustainable workforce
- Financial stability & operational excellence
- Strong governance & community participation

CEO's Report

Anna Burley, CEO



FY2025–2026 year as often felt like a focus on navigating the next step in front of us, rather than being able to see the entire staircase. The landscape in which community services, aged care, disability support and other essential services operate continues to evolve, largely in response to changes in government policy, legislation and funding arrangements. While these challenges remain a significant part of our operating environment, this year I want to place a deliberate focus on the positives: what BWNG has achieved, the challenges we have overcome and the difference we continue to make in our community.

Growth, investment and opportunity

The purchase and redevelopment of 29 Denison Street represents an important step in meeting BWNG's growing operational and staffing needs. This opportunity had been developing for some time, with the building's central location and potential to support our future service delivery making it a valuable investment. Extensive renovations and modifications were required to create a functional space suited to our team, our services and the evolving needs of our community. The result is a facility that supports our continued growth and strengthens our local presence.

Similarly, the purchase and redevelopment of 47 King Street, now home to the *King Street Centre*, reflects BWNG's commitment to improving access to services for our community. We recognised the difficulties residents face when accessing visiting health and allied health professionals, particularly given the limited transport options available to people living in a rural area. By providing quality, accessible consulting and clinical spaces, we aim to attract a wider range of providers to Gloucester and reduce the need for residents to travel elsewhere for essential services. Health care, particularly in rural communities, is most effective when it is accessible, locally connected and delivered through collaborative, multidisciplinary models of care. The *King Street Centre* is an investment in that future.

Strengthening our systems and operations

Significant improvements have also been made behind the scenes. Through the persistence, determination and hard work of our staff, BWNG has achieved greater efficiencies across client management, human resources, payroll, communication and training. These systems have become essential to maintaining effective operations and ensuring the continuity of our services.

Our substantial investment in compliance systems is also delivering tangible benefits. The work undertaken to strengthen our policies, procedures, reporting and assurance processes is supporting better-informed decision-making, improved accountability and a stronger organisational foundation. While much of this work may not be visible to the community, it is fundamental to ensuring BWNG remains a safe, effective and sustainable provider.

Adapting to change and supporting our community

The introduction of new legislation and significant reforms across aged care and disability services has required BWNG to remain responsive and adaptable. Our focus has been not only on implementing changes within the organisation, but also on interpreting complex information and communicating it clearly to the people who rely on our services. Through careful planning, our staff's commitment and ongoing

communication, we have managed these changes with minimal disruption while continuing to provide essential services and information to our community. As aged care reform continues to evolve, BWNG remains committed to helping clients, participants and their families understand what these changes mean for them.

One of the most significant challenges during the year was the loss of funding for the vital Safety Net Program. The impact on vulnerable members of our community was immediate and clearly demonstrated how important this service is to local households experiencing hardship. Following sustained advocacy and discussions, with the support of Alison Penfold MP, Federal Member for Lyne, funding was restored for the Gloucester and Dungog areas. This funding is now in place until 2032, providing much-needed certainty for the program and the people who depend on it. This outcome is an important reminder of the value of persistent advocacy and the need to ensure rural communities are not overlooked.

Meeting the challenges of *Support at Home*

Although the SAH program commenced on 1 November 2025, BWNG was selected by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (ACQSC) to undergo a prudential review between December 2025 and April 2026. BWNG was one of only 25 providers nationally selected to participate in this review.

The review presented a significant challenge, particularly given the newness of the SAH program and the extensive operational changes already being managed by our team. Some areas of non-compliance were initially identified; however, these were addressed throughout the review process, resulting in BWNG achieving full compliance and certification.

This is an achievement worth celebrating. The review required considerable effort from the staff involved, who worked diligently to respond to requirements, address issues and demonstrate the strength of our financial and operational processes. Much of this work occurred across the Christmas and New Year period, adding to the demands on an already busy team. Their professionalism, commitment and resilience deserve special recognition.

Financial sustainability and local economic contribution

Maintaining BWNG's financial viability and long-term sustainability remains a priority. Through careful expenditure management, a focus on operational efficiencies and the continued commitment of our staff, BWNG recorded a surplus of $100,621 for the year ended 30 June 2026.

While this represents a decrease compared with the previous financial year, it is still a positive result in a period of considerable change and uncertainty, particularly as the transition to SAH has affected our ability to recover revenue. Our team has worked hard to control costs while continuing to deliver essential services, support our workforce and invest in the future of the organisation. Achieving a surplus enables BWNG to continue strengthening its services, facilities and capacity to respond to community needs.

Our investment in Gloucester extends beyond the services we provide. BWNG is a significant contributor to the local economy through employment, the purchase of goods and services, and our engagement with local tradespeople and businesses. Every opportunity to employ local people, engage local suppliers and reinvest in our community helps strengthen the economic and social fabric of the region.

During FY2025-2026, BWNG contributed $4.8 million to the local economy, including wages paid to our 51 staff members, alongside the invaluable contribution of 34 volunteers. These figures demonstrate the important role BWNG plays not only as a service provider, but also as a local employer and economic contributor. We remain proud of our

commitment to being a locally focused organisation, with locals supporting locals.

Recognising our workforce

The ongoing Fair Work Commission process to address gender undervaluation in the community and aged care sectors has been another important development. As this process approaches completion, planned adjustments to wage rates represent progress towards recognising the value of work traditionally undertaken by a predominantly female workforce.

The people who deliver aged care and community services make an enormous contribution to the wellbeing, independence and dignity of others. Recognising the value of their work through fair and appropriate remuneration is an important step towards supporting a sustainable workforce and ensuring these essential services can continue into the future.

Advocacy for rural communities

As CEO, I consider advocacy an essential part of my role. Representing the needs and experiences of our community in broader discussions helps ensure that a rural perspective is heard, particularly in decisions that may otherwise overlook the realities of regional service delivery.

Throughout the year, my involvement with organisations and initiatives relating to Meals on Wheels, the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP), palliative care, carer support, patient travel and disaster management has provided opportunities to raise local concerns, share experiences and advocate for practical outcomes. The results of advocacy are not always immediate or readily visible, but ensuring that the experiences of rural communities are considered in policy development and service planning is critical. Our community deserves a voice in decisions that affect its access to essential services and support.

Looking ahead

Throughout this report, you will read about the achievements of BWNG's individual programs and services and the dedicated people who make them possible. Alongside this frontline work, a significant effort has been directed towards strengthening our administration, governance and compliance. These responsibilities continue to grow, and we must remain diligent in meeting them while keeping our focus firmly on the people and community we support.

The challenges facing community-based providers are unlikely to diminish. However, this year has demonstrated BWNG's ability to adapt, advocate, invest and continue delivering essential services despite an ever-changing environment. Our investment in facilities, systems, people and local partnerships provides a strong foundation for the years ahead.

I extend my sincere thanks to everyone who contributes to BWNG: our dedicated staff, committed volunteers, board members, community partners, service providers and funding bodies. Your support, collaboration and hard work make our achievements possible and enable BWNG to continue making a meaningful difference in the lives of people across our community.

It is with pride in what we have achieved, and confidence in our continued commitment to the people we support, that I present the 2025–2026 BWNG Annual Report.

President's Report

Donna Kemp, President



As the BWNG year comes to a close, I find myself reflecting on the highs, lows, daily work and achievements over this time.

The advent and eventual rollout of SAH Program has been eventful throughout the sector as a whole. Delays, changes, rescinding of decisions made, and therefore being prepared for by BWNG, have certainly put everyone to the test.

I want to thank the entire staff for your efforts to help the most important people in the scenario, our wonderful clients, as we navigate these changes together.

The Support Workers who attend people in their homes always with a smile of greeting, you are the public persona of BWNG. You are sometimes the major, if not only link, to community for these people. You are invaluable.

The administration and care coordination teams working away to ensure that clients receive the best outcomes and provisions from their programs. Though not always seen your work keeps the lives of clients moving in the best direction for them.

The Team Leaders give more than many know. Watching over your teams to ensure that there is always someone to go to, to ask questions of, to discuss issues with. Support is at the heart of BWNG in our client dealings and also in the working day world of the organisation.

Our Volunteers are a dedicated, devoted and stalwart group of people. Your interactions with clients, whether transporting to appointments or delivering Meals on Wheels is a highlight in many people's day. We value and appreciate your willing support. These things can't happen without people like yourselves.

Our CEO - standing at the wheel of the ship in the difficult times only serves to make a big job at a difficult time even more so. Your dedication to BWNG is never in doubt. We realise that we are very fortunate to have someone of your abilities, training and fortitude working for the organisation. Your mind that is always looking for best options for clients, staff and the organisation is invaluable. The way you represent BWNG in all forums Is not always known but is truly appreciated.

BWNG's Board of Management – Robert, Ian, Vicki, Jodie, Bev and Julienne. Thank you all for your support, commitment and dedication to BWNG.

These are challenging times for the Board as well. The responsibility for ensuring the organisation is sustainable and flourishing into the future as I have said is a big job. Your willingness to work through the challenges, accept them and move forward is a credit to your strength and character.

I truly enjoy working with all of you, we are a group of people with different life stories and backgrounds, that I feel, is what gives such a knowledge base to the Board.

I look forward to the next things to come. To the plans coming to fruition, to the finding ways to meet the challenges. To seeing BWNG moving forward and as always, supporting our local community.

Our Board of Management

BWNG extends its sincere thanks and appreciation to our board members for their dedication, guidance and commitment throughout FY2025-2026.

The background, experiences, connections and interests of our Board of Management cover a valuable cross-section of the community. Their leadership, collective experience and thoughtful decision-making have helped guide our organisation, strengthen our services and support our vision of a connected community where people can live well, independently and with dignity. We are grateful for the time, knowledge and care each board member contributes to BWNG, and for their ongoing commitment to the people and communities we support.

We extend a special congratulations to our President, Donna Kemp who this year marked 10 years of service on the BWNG Board of Management.

Introducing BWNG's FY2025-2026 Board of Management in the photograph below:

Back, left to right:

- Julienne Huntriss – Board member since 2022
- Vicki Harris, Secretary – Board member since 2022
- Ian Parkes – Board member since 2021
- Beverly Fagan - Board member since 2020

Front, left to right:

- Jodie House, Vice President – Board member since 2016
- Donna Kemp, President – Board member since 2016
- Robert Sparke, Treasurer – Board member since 2017



Treasurer's Report

Robert Sparke, Treasurer



I am able to report a profit of $100,621 for the year ended 30 June 2026.

The net profit has declined by 81.2% compared with 2025 result this is primarily caused by the reduction of revenue with the transition to the SAH program which has limited revenue recovery.

The BWNG team's control of expenses has been exemplary with expenses showing a 2.8% reduction overall whilst absorbing two wage increases during the year.

As at 30 June 2026 our retained earnings is $3,389,309 this result puts BWNG in a strong position, depending on the impact of the SAH program going forward. Our team at BWNG are working hard to ensure a viable result for the future.

FY2025-2026 has had many challenges, control our expenses and ensuring our ability to provide the services to our ever-increasing clients as well as getting a true understanding of the constant changes to this new SAH program.

The team at BWNG have worked extremely hard this year implementing the new SAH program and adjusting to many changes on the run. Additionally, the organisation underwent several audits recently, as required by various government departments, to maintain our certification.

Our team lead by CEO Anna Burley, was supported by Finance Manager Kerry Davis-Marsh and Aged Care Team leader Nicole Cook have achieved a hugely successful year delivering services to clients in our community along with the opening of our office in Denison Street as well as the *King Street Centre.*

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

FY2026 Snapshot

REVENUE
$5.4 MIL
for the year ending 30 June 2026

EXPENSES
2.8% ↓
reduction overall

PROFIT
$100,621
for the year ending 30 June 2026

DECREASE IN PROFIT
81.2%
compared with FY2025

Primarily caused by the reduction of revenue with the transition to the *Support at Home* program which has limited revenue recovery.

RETAINED EARNINGS
$3,389,309
as at 30 June 2026

Finance Report

Kerry Davis-Marsh, Corporate Services Team Leader

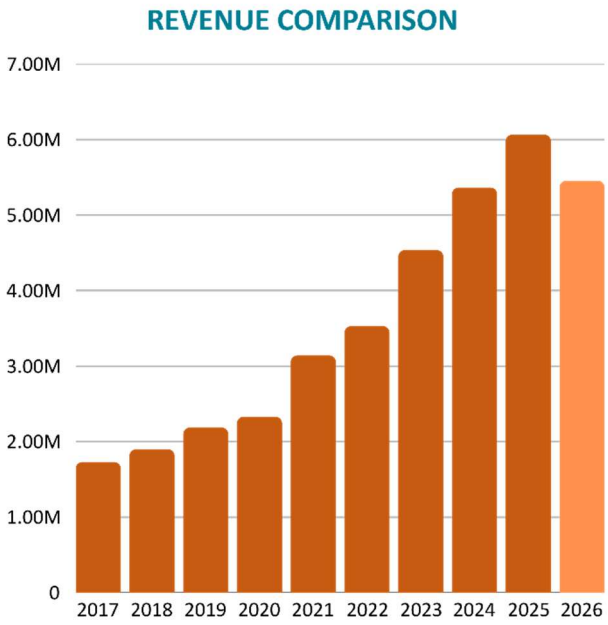


FY2025–2026 has been another year of significant activity and change for BWNG.

The year has been one of continued service delivery, investment and organisational development, while maintaining a focus on delivering quality services to our clients and community while exercising prudent financial management to ensure the organisation remains financially sustainable.

FINANCIAL POSITION

TOTAL ASSETS (includes cash $1,347,675)	**$4,138,831**
TRADE RECEIVABLES (down from $539,723)	**$459,432**
TOTAL LIABILITIES (down from $1,197,064)	**$749,522**
NET ASSETS (up from $3,288,688)	**$5,389,309**



Financial position and investment

BWNG maintained a sound financial position and positive cash flow throughout the year.

A significant achievement was the full repayment of our $500,000 bank loan, strengthening the organisation's financial position and reducing external debt.

BWNG continued investing in the infrastructure needed to support service delivery, recording $527,815 in additions to property, plant and equipment. The closing net book value of these assets increased from $1,799,866 to $2,244,224 – an increase of 24.7%

Cash Flow and Financial Sustainability

Cash flow remained a key focus throughout the year. Net cash inflow from operating activities increased compared with the previous year. This, alongside the management of investments and repayment of borrowings, contributed to a stronger cash position and provided capacity to meet ongoing commitments.

BWNG remains substantially dependent on government funding for its aged care, disability and community services. Managing funding arrangements, meeting regulatory and reporting requirements, and maintaining careful financial oversight remain essential to our long-term sustainability.

Expenditure management

Total expenditure for the year was $5,376,250, compared with $5,530,996 in 2024–2025.

Employee benefits continued to represent the largest component of expenditure, reflecting the significant workforce required to deliver the organisation's services.

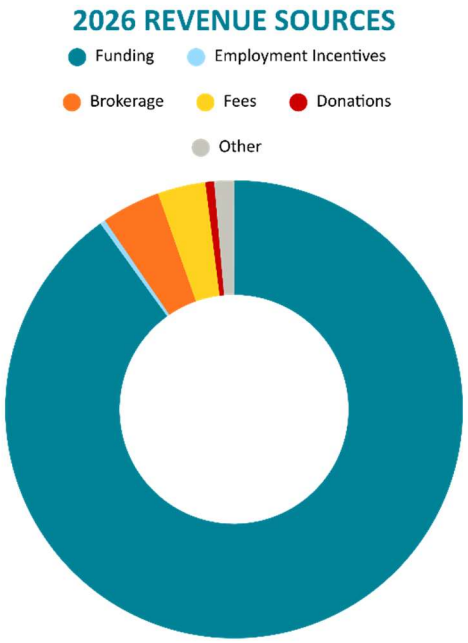
Audit and financial governance

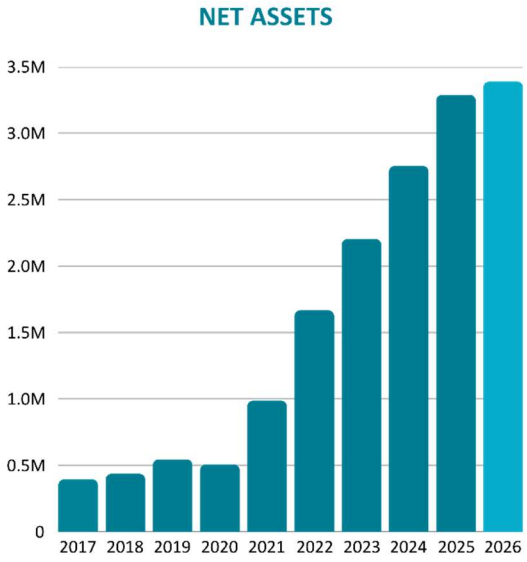
At the beginning of 2026, BWNG successfully underwent an audit by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (ACQSC), demonstrating our ongoing commitment to delivering safe, high-quality aged care services to our community. The audit provided an opportunity to demonstrate our compliance with aged care standards and review the systems, policies and practices that underpin our service delivery. This included scrutiny of our fee structures and financial processes to ensure transparency, accuracy and appropriate management of client contributions and funds. The successful outcome reflects the dedication and professionalism of our team, whose continued focus on quality, accountability and continuous improvement helps ensure our clients receive respectful, reliable and person-centred care.

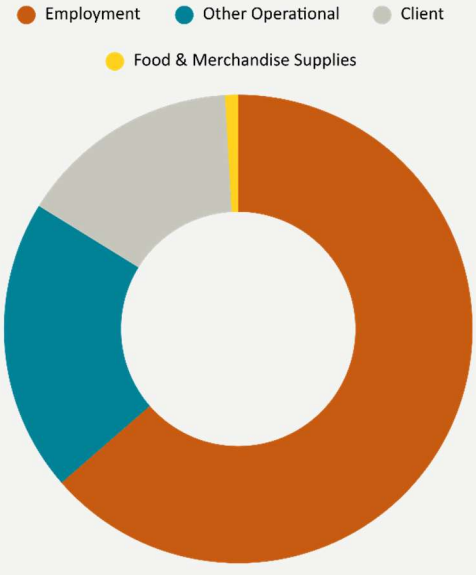
The Annual Financial Report was prepared in accordance with *Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures* and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012.*

Independent auditor *Pitcher Partners NH Partnership* concluded that the financial report gives a true and fair view of the organisation's financial position and performance and complies with applicable accounting standards and ACNC requirements.

I sincerely thank The Board, staff and finance team for their commitment to strong financial governance throughout the year. Despite a challenging and evolving operating environment, BWNG enters 2026–2027 from a position of financial strength.







Our Year in Pictures



July 2025 – Happy retirement Diane
Much-loved Community Connector Diane Nielson retired in 2025.



August 2025 – National Meals on Wheels Day
Our Meals on Wheels staff and volunteers marked National Meals on Wheels Day with a morning tea.



August 2025 – Gloucester's Aged Care Expo
Jeanette, Kylie and Christine providing information at Gloucester's Aged Care Expo which was coordinated by the *Care Finder* service.



September 2025 – The King Street Centre
Doors opened to the *King Street Centre*, welcoming *Key Community Group*, *Tailor Allied Health* and *Melt* Remedial Massage.



October 2025 – Sailing season opens
Sailability Port Stephens reopened for the year for our participants to enjoy the exhilaration of sailing on Grahamstown Dam.



December 2025 – Delivering the last meals for the year
Coordinator Joanne with Volunteers Priscilla, Bramm and Robyn, as well as Cook Tracey.
The last meals for 2025 were delivered on Christmas Eve and were a choice of roast turkey or baked ham, with trifle or Quota Club Christmas pudding for dessert.





January 2026 – Safety Net donations from the Masonic Lodge and the Community Shop
With the Safety Net Program under threat, BWNG received two kind donations of $5000 from local community groups; District 44 Masonic Charities and the Community Shop.
Pictured Left BWNG Connection Program Officer Amber Galvin with Ian Shaw and Des McClure of Lodge Gloucester #291. Right, with Fay Relf and Diann Relf of the Community Shop.



February 2026 – Community Café - Cuppa and Chat
The project was recognised with the 2026 Project of the Australia Day celebrations.
Pictured: Amber (BWNG) with Erin Lute (Regional Industry Education Partnership) as well as Mike D'Angelis & Mik Wisely of Gloucester High School.



March 2026 – MidCoast Community Quilters donation
MidCoast Community Quilters donated a number beautiful handmade quilts to BWNG. Pictured: Anna Burley, Sharon Osborne, Nicole Cook & Gail Ellis.



May 2026 – Masons trivia night and charity auction
Lodge Gloucester launched a fundraising project in support of a new Meals on Wheels kitchen at 88 King St with a trivia night and charity auction. An impressive $6,135 was raised on the night. The Masons and District 44 Charities went a step further, donating and additional $10,000 dollars.



June 2026 – A token of appreciation
A beautiful floral arrangement given to our Ageing and Disability Services Team (represented here by Anne-Marie and Nicole) by client, Helen B, in appreciation of their efforts in helping her with the registration process of My Aged Care.

Ageing & Disability Services

Nicole Cook, ADS Team Leader



This past year has been a landmark year for Aged Care and Disability Services at BWNG, defined by significant reform, organisational transformation, and our continued commitment to delivering high-quality, person-centred care.

As we look ahead, BWNG remains committed to embracing innovation, strengthening compliance and governance practices, and delivering responsive services that meet the evolving needs of our ageing population and people living with disability. The achievements of the past year demonstrate our readiness for the future and our ongoing commitment to excellence in care and service delivery.

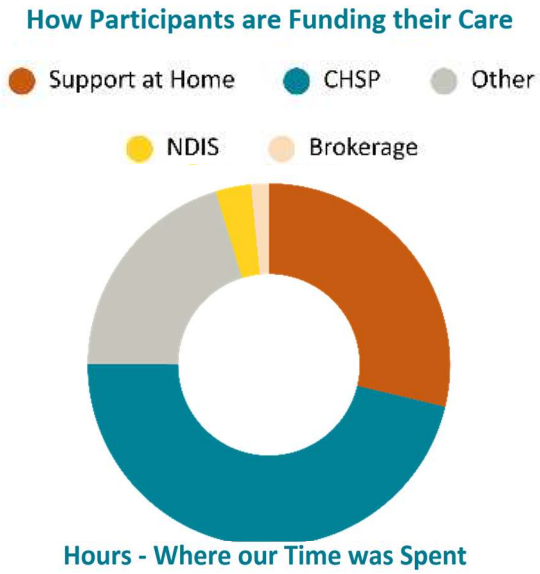
Aged Care

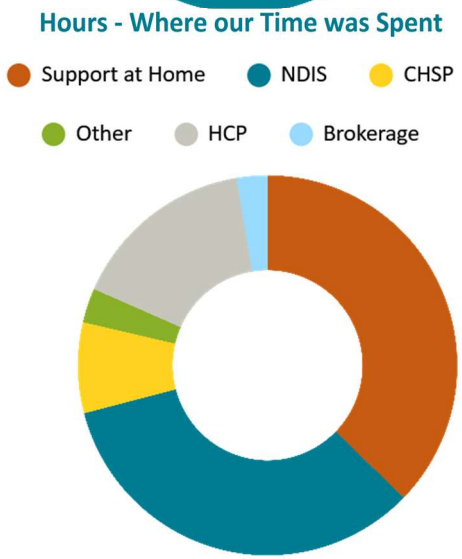
The introduction of the new *Aged Care Act 2024*, which came into effect on 1 November 2025, and the transition from HCP to SAH represented the most substantial reform of the aged care sector in decades. In anticipation of these changes, BWNG undertook an exhaustive program of compliance review, policy development, workforce education, governance strengthening, and operational readiness activities. Considerable effort was invested across the organisation to ensure our systems, practices, and service delivery models aligned with the new legislative and regulatory requirements, positioning BWNG strongly for the future of aged care.

We sincerely thank our Aged Care team for their resilience, flexibility and dedication to our participants, as they continue to adapt to ongoing changes while ensuring the delivery of quality, person-centred support to our community.

The introduction of the SAH has seen some participants required to pay a co-contribution towards the cost of their services. Since the introduction of this new fee structure, we have observed a trend of participants reducing the number of services they receive in an effort to manage their out-of-pocket expenses.

On the staffing front, we have welcomed new faces to key positions within the team this year. Sharon Latimore has joined us in the role of Meals on Wheels Coordinator and Caroline Blamires has transitioned from Support Worker to the role of Nurse Coordinator.









Disability services

FY2025–2026 has been a mixed bag for BWNG's Disability Services, as the sector continues to navigate an evolving regulatory and funding environment.

Across the industry, there has been some uncertainty following funding changes. BWNG welcomes measures that protect and support participants and is committed to delivering a high-quality service however we have also seen firsthand the impact of these funding changes on the lives of participants.

In FY2025-2026 participants receiving services funded through the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) represented 4% of BWNG's total client base, but account for 34% of the annual total care hours provided by our Support Workers.

Last financial year NDIS support hours made up 48% of our total support hours for the year. This data indicates an increasing local demand for aged care services ahead of disability support.

Through BWNG's services, participants have been supported to:

- Build their physical fitness
- Maintain social connections
- Enjoy life safely and confidently
- Provide respite to their carers and loved ones
- Pursue hobbies such as sewing and online activities
- Develop practical life skills including cooking







Throughout FY2025–2026, BWNG's Disability Services team has played an important role in coordinating services and maintaining effective communication between participants, carers, Support Workers and administration staff. Their collective dedication, collaboration and commitment have helped ensure participants received the support they needed, while also providing support to colleagues across the team. We thank the entire Disability Services team for their ongoing efforts and commitment to delivering quality, person-centred support to our community.

After completing work experience with BWNG in FY2024-2025 Gloucester High School students Krystal and Hailee have this year joined our Disability Services Team through the School Based Apprenticeship and Traineeship (SBAT) Program.

Through the SBAT program students develop practical skills, build confidence and gain hands-on experience while completing the theory portion of their training, which all counts toward their HSC. We are pleased to see local young people exploring careers in the disability sector while developing meaningful connections with our team members and participants.

The Cottage has continued to provide a useful hub and meeting place for participant's group activities, as well as a comfortable space for enjoying hobbies such as cooking, sewing, painting and accessing the internet.

BWNG is scheduled to undergo a mid-term NDIS audit shortly after the close of this reporting period. An external audit is a great tool for honing services, but it also creates a significant amount of extra work to demonstrate, with documented evidence, that the organisation is meeting its obligations under the NDIS Practice Standards and delivering safe, high-quality support to participants.

We look forward to reporting a good result from this audit in next year's annual report.







Food Services

Meals on Wheels Gloucester

Meals on Wheels has continued to provide nutritious meals to members of our community throughout FY2025–2026, supporting independence, wellbeing and the ability for people to remain living in their own homes.

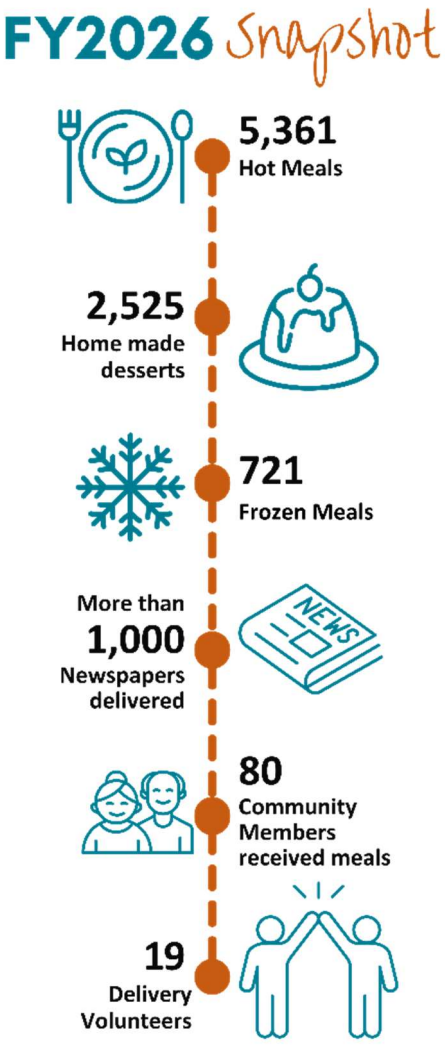
During the year, BWNG once again achieved an A rating from the Department of Primary Industries, reflecting our continued commitment to food safety and excellence in meal preparation. This marks the seventh consecutive year that we have maintained this rating, demonstrating our ongoing dedication to upholding the highest standards.

We were also pleased to welcome Coordinator Sharon and Cook Tracey to the Meals on Wheels team. They have brought an infusion of positive energy and fresh ideas to the service.

A major focus this year has been fundraising for a new commercial kitchen in the downstairs area of our King Street premises. This project will help us develop our facilities to better support the future of the service and meet the needs of our community.

Throughout the year, we prepared 5,361 fresh main meals, compared with 5,372 in the previous year. We also provided 721 frozen main meals, down from 1,185, and 2,525 desserts, compared with 2,605 last year.

These figures reflect the continued demand for convenient, nutritious meal options. We thank our dedicated staff, volunteers and supporters for their contribution to keeping Meals on Wheels operating and helping local people maintain their independence and quality of life.



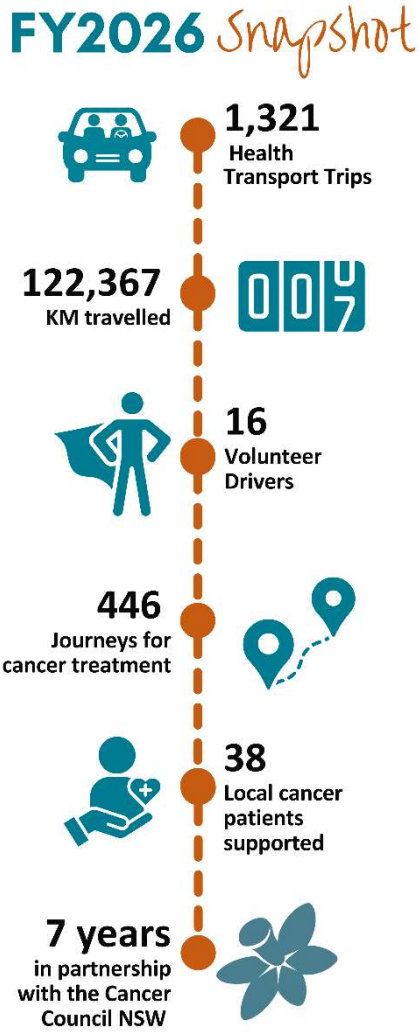
Transport

BWNG's transport program continues to play a vital role in helping Gloucester residents maintain their independence and access essential services, particularly medical appointments and specialist treatment outside the local area.

Our dedicated Support Workers and Volunteer Drivers make a meaningful difference to people who may otherwise struggle to attend appointments due to distance, limited transport options or mobility challenges. Through our health transport service and Cancer Council NSW Transport to Treatment program, we help connect community members with the healthcare they need, while providing reassurance and support along the way.

Demand for transport assistance continues to highlight the importance of this service in a regional community. The number of health transports provided have increased by 11% compared with the previous financial year.

We sincerely thank our volunteers for giving their time, using their own vehicles to provide reliable transport. Their contribution helps reduce the barriers faced by local residents accessing healthcare and demonstrates the importance of community connection and care.





Safety Net & Community Connections

Amber Galvin, Community Connections Officer



Safety Net Program

The Safety Net Program plays a vital role in supporting community members experiencing financial hardship. It helps with essentials such as electricity bills and food, while also offering information, guidance, and referrals to other services and organisations.

FY2025-2026 was a challenging one for BWNG's Safety Net Program. In April 2025, we were advised that our Emergency Relief funding would cease at the end of September 2025. This meant there would be no government-funded emergency relief service available on the ground in our local community.

It took significant and persistent advocacy from our CEO, Anna, alongside Alison Penfold MP, Member for Lyne, before funding was ultimately reinstated in April 2026, with funding confirmed for the next financial year.

The uncertainty and loss in funding resulted in a quieter year for the Safety Net Program. However, we were fortunate to receive generous support from two local organisations, Lodge Gloucester No. 291 and Gloucester Community Shop, who donated funds in December 2025. Their generosity allowed us to provide a limited amount of emergency assistance to community members during this difficult period.

Their support helped ensure that some of the most vulnerable members of our community were not left without assistance when they needed it most.

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

Additional support available through the Safety Net Program for this period included:

- **Energy Accounts Payment Assistance (EAPA) Scheme** – A NSW Government initiative that provides energy vouchers to eligible residential customers experiencing short-term financial hardship.
- **BWNG's Food Pantry** – The pantry offers donated food to anyone in need.
- **Referrals to other services** – help to address the underlying issues impacting hardship including homelessness, domestic/family violence, lack of employment, debt, legal issues.
- **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.

Community Connections Program

Our Connection Program works with individuals and families in the community to connect them with appropriate services, provide support and facilitate referrals.

Our Connections Program is made possible via funding from the NSW Government Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ). This year seen a change from the *Targeted Early Intervention Program* (TEI) to the *Community and Family Support* (CAFS) program. The program provides early intervention and flexible support to children, young people, families and the wider community, helping people access the assistance they need.



Youth
In August, we welcomed Olivia Barron to BWNG. Olivia is currently undertaking a traineeship through the School Based Apprenticeship and Traineeship (SBAT), working primarily within the Community Hub. Through her traineeship, Olivia will gain valuable hands-on experience while working towards her Certificate III in Community Services.

To celebrate Youth Week 2026, BWNG's SBAT trainees Olivia, Krystal and Hailee took the lead in planning and organising activities for local young people. Through a MidCoast Council Youth Week grant, the students embraced the opportunity and developed two well-planned and engaging events - a trivia tournament and a movie day.

Both events were a great success, providing young people with opportunities to have fun, socialise, connect with others and enjoy positive experiences in a welcoming environment. The trainees gained events planning experience, while building their confidence and leadership skills.

We continued our collaboration with Gloucester High School this year, with a number of programs and activities supporting Aboriginal students and the wider school community, including weaving lessons and traditional dance excursions and programs.

One of these initiatives was the SistaSpeak program, which continued to provide a safe and supportive space for young Aboriginal women to develop positive relationships, build self-respect and respect for others, and strengthen their pride in their Aboriginal identity.

Cuppa and Company – Community Café
Made possible thanks to the support and funding from the Regional Industry Education Partnerships (RIEP).

Cuppa and Company serves a dual purpose: providing older community members with a welcoming and social space to connect, while giving local students valuable, hands-on work experience in a supportive environment.

Through the program, students are developing important employability and life skills, including teamwork, time management, food preparation and customer service.

The growth in students' confidence has been remarkable, with noticeable improvements in their skills and ability to work independently and as part of a team.

The program has received an overwhelmingly positive response from the community, with its impact recognised through being awarded 2026 Project of the Year at the Gloucester Australia Day celebrations. This recognition highlights the value of the program and the positive difference it is making for both local students and older community members.





Cooking 101

Launched as a pilot program in 2025, Cooking 101 has become a successful and well-received initiative. Delivered by BWNG, the weekly after-school program brings together a small group of Gloucester High School students to learn practical cooking skills while preparing a nutritious meal to take home and share with their families.

The program aims to build confidence and independence in the kitchen while promoting healthy eating and life skills. Through hands-on learning, students develop basic cooking techniques, meal planning skills, and an understanding of food budgeting by exploring the cost of each recipe they prepare. Cooking together also encourages communication, teamwork, and problem-solving in a supportive and enjoyable environment.

NAIDOC Week 2025 – The Next Generation: Strength, Vision and Legacy.

We were proud to once again support Gloucester Worimi First Peoples Aboriginal Corporation (GWFPAC) in delivering the Gloucester NAIDOC Week celebrations. Working together, we coordinated a range of successful events that brought our community together to celebrate and honour Aboriginal culture.

NAIDOC Family Fun Day - As always, a fantastic day out for the whole family, with the event continuing to grow each year. The Family Fun Day brings people of all ages together to celebrate and share in the richness of Aboriginal culture, strengthening community connections through a day of fun, learning, and cultural pride.

Door Display Competition – Local businesses were invited to decorate their shopfronts in celebration of NAIDOC Week, showcasing their support and recognition of Aboriginal culture. Congratulations to Paula from Milady Salon, whose vibrant, creative display impressed the judges and earned first place!

Colouring Competition – Our older young people were invited to create original colouring designs inspired by the NAIDOC Week theme. The designs were then brought to life by younger children, who enjoyed colouring them in before they were proudly displayed throughout the main street. Two outstanding designs were selected as winners, with both showcasing incredible creativity and talent





Christmas Giving Tree

The BWNG Giving Tree provides our community with an opportunity to spread kindness and bring some extra joy to local individuals and families experiencing hardship during the Christmas season. Each donated gift helps make the festive period a little brighter, reminding people that they are supported and valued by their community.

We are incredibly fortunate to be part of such a caring and generous community, whose ongoing support makes this initiative possible each year. We would especially like to extend our gratitude to the Gloucester Men's Shed, who have been dedicated supporters of the Giving Tree for several years. Their generosity plays an important role in the success of this initiative, helping ensure that many local families experience the spirit of Christmas.

Gathang revitalisation

Gathang language lessons continue to be held within our local community.

Gathang is the traditional language of the Worimi, Biripi and Gringai peoples, and it has been an honour for BWNG to play a role in supporting its revival and continued use in the Gloucester area.

BWNG first launched Gathang workshops in January 2022, hosting regular workshops for two and a half years. Since the program began, four community members have achieved a Certificate III in Gathang through Muurrbay Aboriginal Language and Culture Co-op, while two others have completed a Certificate I through TAFE. We are incredibly proud of these achievements and of the contribution BWNG has made towards revitalising and strengthening the Gathang language within our community.

Gathang lessons are now being delivered by local community members, which is a wonderful reflection of the skills and knowledge that have grown through the program. The language is also making regular appearances in local schools and at community events, which has been great to see and is helping to ensure Gathang continues to be shared with future generations.



Outreach services

Financial Counselling & Legal Aid

Financial Counselling

Financial Counselling is a fortnightly outreach service at BWNG 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 people experiencing financial hardship.

This service also offers assistance with:

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

FY2025-2026 has again proved challenging for the Gloucester community, with a number of clients present to this service as a result of cost-of-living increases.

The key issue has been the increase in fuel costs. This issue affects those in the Gloucester Community due to having to travel to Taree or Forster to access services.

In line with the above, the key issues in the Gloucester Community were:

- Rental affordability and mortgage stress
- Lack of access to services
- Accessing Superannuation on Financial Hardship grounds

Mortgage stress has again been a major factor, resulting in a number of clients having to sell their home. This issue is expected to be ongoing in light of the recent interest rate rise. As a flow on effect, numerous clients have had to access their superannuation on financial hardship grounds.



Legal Aid

During FY2025-2026, the *Regional Outreach Legal Aid* Program continued to help local people navigate a range of legal issues.

A total of 48 legal advice services were delivered in Gloucester during the year. Family law accounted for the largest share, with 17 matters, followed by civil law with 29 matters and criminal law with two matters.

Demand varied throughout the year, with the highest number of services delivered in the third quarter (January–March), with March being the busiest month.

The program plays an important role in improving access to legal assistance for people living in regional communities, where accessing legal services can present additional challenges. By bringing legal advice to Gloucester, the program helps local people to better understand their rights, address legal concerns and make informed decisions. We extend our thanks to Legal Aid NSW and Eddie Roux of Legal Sphere Taree for their facilitation of this service in our community

Safety, Quality & Workforce Development

Georgine Wise, Resource Officer



As outlined previously the legislative compliance has increased markedly and BWNG has been required to implement a raft of assurance activities.

Quality Assurance
This year Quality Assurance has focused on adapting all that we do to ensure we will meet the new Aged Care Act and Quality Aged Care Standards, ensuring our policies and procedures meet all the legal requirements and standards for all our funded programs.

Our team has been working behind the scenes to build and manage compliance registers, strengthen quality assurance, and digitise forms and records. Part of this team is Luke Gorton. This work has included developing the internal audit program, refining continuous improvement and document approval workflows, reviewing policies and food safety documentation, improving document control, and supporting follow-up of identified issues. Digital initiatives have included reception records, key client intake and assessment forms, Meals on Wheels forms and records, food safety program policy and procedures, forms, and vehicle logbooks, with QR codes used to simplify access. This has also involved configuring workflows, testing systems and providing staff guidance to improve consistency, accountability and access to records.

Governance: BWNG reviewed and updated its governance framework and Clinical Governance procedures, with relevant information added to the policy and procedures portal. Financial liquidity was reviewed to ensure the organisation can meet its financial obligations. A membership register was established to meet legislative requirements, and document version control was improved to keep records accurate and up to date.

Internal audits: Significant amount of work undertaken that has broken up both NDIS and SAH standards that enable the team to undertake internal audits according to the Departments requirements and expected outcomes for clients. These tools ensure that Internal audit is an important element in the governance and assurance environment, and a valuable tool to effectively manage risk. Internal improve safety and operational readiness by catching compliance gaps before official reviews.

Key benefits:

- Early warning system
- Regulatory readiness
- Improves care quality
- Reduces inefficiencies
- Strengthens governance

New Buildings: BWNG will soon be managing three premises: 88 King Street, 47 King Street and 29 Denison Street, which is expected to open shortly after the reporting period. All three premises have been incorporated into BWNG's Work Health and Safety (WHS) schedules, including fire safety, pest management, first aid and emergency requirements, to ensure each site is appropriately maintained and safe.



