



# BUCKETTS WAY

Neighbourhood  
Group Inc.

November 2025 Newsletter



Julienne, Vicki, Ian, Beverley, Jodie, Donna and Robert.

## BWNG'S BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

BWNG held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) on Monday 27 October.

During the AGM the volunteer Board of Management was elected for 2025/26 and remained unchanged from the previous year.

They are Donna Kemp – President, Robert Sparkes – Treasurer, Jodie House – Vice President and Directors Julienne Huntriss, Vicki Harris, Ian Parks and Beverley Fagan.

We express our gratitude to our board members for their dedicated service, and we look forward to the continued growth and success of BWNG under their guidance.

## SAILING RECOMMENCES FOR THE SEASON

Sailing is one of very few sports in which able-bodied people and people with a disability participate on equal terms.

As the sailing season returns, BWNG's Cottage participants are again able to enjoy the exhilaration of sailing thanks to the amazing volunteers of Sailability, Port Stephens.

Sailability is a not-for-profit organisation operating throughout NSW which promotes the activity of sailing to everyone regardless of disability.

With the help of Support Workers and Sailability's Volunteers, participants experience the freedom of sailing on Grahamstown Dam in yachts which have been especially designed for stability and ease of use.

We are grateful to Sailability for their commitment to inclusivity and for making sailing an adventure everyone can enjoy!



Krystal (left) with Josh and Support Worker Kerri.

## KRYSTAL'S WORK EXPERIENCE WITH BWNG

Gloucester High School student, Krystal, recently joined our Ageing and Disability Services team for work experience.

Work experience gives students a valuable opportunity to explore potential career paths and gain firsthand experience in the workplace.

Supporting young people as they consider their future is something we take great pride in. It was a privilege to have Krystal on board, and it's inspiring to see the next generation showing interest in making a difference in their community.



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## CARING FOR THE CARE GIVERS

We've already had a few scorching days in the last few weeks, and we haven't even reached summer yet.

The tasks our Support Workers undertake are often strenuous, and it is easy to overheat when working in the hotter months.

Please help us look after our Support Workers in the heat.

When receiving assistance from our team in your home, please pop your air conditioning on before they are due to arrive, if you don't already have it operating.

## GIVING TREE ACCEPTING DONATED GIFTS

Each year BWNG coordinates *The Giving Tree*, collecting donated gifts for local people experiencing hardship at Christmas.

Last year we received fantastic support from the community.

Some of our key donors were Gloucester Men's Shed, Ray White Gloucester, and the Gloucester office of MidCoast Council.

Thanks to this amazing support we were able to distribute 125 gift parcels to the community.

We invite anyone who would like to contribute to drop any new, unwrapped gifts to our office before 12/12/25.



## NOVEMBER IS RURAL HEALTH MONTH

Rural communities like Gloucester are known for our resilience, generosity, and spirit. But we also know that accessing health services in the country can come with challenges. Long travel distances, limited specialist care, and workforce shortages can make it harder for people to get the health support they need close to home.

For many people in our region, travelling to medical appointments (especially for cancer treatment or specialist care) can be both costly and stressful. Thankfully, support programs exist to help make accessing care easier. The Cancer Council NSW Transport to Treatment Program provides eligible patients with assistance getting to cancer-related appointments, helping ensure that travel challenges don't become a barrier to life-saving treatment.

BWNG works closely with Cancer Council NSW and our team of amazing volunteer drivers to provide this service to local cancer patients.

In addition, the NSW IPTAAS (Isolated Patients Travel and Accommodation Assistance Scheme) offers financial support to rural and regional residents who need to travel significant distances for specialist medical care. IPTAAS can help cover travel and accommodation costs, reducing the financial burden for individuals and families seeking treatment away from home.

For more information on IPTAAS visit the Department of Health website <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/transport/Pages/iptaas.aspx> or scan this QR code with your phone:



BWNG is also a member of the National Rural Health Alliance which advocate for improved health outcomes for people living in rural and remote Australia.

During Rural Health Month, we acknowledge the dedication of our local health workers as well as the importance of programs and partnerships like these. Together, we can continue to support each other, advocate for rural health services, and ensure our region remains a place where everyone can access the care they need.



## 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

Free copies of our annual report are now available.

If you would like to see what BWNG has been up to over the last twelve months contact our office to arrange for a copy to be sent to you.



Gail, Nicole, Sarah, Leanne & Amber.

## MARKING FIVE YEARS WITH BWNG

Several of our team members have recently reached their five-year anniversary with BWNG.

Please congratulate:

- Gail - Meals on Wheels Cook
- Nicole - Ageing & Disability Services Team Leader
- Sarah - Support at Home Care Partner
- Leanne - Support Worker
- Amber - Connections Program Officer

Over the past five years, each of these team members has played an important part in the organisation.

We are pleased to celebrate this milestone with Gail, Nicole, Sarah, Leanne and Amber; and we thank them for strengthening our programs and helping the organisation grow.

## SUPPORT AT HOME – NEW SERVICE AGREEMENTS

With the commencement of Support at Home and the new Aged Care act on 1 November, people receiving funding through a Home Care Package (HCP) will now have transitioned to Support at Home (SAH).

