



BUCKETTS WAY Neighbourhood Group Inc.

April 2026 Newsletter



Maggie and her renovated bathroom.

A SAFE NEW BATHROOM FOR MAGGIE

We're pleased to share a good-news story! Local community member Maggie was recently able to use her funding to upgrade her bathroom.

Maggie's mobility challenges meant her old bathroom was difficult and unsafe for her to access, with a high lip to lift her walker over, insufficient space to manoeuvre around, and no safety rails in the shower.

In a joint effort between Maggie's BWNG Care Parter Tia, Occupational Therapist (OT) Melissa Pitfield, and Gloucester Home Maintenance and Modifications (GHMM) the much-anticipated renovation was coordinated and completed.

In Maggie's own words: 'I'm no longer afraid to have a shower'.

This is a great outcome! We extend our thanks to GHMM, OT Melissa and Tia for working with Maggie to make this happen.

ORGANISE YOUR FLU VACCINATION EARLY

It is recommended that you receive your annual Flu shot as soon as it becomes available, to give your body time to prepare for the Flu season.

Vaccination against the Flu is required annually because Influenza viruses mutate rapidly. This means last year's vaccine may not protect you against new strains circulating in the community.

The 2026 Influenza vaccine will be available from April, and is free under National Immunisation Program for people at higher risk of infection or serious health complications, including:

- Adults aged over 65
- Children under five
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Talk to your doctor or pharmacist as soon as possible to organise your 2026 Flu shot.



New team members Claire & Sharon.

NEW FACES IN THE TEAM

We have two new faces to introduce to you this month. Welcome to the team Support Worker Claire and Aged Care Officer Sharon.

Claire has come on board as a Support Worker and is already making a positive impact in her role.

Sharon joins us as our new Ageing & Disability Officer, bringing valuable experience and a strong commitment to supporting our community, and has undertaken the coordination of our Transport and Meals on Wheels programs.

Please join us in giving Sharon and Claire a warm welcome to the team!

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APRIL - FALLS AWARENESS MONTH

April is Falls Awareness Month in Australia — a time to raise awareness about fall prevention, especially for older adults.

Falls are the leading cause of injury-related hospitalisations in older Australians, but the good news is most falls are preventable.

Here's how you can help prevent falls:

- **Stay active:** Gentle exercises like walking or tai chi help improve balance and strength.
- **Check your environment:** Keep walkways clear, ensure good lighting, and use non-slip mats.
- **Have regular health checks:** Vision, medications, and foot care all affect balance.
- **Use mobility aids if needed:** They're there to keep you safe.

Let's work together to reduce the risk of falls and promote safe, confident movement every day!

For more tips and resources, visit www.stayonyourfeet.com.au

Or scan this QR code with your smart phone:



YOUTH WEEK: THE VALUE OF CONNECTION ACROSS GENERATIONS

As we celebrate Youth Week, it's a wonderful opportunity to recognise the positive impact young people have in our community, especially when they connect with older generations.



Students and attendees at the Community Cafe

Programs like the community café, run for seniors by local students, are a great example of how these connections can flourish. These gatherings create space for conversation and shared experiences. For seniors, it's a chance to stay socially connected and engaged, while for young people, it offers valuable life experience, confidence, and a deeper understanding of their community.

Intergenerational activities help break down barriers, challenge stereotypes, and build mutual respect. They remind us that everyone has something to offer, and that meaningful connections can happen at any age.

During NSW Youth Week (16-22 April 2026), we thank the young people who give their time and energy to support others, and we celebrate the friendships and community spirit that grow from these special interactions.

STAY ALERT: GIFT CARD AND MEALS ON WHEELS SCAMS

It's a sad reflection of the times, but older Australians are often targeted by criminals attempting to carry out scams. Awareness remains our strongest defence. If something feels unusual or overly urgent, it's always worth taking a moment to double-check.

Meals on Wheels Scam

Meals on Wheels NSW has recently alerted us to a concerning new scam. People have received phone calls from someone representing "Meals on Wheels World," claiming to require immediate payment. The caller then pressures individuals to pay on the spot, often requesting payment via gift cards or credit card over the phone.

BWNG will never contact you in this way to request money or solicit donations. If you receive a call like this, it is not genuine and you should hang up immediately. If you are ever unsure whether a call from BWNG is legitimate, we encourage you to contact our office directly on 6558 2454 to verify.

Gift Card Scams

Gift card scams are also on the rise. Even members of our own community have been targeted. In these scams a potential victim is told they must pay an urgent bill over the phone using gift cards. They will instruct the target to purchase these gift cards from the post office, Woolworths and other stores, often in bulk.

These criminals often use emotional pressure to manipulate their targets, with statements such as, "I'll lose my job if this isn't paid."

It's important to remember that legitimate organisations will never request payment via gift cards. If you receive a request like this, pause and verify it using official contact details. Additionally, you should never share gift card codes with someone you do not know or trust.



Chef Tracey filling reusable food containers.

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF ZERO WASTE – WE’RE PLAYING OUR PART

Each year on 30th March the world recognised international *Day of Zero Waste*, which is an annual reminder of the small, practical steps we can all take to reduce waste and protect our environment for future generations.

At BWNG, we have a range of initiatives in place to minimise waste and reduce our environmental footprint.

Our Meals on Wheels service uses reusable containers, which are returned to BWNG, sanitised and reused. This helps to significantly cut down on single-use packaging while still delivering fresh, nutritious meals to our community.