Training

Our team is required to update their skills and qualifications and stay abreast of industry changes. To maintain and manage the skills and qualifications of our large and diverse team we have developed a training matrix to differentiate roles and associated skills from induction onwards.

We have also continued in our support of the emerging generation of social services personnel by accepting three trainees from Gloucester High School through the SBAT program.

Olivia has undertaken Certificate III in Community Services while Krystal and Hailee are working toward Certificate III Individual Support. Krystal and Hailee assist our qualified Support Workers in supporting NDIS participants, while Olivia works closely with BWNG Connections Program Officer Amber.

We remain committed to supporting staff to expand their skills and maintain the competencies required to deliver safe, high-quality care. This includes specialised training in areas such as medication assistance, basic wound care, and supporting participants who experience difficulty chewing or swallowing food.

BWNG can also develop tailored training to meet the organisation's specific operational needs. For example, when QR codes were introduced for use in our vehicles, we developed step-by-step instructions to guide staff through the new process, ensuring they understood the requirements and were prepared for implementation. This practical, targeted approach helps build staff confidence, promote consistency and support the effective introduction of new systems and procedures.

Digital technology for is now considered a basic skill. Staff can now use their phones for most of our software, enabling the team to do what is required via mobile and/or a computer device. Staff use a variety of online platforms for quality assurance, work health and safety, communication, client management, policies and procedures, human resources and training.

Our team have all undertaken training on the new *Aged Care Act 2024*, and have also attended many online forums, information sessions and webinars to ensure we have the right knowledge skills and can easily access BWNG policies and procedures.

This is my 5th Annual Report and final report for BWNG. I would like to thank the entire team for all their support during this time.

The changes that have occurred since I returned are astronomical to say the least! Whilst challenging, they have been accepted and applied across the organisation. This will ensure BWNG is well prepared for audits and can maintain accurate documentation, up-to-date policies and procedures, effective training, and quality assurance and improvement plans across all areas of the organisation. Most importantly, these processes support the safe, high-quality care and services we provide to our clients, who remain at the heart of everything we do.

Nothing stays the same and sometimes we lose aspects of a funded program that worked well to new programs and guidelines that become cumbersome and difficult to navigate and apply in our community services world.

BWNG continues to ride these waves that at times feel like a tsunami at times, evolve and apply our knowledge to navigate these changing waters, learn new skills and continue to sail smoothly until the next change.

I wish BWNG continuing success in the ever-evolving landscape. As I look back on over 40 years in community services, I am filled with immense gratitude for the journey, the people, and the lives we've touched together.

To quote Seneca, *'Every new beginning comes from some other beginning's end.'*

While this marks the end of my chapter here, I leave incredibly proud of what this community has accomplished and excited for its future.



BWNG Training Awards Night

Over the last five years twenty-two BWNG employees have attained qualifications both through on-the-job traineeships and the SBAT Program.

We think that's something to celebrate.

To mark Aged Care Employee Day 2025, BWNG held a training awards night to recognise the team members who have gone the extra mile to undertake training or gain an extra qualification.

Trainees were presented with a certificate to recognise their efforts, as well as a gift of wine and chocolates.

Training is an investment in people, and at BWNG we recognise that investing in our staff is an investment in the future of our local community. By encouraging ongoing learning, supporting traineeships and developing training tailored to our own service needs, we are helping build a skilled, confident and capable workforce for the future. By creating opportunities for local people and nurturing future generations of care workers, we are also helping ensure our community continues to have access to the services it needs.

This investment is particularly important in a female-dominated industry, where the value of care work has not always been fully recognised in terms of its professional skills, expertise and career opportunities. BWNG believes that the people who dedicate themselves to supporting others deserve the same opportunities for development, advancement and recognition as workers in any other profession.

The community services, aged care and disability sectors are continually evolving, with changing legislation, new technologies and increasing expectations around the quality and safety of care. By providing opportunities for staff to develop their skills, build confidence and gain new qualifications, BWNG ensures our team is equipped to meet these challenges while continuing to deliver high-quality support to the people who rely on us.

Training also empowers our employees to grow professionally, explore new career pathways and take pride in the important work they do.

Everyone's lives are busy. Finding the time and motivation to keep growing professionally isn't always easy, but these people have shown commitment to increasing their skills and supporting our clients with even greater knowledge and care.

Congratulations and thank you!

Investing in our Community's future

Throughout FY2025–2026, BWNG continued to invest in facilities that strengthen our ability to support the Gloucester community, both now and into the future.

47 King Street - *The King Street Centre*

In July 2025, BWNG purchased the property at 47 King Street, Gloucester, establishing what is now known as *the King Street Centre*. This investment reflects BWNG's commitment to strengthening local access to health, wellbeing and community services. The Centre was developed with a vision of creating a welcoming, professional space where health practitioners and community organisations could establish or expand their services, helping ensure Gloucester residents can access support closer to home.

The *King Street Centre* offers a range of clinical and consulting rooms designed to accommodate different professional needs.

More than simply providing rooms for rent, the Centre aims to foster a connected community of service providers who contribute to the health and wellbeing of local people.

By investing in this property, BWNG is helping create opportunities for essential services to grow within Gloucester, supporting local employment, encouraging collaboration and strengthening the community infrastructure that will serve our region into the future.

29 Denison Street

Having outgrown our long-time offices at 88 King Street, BWNG recognised the need for a more accessible space that would better support the community's changing ageing and disability needs.

29 Denison Street was chosen due to its proximity to the main street and the suitability of its layout.

Through the vision of *Austin-Mcfarland* Architects and under the project management of Galvin Construction, a major refurbishment and retrofitting of 29 Denison Street has been undertaken. A key focus of the project was preserving the historic character of the building, which was the former Gloucester Advocate office.

We have prioritised engaging local contractors and tradespeople wherever possible, supporting the regional economy while drawing on local knowledge and expertise.

Once open, 29 Denison Street will provide much-needed space for BWNG's Ageing and Disability Services team, allowing us to better accommodate our growing operations and the staff who coordinate and deliver essential services.







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We ndis Registered NDIS Provider

REGISTERED CHARITY acnc.gov.au/charityregister

Meals on Wheels Gloucester

CONNECTIONS PROGRAM