In line with the new program, you will soon receive an updated BWNG Service Agreement, if you haven't already.

Service Agreements are an important legal document which protects both the client and the provider. A services agreement explains what services are covered, how often they will be provided, how much they will cost, your rights and responsibilities, and what to do if things change or go wrong.

Once you receive your new service agreement you should:

1. **Read it carefully** and make sure you understand what services will be provided, how often, and any fees or contributions.
2. **Check that it reflects your needs and preferences** and discuss any concerns or changes with your BWNG Care Partner.
3. **Seek clarification if needed.** You can speak with your Care Partners at BWNG, have a support person look it over, or seek impartial advice from an advocate such as **OPAN** (Older Person's Advocacy Network – **Ph: 1800 700 600**).
4. **Sign** and return the agreement to BWNG so that you services can continue smoothly.
5. **Keep** a copy to for future reference.

Remember: take your time, ask questions, and make sure the agreement supports your goals and needs. You are in control of your care.



## THE BED MAKER AND MATTRESS LIFTER

This product is designed to make bed-making easier and more efficient.

The Bed Maker has an ergonomic design that allows the user to grip it in a number of different ways and reduces your likelihood of you or your carers sustaining injuries while making the bed.

Lightweight and easy to use, the Bed Maker can be slid between the mattress and box springs like a wedge to lift your mattress, making easy access to tuck sheets in.

We at BWNG love the idea of this tool because it also helps look after our Support Workers, saving repetitive lifting and strains and protecting their backs and muscles.

The Bed Maker and Mattress Lifter can be purchased through BWNG for \$20 each.

For more details or to place an order please speak with your BWNG Care Partner.





## ORDERING MEALS FOR DECEMBER & JANUARY

If you are ordering Meals on Wheels for December and January don't forget that your meal selection needs to be returned to the office by the end of November.

Clients enjoying Meals on Wheels on the last three days of deliveries for the year (22, 23 & 24 December) have the option of delicious Christmas Pudding for dessert, made by the pudding specialists - Gloucester's QUOTA ladies!

## FROZEN MEALS FOR THE HOLIDAY PERIOD

Meals on Wheels will deliver the last freshly-cooked hot meals for the year on Wednesday 24/12/25, resuming Monday 12/01/26.

We have a menu of nutritious frozen meals available for you to pop in the freezer and reheat at your convenience.

If you would like to order some frozen meals to get you through BWNG's closure period, please speak with our Meals on Wheels Coordinator Jo before the close of business Friday 19/12/25.

## PLAN AHEAD TO BEAT THE HEAT THIS SUMMER

Heatwaves or extreme heat events are defined as times of abnormally hot weather lasting several days. Heatwaves or extreme heat events can have a serious effect on people's health.

It is important you prepare early, plan for the first heatwave and protect yourself. Here are some tips to stay safe in the heat.

### Drink plenty of water

- Drink plenty of water even if you do not feel thirsty (unless your doctor usually limits your fluids) – check the colour of your wee – if it's pale, you're drinking enough.
- Avoid alcoholic, hot or sugary drinks including tea and coffee. If you go outside, carry a bottle of water with you.

### Keep your body cool

- Drink cold drinks and eat smaller cold meals such as salads and fruit.
- Wear light-coloured, loose-fitting clothes made from natural fibres like cotton.
- If you must go outside apply sunscreen and wear a hat.
- Plan your day around the heat. Try to stay out of the sun and avoid being outdoors between 11 am and 5 pm.
- Put wet towels or cool packs on your arms or neck, put your feet in cool water or take a cool shower or bath.

### Keep your house cool

- Cool your house by closing windows and shutting curtains or blinds through the day.
- Have your home air-conditioning (if you have it) serviced before summer.
- If you don't have air-conditioning at home, try to spend time in a cool place like a library or shopping centre.

### Prepare early and plan for the first heatwave of summer

- Listen to weather updates regularly or keep an eye on the Bureau of Meteorology's (BOM) Heatwave Service for heatwave forecasts. (<http://www.bom.gov.au/australia/heatwave>) or scan this QR code with your smartphone:
- Know whom to call if you need help.
- Follow your doctor's advice if you have any medical conditions.
- If you feel unwell, seek medical advice from a doctor or nearest hospital.
- Know where to find your emergency kit in case of a power failure.

### Keep your food safe

- Make sure food that needs refrigeration is properly stored (between 0°C and 5°C). Defrost foods in the fridge, not on the kitchen bench.

### After the heat has passed

- Continue to drink plenty of fluids so your body can get back in balance.
- Take time to rest and recover as coping with hot weather can be tiring.
- Go to your GP if you feel unwell after the heat has passed.
- Open windows and doors to let your house cool down.

### Important telephone numbers

- In an emergency – call 000
- For advice on medications and their effect in hot weather – talk to your GP
- For general health advice – call Health Direct on 1800 022 222. This is a free 24-hour health advice phone line staffed by Registered Nurses.

For more information visit [Plan ahead to beat the heat - Beat the heat \(nsw.gov.au\)](http://Plan ahead to beat the heat - Beat the heat (nsw.gov.au)) or scan this QR code with your smart phone:

