



Annual Report

2022 - 2023





Welcome

...to our 2022- 2023 Annual Report.

This year we have overcome fresh challenges, supported each other through unexpected heartbreak and advocated for our community.

Come read about our journey through the last twelve months.

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Glossary

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

About us

Bucketts Way Neighbourhood Group Inc. (BWNG) is a non-profit, locally focused organisation formed in 1989 that provides a variety of essential community services to the people of Gloucester and surrounds.

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

BWNG receives some government funding but relies heavily on grants and donations to be able to maintain our extensive, diverse programmes that help fill the gaps in services available to local people.

The Safety Net and Community Connections programmes, ageing and disability services, training, Meals on Wheels, health transport service and 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 and services such as 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 training organisations and outreach programmes 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 voted in at the Annual General Meeting by the financial members of the organisation.

Over the last 34 years, we have grown and evolved, becoming one of the largest employers in Gloucester, and the only local-based provider of many essential services.



Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land from the Worimi and Biripi People & pay our respects to Elders past, present & future.

Welcome to/Acknowledgement of Country – Gathang language

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

Our Story

- 1989** The Gloucester Neighbourhood Centre was formed to distribute funding.
- 2000** Aged Care services were rolled out, and we began offering transport, Meals on Wheels, social activities and respite care.
- 2002** ‘The Cottage’ at 40 Tyrrell Street was purchased to provide a disability support programme.
- 2006** 14 Queen Street was purchased to allow the Neighbourhood Centre to expand its services.
- 2007** BWNG partnered with Cancer Council NSW in assisting people in the community with transport to their cancer treatment.
- 2012** With demand for services increasing BWNG moved to 88 King Street.
- 2014** Founding CEO Georgine Wise retired, and current CEO Anna Burley took the reins. BWNG participated in the School Based Apprenticeship and Traineeship for the first time.
- 2016** All services made the final move into our new premises at 88 King Street. ‘Merv the Merc’ retired, and a wheelchair modified Kia Carnival was purchased to transport mobility-challenged clients. The new vehicle was funded through grants and an enormous fundraising effort from the community.
- 2017** A joint initiative commenced between Energise Gloucester, Powershop and BWNG to install 30kw solar system on the roof of 88 King Street with the aim of reducing BWNG’s energy costs by 80%.
My Aged Care services are rolled out and BWNG registered as an approved NDIS provider.
- 2018** Blueprint Training Kitchen opened in Britten St and commenced service of a re-booted hot Meals on Wheels service, which received the Meals on Wheels NSW Innovation Award 2018.
- 2019** BWNG successfully applied for a NSW Environmental Protection Authority Organic Infrastructure grant for a community kitchen food trailer to reduce food going into landfill.
We celebrated BWNG’s 30th Anniversary 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 Emergency Relief Programme relaunched as the *Safety Net Programme*.
The COVID-19 pandemic brought unprecedented challenges to the care industry. BWNG undertook extensive infection control measures including the appointment of a Pandemic Officer
- 2021** BWNG took delivery of a custom-made kitchen purpose-built for the Meals on Wheels service.
- 2022** BWNG launched the Gathang Revitalisation Project, offering a chance for members of the local Aboriginal Community to learn the Gathang language, participate in workshops and reconnect with their culture.

CEO's Report



Anna Burley, CEO

Commencing in this role in September 2014, I feel that reforms have always been on the horizon for us. Be it Community, Aged Care or Disability Services, this volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous environment requires Bucketts Way Neighbourhood Group Inc. (BWNG) to transform and/or shift to ensure that the organisation and more importantly the community is able to thrive into the future.

As we travelled through FY22-23, we can celebrate the continued growth we have achieved due primarily on keeping our eyes on our Strategic Plan work undertaken last year. The focus on staffing, the regulatory changes and governance has shown great results and that decisions made and as part of the strategic planning process now holds the organisation as a sustainable service provider in a good position for the further changes expected – and there will be many.

The implementation of the strategy for 'growing our own' has seen great rewards this past year. In this report you will read about BWNG's focus on building capacity and opportunities for staff. Numerous employees have commenced or completed studies. The continued growth in staff numbers, operating income and the number of people accessing our services is a further indication that we are on track with a very capable workforce.

I have not missed the opportunity to grow my knowledge, tackling a Diploma of Community Services Governance through the Institute of Community Directors this year. Let's just say I have studied extensively, and this program was very challenging!

This past year we've implemented improvements in the area of governance, with better processes in place for reporting to the board and for communication between all levels of staff. Whilst we continue to grow, we will continue to remain a local organisation, and caring for our community will always remain at the forefront of what we do.

Both the Aged Care Royal Commission and Disability Royal Commission will see marked shifts within BWNG's service delivery. The current challenge of regulatory uncertainty following the outcomes of these Commissions, and the change of government in May 2022 has seen another delay. For example, the in-Home Aged Care services reform is now extended a further 12 months commencing 01 July 2025. Even though we have no clear guidelines presently, I feel satisfied that the client/consumer is front and centre of these reforms.

I would like to say a big thank you to our Volunteers, who are such an integral part of our organisation – your time and generosity is highly valued and appreciated.