At our main premises, 88 King Street, solar panels on the roof harness clean, renewable energy, which is to power our Meals on Wheels freezer, which has a large energy draw. This is thanks to a joint project between BWNG and former community organisation, *Energise Gloucester*.

Used printer toner cartridges are collected and recycled through *Close the Loop* resource recovery, where they are either returned to manufacturers for refill, or recycled into things like pens, moulded plastic furniture and asphalt additives for roads. In fact, since 2018 we’ve diverted almost 70 kg of printer cartridges from landfill.

We’ve also taken steps to reduce fuel emissions by incorporating hybrid vehicles into our fleet, making our transport services more environmentally friendly as well as more cost-effective.

These may seem like small changes, but together they make a meaningful difference. By continuing to look for ways to reduce waste and use resources wisely, BWNG is helping to create a cleaner, greener future for our community.



Alysha and Chris of Key Community Group.

KEY COMMUNITY GROUP AT THE KING STREET CENTRE

We are pleased to welcome *Key Community Group* as they expand their services into Gloucester.

Key Community Group is a non-profit organisation with a strong focus on supporting people with disability to access meaningful employment and build independence.

Their services support both job seekers and local employers, offering personalised job training, career coaching, and assistance with resumes, as well as guidance around workplace accessibility and inclusion. They also provide a range of supports through the NDIS, including help to prepare for, find, and maintain employment.

With a commitment to breaking down barriers and creating opportunities, *Key Community Group* works closely with individuals to build confidence, develop skills, and connect people with the right job opportunities. Their arrival in Gloucester brings valuable new support to our community, helping more people to participate in the workforce and achieve their goals.

Alysha and Kris (pictured) are at the King Street Centre on Tuesdays and Thursdays. If you are a person living with disability looking for help to access employment, simply drop into the King Street Centre on those days, give them a call Ph: 5525 6033 or contact them through their website www.keycommunitygroup.com.au





2026 ANZAC DAY SERVICES FOR GLOUCESTER*

5.30am - Dawn service at the Memorial Park Clock Tower (Please arrive 5 min early to avoid disruption), followed by wreath laying at:

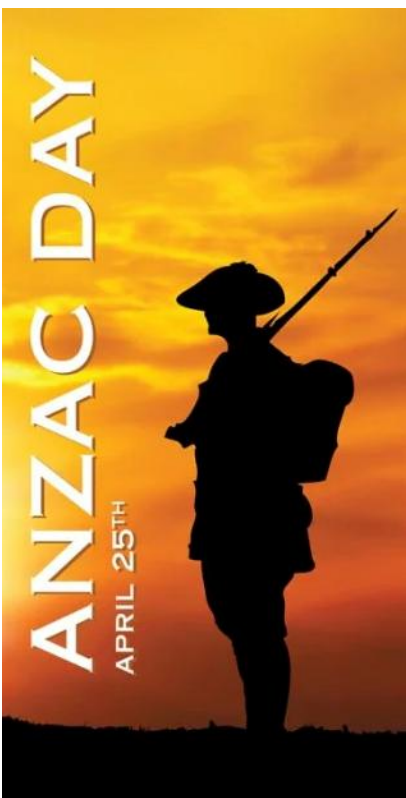
- The Uniting Church
- Gloucester Cemetery Memorial Wall
- Gloucester Historical Society

10.15 – Assembly time for the parade - Denison Street outside Club Gloucester

10.40 am - Parade steps off from Denison Street, proceeding up Church Street then Hume Street to the memorial clock tower.

11.00 am – Main Commemoration service commences at Memorial Park Clock Tower.

*Information from www.GloucesterRSL.org



THE HOME EQUITY ACCESS SCHEME

For many retirees, the family home is their most valuable asset—but it often sits untouched when it could be helping to fund a more comfortable lifestyle. That's where Australia's Home Equity Access Scheme (HEAS) comes in.

Run by Services Australia, the HEAS allows eligible older Australians to access the equity in their home as a steady income stream or lump sum without needing to sell or move out. It's a practical option for those looking to supplement their retirement income while staying in the place they know and love.

How does it work?

The scheme operates similarly to a reverse mortgage. Participants receive regular fortnightly payments (and in some cases lump sums), which are secured against their property. Instead of making repayments along the way, the loan balance (including interest) builds over time and is typically repaid when the home is sold or from the estate.

Who is eligible?

To access the HEAS, you must be of Age Pension age and own real estate in Australia. Importantly, you don't need to be receiving the Age Pension. Self-funded retirees can also apply, making it a flexible option for a wide range of people.

How much can you receive?

Payments are capped so that your total income reaches up to 150% of the full Age Pension rate. The exact amount depends on factors like your age, property value, and any pension you already receive.

Why consider it?

The HEAS can provide a valuable financial buffer in retirement, helping cover everyday expenses, healthcare costs, or even lifestyle goals like travel. It also comes with a "no negative equity guarantee," meaning you'll never owe more than the value of your home.

Things to keep in mind

While the scheme offers flexibility and security, it's not without trade-offs. Interest accrues over time, reducing the equity in your home and the value of your estate. As with any financial decision, it's worth considering your long-term goals and discussing options with a financial adviser.

The bottom line

The Home Equity Access Scheme is a useful tool for retirees looking to enhance their income without giving up their home. For the right person, it can turn a largely untapped asset into a reliable source of financial support and help make retirement a little more comfortable.

If you'd like to explore whether the HEAS could work for you visit the [Services Australia website](https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au) or phone 132 300