I extend a deep thanks to our Board of Management for their engaged leadership again this year. I would like to thank each of them for the way they add value to BWNG. They each are engaged, focused and formidable and have care for the organisations vision, its people, and the community we work within.

And finally, a big shout out to each and every member of our staff. They are amazing! I thank you for your continued hard work and for making BWNG the fantastic organisation that it is. I know the future is strong, thanks to the wonderful people we have here at BWNG. I'm extremely proud to be part of this great organisation; there is a lot to celebrate and a lot to look forward to.

It's with pleasure I present my report and commend the Annual Report to you as members and supporters of Bucketts Way Neighbourhood Group Inc.

President's Report



Donna Kemp, President

As I write this, my President's Report for FY22-23 of BWNG, I'm struck by the old adage: 'The more things change, the more they stay the same.'

By the very nature of the services provided by BWNG, change is the order of the day. Change in number and needs of clients, government funding body requirements, staff numbers, community expectations. These are some of the factors which dictate organisational actions and responsibilities.

The thing that doesn't change is the dedication to client and community from BWNG.

Ensuring that the organisation is run as a best-practice provider and an employer of choice is a high organisational aim. This is paramount in all directions taken and practices followed in all that BWNG does.

Dealing with such a fluid situation can be, at times, difficult and stressful. I have admiration and respect for the way all challenges are met by our staff.

Every team member is important to the running of BWNG. The staff who work in the community in direct contact with clients. Those who work within the offices, coordinating and managing the client packages, the Team leaders who oversee the work of all. The Finance Department who coordinates the distribution of funds for the client's needs. The Safety Net Program that works with members of our community who are finding themselves experiencing difficult times. The Reception, Human Resources, Information and Technology, Administration, Volunteer Liaison, Meals on Wheels/Transport Coordination. Departments working diligently to keep BWNG responsive and relevant in the community.

Our amazing Volunteers who are invaluable within the service. Delivering the meals, transporting clients for appointments, always with a smile, a kind word, a listening ear and a shoulder for support.

Our CEO, Anna, who is tireless in her dedication to BWNG, always putting her heart and soul into the plans, decisions and representations she makes on behalf of the organisation. There is far more effort and input than hours claimed on her behalf. We are extremely fortunate to have someone with the mix of experience and training Anna has. The growth of the organisation and the service provision is driven by her, and the community, clients and staff are the beneficiaries.

The board, who I work closely with, are a special group of people. Giving freely of their time and talents to ensure that BWNG remains a vibrant, progressive organisation which functions at best practice levels within the scope of the business of the organisation.

I thank Robert, Bev, Vicki, Ian, Jodie and Julienne for their continued support, humour, input and wisdom.

I look forward to the coming year being able to watch and participate in bringing these ideals to the forefront in all actions and interactions taken in the provision of services and the running of BWNG.

Our Board of Management

Each year seven members of BWNG's Board of Management are elected by the financial members of BWNG at the annual general meeting.

We appreciate the experience, skills, knowledge, passion and insight that our 2022-2023 Board Members have brought to their roles, as well as the effort they have put into moving the organisation forward.

Board members are guided in their duties by a well-developed organisational constitution, which is built upon a framework of rules, systems and processes.

Introducing our Board of Management

Donna Kemp, President Board Member since 2016

Donna has an extensive history in working with kids and 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.



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.



Jodie House, Vice President Board Member since 2017

Jodie is currently serving as a 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.

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 multi-national 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 country towns to her role on BWNG's Board of Management. Julienne also holds qualifications in Business Administration and Aged Care and has a strong background in health care and Residential aged care.



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.



Ian 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.

Vale Janice Ellis

At the beginning of 2023 the BWNG family was shocked and deeply saddened by the loss of a member of our team, Janice Ellis.

Janice's connection with the organisation was long and storied; having first joined the team in the early 1990's as a Volunteer in BWNG's Disability Services program, where she was often the photographer for any outings or occasions. It is moving to look back on the photos of this time and know that they were taken from Janice's viewpoint.

Janice also served on BWNG's Board of Management from 1991 to 1998 where along with other serving board members of the time she helped to shape and guide the organisation.

Most recently, Janice provided home care services to local seniors as a Support Worker – a role which fitted with her caring nature.

Janice is remembered and missed by an extensive network of family, friends and colleagues within the local community and beyond.



Support Worker, Volunteer and Former Board of Management Director, Janice Ellis.

Our vision

Connecting our Community

Our values

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 mission

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



Caroline B. and Albert.



Jan & Renita.



Mary and Caroline M.

Ageing and Disability Services

While FY21-22 showcased our resilience, FY22-23 proved what we can achieve when we work together.

A COVID-19 outbreak amongst our administrative team in May presented us with both our greatest challenge of the year and our greatest triumph. Efficiency in the face of such a challenge is a good litmus test of overall effectiveness, highlighting the comprehensiveness of the systems in place, and providing an opportunity to analyse and fine-tune others. In other words, 'We done good!'

Any administrative staff able to work from home did so. As a team BWNG ensured essential services were provided, without the infection spreading into the community.

A focus for the Ageing and Disability Services (ADS) team this year has been technological developments, which have both improved communication within the team and bolstered cyber safety for clients and team members alike.

In a rural area where team members are often more than half an hour from the office, a reliable method of communication is a vital resource. The implementation of apps specifically designed for messaging, rostering and client management has allowed more direct and timely communication between our widely dispersed team.

Aged Care

The number of clients funding their care through a Home Care Package (HCP) has continued to build steadily with an 26% increase on the number of Home Care Packages compared to last financial year.

In spite of the increase in HCP, the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) continues to be a vital source of funding for people waiting for a HCP, or needing temporary assistance to remain living independently in their own home rather than entering a residential aged care facility.



Meals on Wheels

Meals on Wheels underwent a changing of the guard in February when Coordinator Emily transitioned into the role of Community Connector, handing the baton of Meals on Wheels Coordinator to Leanne. Leanne has in turn undertaken a traineeship in Certificate IV in Aged Care as part of the role.

Because of the crucial nature of Meals on Wheels, and our focus to continue service delivery we have at times had to call on other staff to maintain the service. Thanks to Vicki, Gail, Kath and Belinda for stepping in to help.

We thank our Chef Naomi for her ongoing menu development, and for implementing the new innovations which have been launched this year.

A highlight for the Meals on Wheels team this year has been the implementation of a weekly choice of home-style desserts to complement our freshly-cooked main meals.

The option to add a treat to their weekly order has been a huge hit with local Meals on Wheels recipients, many of whom hold fond memories of classics such as golden syrup dumplings, bread and butter pudding or creamed rice. This initiative commenced with a proverbial bang - more than 200 home-style desserts were ordered in the first month alone.

BWNG's custom-built Meals on Wheels kitchen maintained an 'A' rating (the highest available, and the only rating BWNG has ever received) for the sixth year in a row, through a scheduled audit by the Department of Primary Industries (DPI).

In line with our responsibilities under the Vulnerable Persons Act, BWNG must have an audited Food Safety Program in place to identify and document food safety hazards, and the steps taken to mitigate them. The annual DPI audit assesses the quality and compliance of the organisation's Food Safety Program.



Dessert Cook, Gail.



Emily, Chef Naomi & ADS Team Leader Corrina.



Volunteer, Vicki.



Meals on Wheels Coordinator Leanne, with Community Connector Emily.



Volunteers Priscilla & Pam.

Authorised provider of the Veteran’s Home Care program

Veteran’s Home Care (VHC) is a programme funded through the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA). It provides a small amount of practical assistance to help eligible veterans continue to live independently at home, including personal care, respite care, domestic help and safety-related home and garden maintenance.

After identifying a gap in services available to local veterans, BWNG undertook the provision of these services to eligible veterans and their families.

We are pleased to have been able to provide these services through the VHC program until other support became available.

Health transport – Cancer Council and Hunter New England Health



‘Transport to Treatment’ is a Cancer Council NSW program through which BWNG coordinates Volunteer drivers to assist cancer patients with barriers to transport to reach out-of-area diagnostics, treatment and review.

Additionally, BWNG receives funding through Hunter New England Health to help local people who can’t access Community Transport services, or have other transport barriers, to attend medical appointments.

The number of clients requiring health transport has increased from the FY2021-22 levels, which were impacted by COVID-19 restrictions and a shift toward tele-appointments.

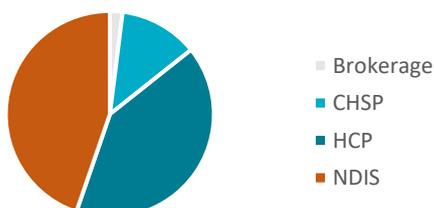
While the number of trips made has increased, more clients have funding through a Home Care Package, which can be used for transport, so this has seen less of a reliance on funding through the Cancer Council and Hunter New England Health.

Clinical governance review

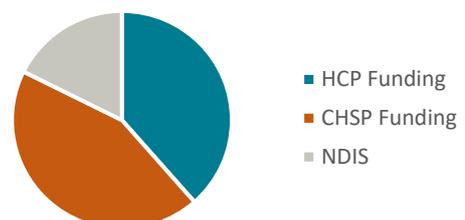
Through our Continual Improvement procedure, the organisation regularly analyses and systems in a process of ongoing refinement. This year BWNG undertook a clinical governance review to provide an independent, objective assessment of the organisation’s performance.

Clinical governance is an umbrella term which encompasses a range of activities in which an organisation of BWNG’s nature should become involved in order to maintain and continually improve the quality of care they provide to clients, and to ensure full accountability of the system to clients.

Ageing & Disability Services Hours



How Are Clients Funding Their Care?





Disability Services

We are now in our seventh year of providing services under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

From the beginning of the pandemic BWNG has followed advice from the Department of Health closely, including the use of masks and personal protective equipment (PPE), and the restriction of activities. This year participants were finally able to return to community-based activities including 'Riding for the Disabled', swimming, music therapy and visits to local venues.

One highlight of the year was a group outing to the Barrington Wildlife Sanctuary. Located in the Barrington Tops, the sanctuary formerly known as Devil Ark includes a Tasmanian Devil preservation project. Participants were able to interact with wildlife including devils, quolls and possums.

Photographer and BWNG Support Worker Stephanie of Storybook Photography captured the participants' day.

The art of BWNG's Cottage participants was recognised at Gloucester's annual local show, with their entries receiving first place and second place awards, two encouragement awards, and the Judges award!

Another highlight of FY22-23 was the arrival of 'PARO The Baby Harp Seal'.

PARO is an advanced interactive therapeutic robot that responds to a person's touch and voice. PARO's life-like appearance is designed to have a calming effect on, and elicit emotional responses in people with cognitive disorders. Essentially, PARO is a robotic therapy animal.

Our team had worked closely and at length with the participant's family to secure PARO, so the achievement of this goal for the participant (and to witness his reaction to PARO) was extremely rewarding.



Everyone's favourite Meals on Wheels Volunteer, Melinda, has been assisting with the delivery of Meals on Wheels most Fridays.

Melinda enjoys interacting with the people she meets on the delivery run and feels a sense of purpose and fulfilment from her 'job'.

Nursing

As part of BWNG's ongoing provision of a quality Home Care Package program, our nursing service has experienced growth and development for installing best practice and improved outcomes for clients. We have heavily invested in services, reviewing and refining these supports.

Whilst undertaking clinical assessments we have identified that a number of our Home Care Package clients are at a high risk of falling, pressure injury, medication misadventure and urinary incontinence.

Thank you to all of our clients for participating in this review and assessment process, allowing us to plan more effectively, and to instil evidence based clinical care to all recipients.

Another focus over the last twelve months has been to open better communication channels with other health service providers, locally. Regular meetings with our local health centre have supported our clients in their ageing/health journey, and further assists with the current local GP shortage.

Additionally, we've reviewed our future needs with a view to expand our nursing workforce with more to come next year.

Another significant outcome of our ongoing training and professional development saw our Registered Nurse, Rebecca Whitton, complete a Master of Nursing, Aged Care and Chronic Disease from the University of Newcastle. Congratulations, Beck, on your effort and energy to achieve this.



Our year in pictures



The arrival of PARO (therapy robot seal)



Behind the scenes – the 2023 ADS Administration Team



Anna, Miranda, Jenny & Amber



Support Worker, Robyn helping with a client's regular line dancing outing.



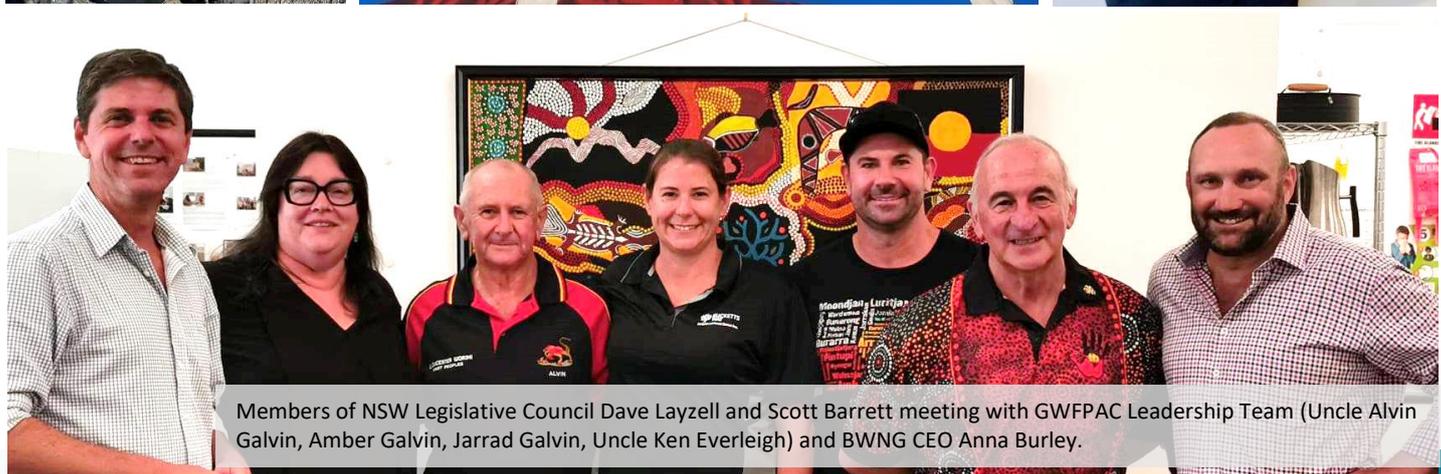
A client & Occupational Therapist look over a new mobility scooter.



Some of the young artists who participated in the Gathang Mural



Support Worker, Sarah with one of the new cooler bags to aid the health and well-being of team members in hot weather.



Members of NSW Legislative Council Dave Layzell and Scott Barrett meeting with GWFPAC Leadership Team (Uncle Alvin Galvin, Amber Galvin, Jarrad Galvin, Uncle Ken Everleigh) and BWNG CEO Anna Burley.



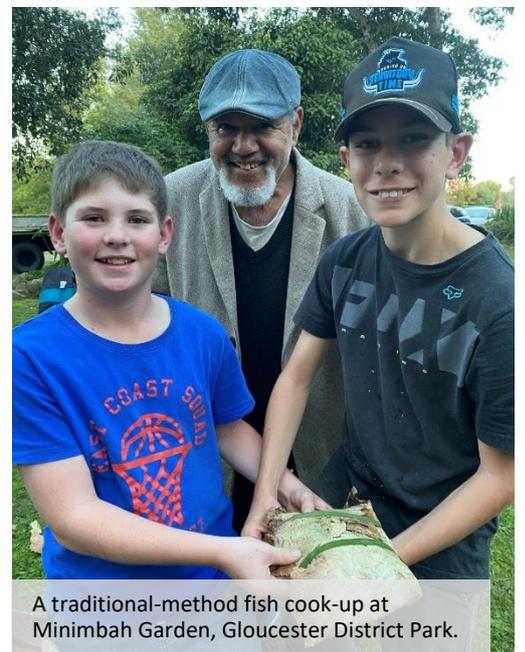
Amber instructs a NAIDOC Week Indigenous weaving workshop at Gloucester Arts & Cultural Council Inc. (GACCI).



A Riding for The Disabled outing.



Indigenous weaving with students at Gloucester High School has helped meld the emerging generation of Gathang speakers into a community.



A traditional-method fish cook-up at Minimbah Garden, Gloucester District Park.



BWNG SBAT Trainee, Miranda with Senior Project Officer Erin Lute at the Mid North Coast School & Industry Forum, which was delivered by Regional Industry Education Partnerships.



Miranda with BWNG Human Resources Coordinator Rachel, at the Gloucester Careers Expo.



Administration Volunteer, Faith with the mountain of archiving she performed for BWNG.

Human Resources



*HR Coordinator,
Rachel Zimmerman*

In an effort to meet the increase in demand for services, recruitment and staff retention has been a key focus of the organisation this year.

To accommodate BWNG’s expanding workforce our administrative centre at 88 King Street has been developed and renovated to maximise the space available and to accommodate more work stations.

Additionally, the creation of a Scheduling Officer role to manage roster changes has allowed the team to remain responsive to the many service changes that we must adapt to on a daily basis.

The creation of a 12-month Cyber Security Officer role met legislative requirements while supporting team members in the safe use of organisational devices and software. Under the guidance of this team member safe online practices have been embedded in the day-to-day use of technology.

In FY22-23 BWNG supported 14 trainees, including one School-Based Trainee (SBT) and 13 mature trainees.

Training of mature staff has provided BWNG with qualified and upskilled employees. These employees often left school early and did not see themselves as “having the ability” to undertake formal training, with the right support these staff have enjoyed their studies and completed their courses. In fact, 46% of our workforce is over 50 years of age.

BWNG provides employment to 58 local people (13 casual, 45 permanent part time) which equates to a full-time equivalent of twenty-two.

STATISTICS

BWNG

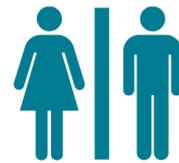
$$13 + 45 = 22$$

Casual Employees Permanent Part Time Full Time Equivalent



46%

Of employees are aged over 50.



54 Female
4 Male



OUR TEAM



27% Admin
38.2% Community
34.8% Volunteers

14

TRAINEES

13 Mature
1 SBAT



Finance Report



Kerry Davis-Marsh, Corporate Services Manager

During the year of the COVID-19 pandemic related restrictions and the unsteady and volatile economic conditions continued to impact BWNG operations, however, our strong resilience to the conditions has resulted in another year of steady growth, and we successfully navigated the challenges thrown our way.

Key highlights during the FY22-23:

- \$388,000 cash was generated from net operating activities.
- Revenue of \$4.5 million
- Net increase in financial assets of \$400k.
- Salaries and employee related expenses totalled \$2.9 million
- Net Assets totalled \$2.2 million
- Surplus was approximately 12% of total income.

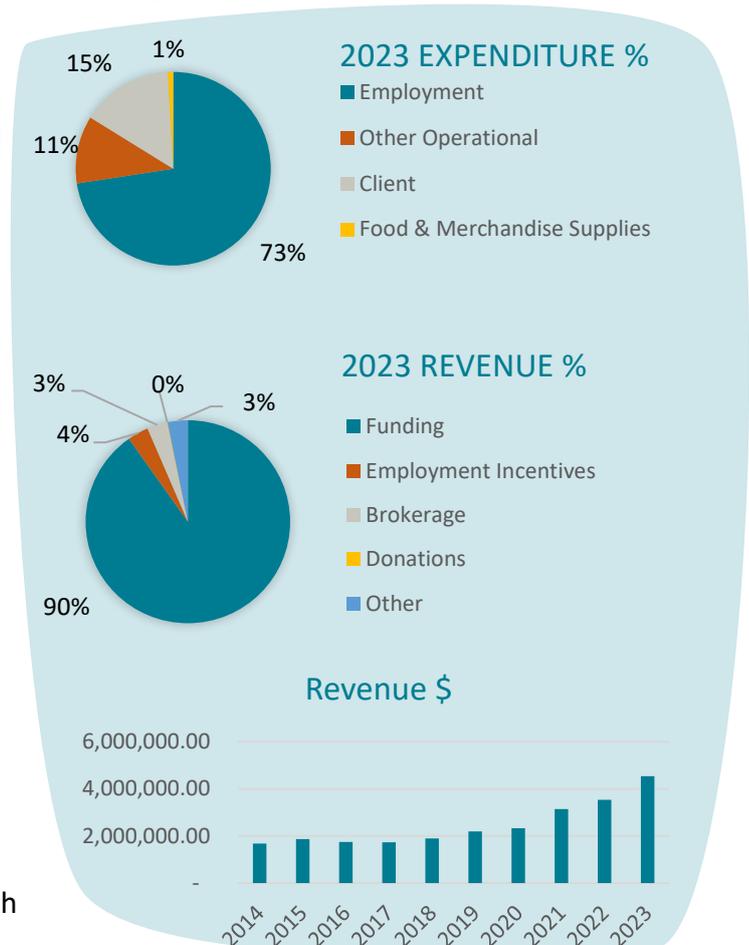
Not surprisingly, there was increase to spending and this was in line with the increased revenue to meet the service deliveries. BWNG is still strong in a cash point perspective and reporting a sound financial result improving the position for BWNG during the FY22-23. This result allows us to continue to provide quality services to the community.

During the year, we have seen good growth in the Home Care Package Program.

While we have seen growth in areas, there have been many financial challenges faced with increased costs associated with wages and transport with only a nominal indexation increase in government funding. There are also the additional unplanned costs associated with managing the challenges of COVID-19.

Of the total expenditure, 72.5% were allocated to salaries and wages expenses amounting to \$2.9 million going back into the community.

The Finance team saw a new member, Julie Andrews, move across from within the organisation, and I would like to congratulate the finance team for their work ethics and diligence throughout the year even with the introduction of some new systems and challenges that go with it. I look forward to the coming year with the objective to further streamline processes, improving productivity and overall improve system outcomes.





Woolworths Team Member, David with BWNG Safety Net Officer, Tia.

Safety Net & Community Connections



Amber Galvin, Connections Program Officer

Safety Net Programme

We provide a safety net to members of our community who are doing it tough, through help with bills, food, information and advice, and referrals to other community organisations and services. January 2023 saw BWNG welcome Tia aboard to the position of Safety Net Administrator. Tia has enrolled, and currently undertaking a Certificate IV in Business Administration.

This year our Safety Net Hub has assisted the community with over \$100,000 in financial aid, conducted over 400 appointments and provided 200 referrals to other services. With the rising increase in the cost of living, we have seen an increase of people needing assistance. It is through our partnership with The Salvation Army that we have also been able to provide the community with food (via online shopping), fuel and pharmacy assistance to those experiencing hardship. Since our change to online shopping last year, we have had a lot of great feedback and have found the initiative to be a great success.

Other supports available through Safety Net include:

- Energy Accounts Payment Assistance (EAPA) A State Government funded scheme which provides vouchers to eligible residential energy customers. If you are experiencing a short-term financial hardship or emergency such as unexpected medical bills, reduced income and natural disaster, you may be eligible to receive these vouchers.
- Telstra Bill Assistance Program (TBAP) helping Telstra customers who are experiencing a financial crisis and are unable to pay their Telstra bill. TBAP has ceased and we have limited vouchers remaining.
- BWNG's "Food Pantry" is available to everyone in the community from 9am-4pm Monday to Friday in reception at 88 King Street Gloucester NSW 2422. The food pantry provides food to the community at no cost. We are extremely grateful to the local businesses, organisations and members of the community that donate to our pantry. We would especially like to thank Woolworths Gloucester for their continued significant donations this financial year.

Pool Pass Giveaway – This year for Christmas we had a giveaway for families that saw us distribute 40 family pool passes. The passes allowed the families unlimited access to the Gloucester pool for the month of January. From all reports, the vouchers were greatly utilised and allowed families valued time together and increased well-being. We are grateful to Gloucester Community Shop who collaborated with us to fund this initiative.

Christmas Giving Tree - 2022 also saw the return of our Christmas giving tree. The giving tree allowed families in need access to donated gifts. We thank everyone in the community who supported this initiative.

Community Connections Programme

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

While in the role of Connections Program Officer, Amber has this year successfully completed her Diploma of Community Services.

NAIDOC 2022

We were heavily involved in this year’s NAIDOC events in Gloucester. We worked with the community to create an amazing clip relating to the 2022 NAIDOC theme, Get UP, Stand Up, Show Up (the clip can be viewed on our website under the Connection tab). The annual Family Fun Day was a hit as always and we involved youth and businesses with a colouring-in competition that we then displayed throughout the main street. We were also excited to collaborate with GACCI, who hosted a community weaving workshop.



Minimbah Gardens Holiday Fun Day

With funding from the NSW Government Office for Regional Youth, we held a day for youth to showcase, and contribute to our beautiful Aboriginal Gardens located within Gloucester District Park. Children and parents alike learnt, and were involved with planting of bush tucker, games, craft and culture. We topped off the day with a sausage sizzle and snake bite kit demonstration from our local paramedic Jodie, where we also handed out 38 snakebite kits to families.



Paramedic, Jodie gave a snake bite first aid demonstration.

Gathang Revitalisation

June 2023 saw the wrap-up of our two-year Gathang Revitalisation project. This project enabled Aboriginal community members the chance to learn Gathang, the language of their people and their land, Worimi and Biripi Country.

Working with Worimi/Biripi Gathang speakers, Benn Stewart and Mandy Davis, with funding through the Commonwealth Government Department the Indigenous Languages and Arts Program (ILA) the program has been very successful. Whilst learning to speak Gathang, participants have also been learning and sharing their culture plus growing their own knowledge.

This program has paved the way for the Gloucester community to have its own Gathang speakers and language group. The Gathang participants have also created an amazing mural, which will be used as a future learning resource for our community.

The program has also led to some involvement within local schools around language. An area that will increase as our local participants' knowledge of the language does.

Gloucester Local Aboriginal Educational Consultative Group

Working alongside Gloucester Local Aboriginal Educational Consultative Group (AECG) has seen us more involved in our local schools. One key project we have worked on this year is a weaving program at Gloucester High School. Where we are working with the students to teach them weaving, to create an artwork of their own. We are seeing some 'deadly' talent amongst this group.

Training & Staff Development

BWNG had secured a grant from The Foundation for Rural, Regional Renewal (FRRR) for community-based training. Due to the impact of COVID-19 on delivering training, this grant was reallocated to be used for internal organisational training purposes.

The FRRR grant enabled us to support our internal trainee's studies and existing staff. BWNG allocated this project to our Resource Officer, Georgine Wise, who has a Cert IV in Training and Assessment and worked in the training industry for over 10 years.

BWNG has a long history of investing in the professional development of our staff under the Vocational Education and Training and Australian Qualifications Framework that provides accredited, nationally recognised qualifications for our staff.

This has included School based trainees in partnership with Gloucester High school.

FY22-23 saw 14 trainees with one of these trainees being a High School student.

The staff have been trained in:

- Cert IV Leadership and management
- Cert IV Business Administration
- Diploma of Community Services
- Cert III Business
- Cert IV Community services
- Cert III Individual Support – Disability/Ageing
- Cert IV Ageing Support
- Cert IV Accounting and Bookkeeping
- Cert IV Work Health and Safety.



In addition to the qualifications training all staff have been required to update/learn industry required skills such as Food Safety for Disability Support Workers, WHS and Infection Control. BWNG has used an online platform for this training that allows staff to complete their training at home or after a shift with most of the modules being short in duration.

Continuing professional development:

BWNG has developed individual training plans for support staff for basic skill requirements and for those providing high levels of support. This includes Clinical Care and each staff member's scope of practice. Identified online training programme to meet our client-based support requirements; individual needs and government required "quality indicators" for the skills our staff require to deliver high level of clinical care. This includes ensuring a competency check is done on all of these areas prior the staff performing those duties.



Training Excellence - A spot light on BWNG trainees

Amber Galvin – Connections Programme Officer

Amber has proven to be a dedicated trainee both on the job and with her studies. She consistently applied herself on the job and with her studies and has adapted well to using her knowledge gained in studies to the workplace by showing pride in her work.

Starting in a Safety Net administration role, Amber expressed an interest in furthering her professional development and was supported by BWNG. Having not studied since high school she quickly adapted. Amber’s can-do attitude and high-level professional approach to studies saw her complete two Diplomas via traineeship within 14 months and received her final completion sign off in December 2022.

Amber completed a Diploma in Leadership and Management, before undertaking and finishing a Diploma in Community Services.

Amber takes the skills she has learnt in the traineeship and applies them to varying community activities supported by BWNG such as organising Aboriginal language workshops, Aboriginal basket weaving at the local high school and securing a grant to help introduce an Aboriginal community transport service. Amber is excelling in her role due to the studies she has undertaken and her on-the-job application.

Jenny Hitchcock.

Jenny commenced in early 2022 as an Administration Assistant after coming from a banking industry. Jenny had some training from the banking sector but had no nationally recognised qualifications. Jenny enrolled in Cert III Business Administration. Jenny’s skills and excellent eye for details and operational aspects of business produced high quality results in her studies, being nominated for student of the month three times by Australian Collage of Commerce and Management. Jenny brings a wealth of customer service skills and has an eye for details that ensures our front office and reception runs smoothly and we have happy customers who appreciate Jenny’s skills and knowledge.



Jenny received multiple nominations for Student of the Month.

Information Technology



*Clinton Portsmouth,
Cyber Security Officer*

BWNG's Strategic Plan identified the need to focus on our information and technology.

We have undertaken an overhaul of phone systems, plus ergonomic headsets, with room to easily expand as BWNG continues to grow.

Additionally, we have researched the viability of moving to a more modern, cloud-based approach to ensure continued security and privacy of our clients.

During the FY21-22, the Australian Cyber Security Centre (ACSC) identified healthcare services as one of the top ten most targeted industries for cybercrime.

This financial year, in response to the ongoing cybercrime trends BWNG created the position of Cyber Security Officer; A position to oversee our online and in-office computer practices, overall cyber hygiene, and to ensure we are doing everything we can to maintain the security and privacy of our client's information.

Part of this process involved reviewing how our Information Technology infrastructure and current online services stacked up against the ACSC's Essential Eight baseline (a framework to help mitigate the potential for cyber security incidences), implementing changes where recommended, carrying out ongoing research into new and emerging cyber security practices and threats, planning for the year ahead and well beyond.

Members of our Information Technology team also partook in a number of webinars to help increase their knowledge of cyber security.

Sustainability

The organisation's ongoing goal is to identify and improve sustainability. Key efforts to achieve in FY22-23:

- Monitoring and reducing printing and stationery resources.
- Reinitiating the monitoring of our solar energy production as part of reviewing our solar system setup.
- Ongoing collaboration with Energise Gloucester with a focus on electric vehicles, and an ongoing review of our fleet to improve efficiencies.
- Reducing, reusing and recycling.
- Diverting food wastage from landfill through the community pantry.
- Commencing a process to find our baseline of resources used through NABERS.



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

Financial Counselling & Legal Aid



Steven McWilliams – Financial Counsellor

Financial Counselling at Bucketts Way Neighbourhood Group Inc. 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 debtor's rights
- Bankruptcy information
- Budgeting
- Referrals to appropriate agencies
- Financial literacy information

“ 33% of new clients presented with issues relating to rental/mortgage arrears. ”

This financial year has again proved challenging for the Gloucester Community. 75% of new clients obtain their income via Centrelink, the result of which appears to be a constant struggle to meet their financial commitments. This situation is being exacerbated by increasing costs of living.

Key issues for FY22-23

33% of new clients presented with issues relating to rental / mortgage arrears.

70% of new clients presented with issues relating to cost-of-living increases. The strain on the family budget is exacerbating existing mental health conditions as well as increasing the demand on Emergency Relief providers. Meeting with a Financial Counsellor can assist in addressing issues relating to financial hardship.

An emerging issue during this reporting period is assisting clients in understanding and navigating the costs associated with Aged Care.

Financial Counselling is available fortnightly at the BWNG.

“ An emerging issue during this reporting period is assisting clients in understanding and navigating the costs associated with Aged Care ”

Work Health & Safety / Quality Assurance



Tamara Perry, WHS/QA Officer

Work Health and Safety

BWNG remains committed to the health, safety and welfare of our workers and others who may be affected by our ongoing work.

A major regulation change introduced in the past year centred on psychosocial hazards and this resulted in Safe Work NSW carrying out a compliance check on BWNG in June 2023. A good result was obtained from the compliance check with Safe Work NSW.

BWNG's WHS committee continued to meet on a regular basis. The WHS committee currently has eight members, and the committee is open for more members coming on board.

The most common incidents reported were client incidents, which include changes in client behaviours, client illness, client falls and client transport issues. From last year there was a slight increase in injury related notifications which required staff to seek medical treatment and worker compensation.

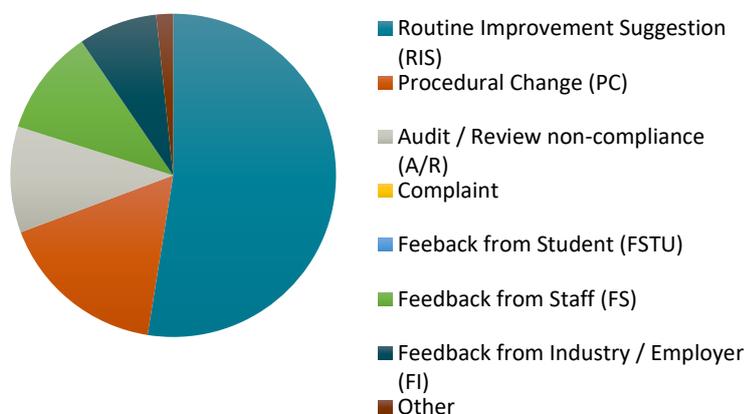
This year BWNG experienced an increase in workers compensation claims. This can be attributed to education and BWNG experiencing its first COVID-19 cluster and COVID-19 being considered an injury for workers compensation claims in our industry.

Quality Assurance

Quality assurance (QA) remains an important organisational activity for addressing policies, attitudes, actions and procedures necessary to ensure that quality is maintained and enhanced.

Areas of focus this year centred on ensuring traceability of continuous improvements from Incident notifications and feedback provided. During the FY22-23 year, a total of 136 continuous improvements were submitted.

FY22-23 Continuous Improvement Submissions





Stratford Common – Bucketts Way South



**BUCKETTS
WAY** Neighbourhood
Group Inc.

bwng@bwng.org.au | www.bwng.org.au 

PO Box 101 | 88 King St | Gloucester NSW 2422

Ph: 02 6558 2454

