



**BUCKETTS  
WAY** Neighbourhood  
Group Inc.



# Annual Report

---

2020 - 2021



*Rosemarie and Ian with Support Worker, Jamie*

# Welcome

*Within this Annual Report you will read about a grass-roots organisation that started right here in Gloucester, and over 30 years later, is still focussed solely on our own community. You will read about challenges and triumphs. You will read about loss and resilience. You will share in our journey.*

## Contents

Contents.....	2
About Us .....	3
Our Story.....	4
CEO’s Report .....	5
President’s Report .....	7
Our Vision .....	8
Our Values.....	8
Our Mission.....	9
Our Management Board.....	9
Vale Kylie – a valued team member and friend.....	10
Ageing & Disability Services .....	11
Highlights .....	14
Training Services .....	17
Social Ventures Report .....	19
Donations and Grants .....	20
Finance Report.....	21
Safety Net & Community Connections Report .....	22
Financial Counselling Report.....	23
BWNG’s Pandemic Response.....	24
The Yarn Connection Project .....	25



*Two of our valued Support Workers, Leanne (above) and Janice (below)*



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

## 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 Limeburners Creek in the south to Krumbach in the east and includes the communities of Gloucester, Barrington, 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 and diverse services.

Over the last 31 years, we have grown and evolved, becoming one of the largest employers in Gloucester, and the only local-based provider of many essential services. Our team currently consists of 30 volunteers and 48 employees.

A seven member volunteer Board of Management voted in at the annual general meeting by the members of the organisation governs BWNG.

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 many partnerships with likeminded organisations and services such as Legal Aid NSW and Financial Counselling Australia.

We have diversified our training services, and incorporates a social venture known as Bluey the Mobile Coffee Cart. This initiative provides employment, experience and certified training to local job seekers as well as a soft entry point to our services, through which vulnerable community members can connect with and build confidence in our services.



*Melinda delivering Easter eggs.*

## Our Story

---

- 1989** The Gloucester Neighbourhood Centre was formed to procure funding for a speech therapist for Gloucester Hospital. Identifying further gaps in local services, more funding was secured from the Department of Community Services (DoCS) to assist locals experiencing financial or geographical disadvantage.
- 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 the former butter factory building at 88 King Street. The Cottage moved in next door with the larger space creating room for BWNG’s growing staff and services.
- 2014** Founding CEO Georgine Wise retired and current CEO Anna Burley took the reins.
- 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 St 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.  
Gloucester Pool Kiosk was leased from MidCoast Council by Blueprint Kitchen.
- 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.  
BWNG’s 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary was celebrated with a Colour Run Community Event.  
Recovery Hub 2422 was set up under the auspices of BWNG to provide assistance to local primary producers experiencing hardship specific to drought and other rural adversities.
- 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 was relaunched as the *Safety Net Programme*.  
BWNG made the final repayment for the solar energy system installed on the roof of 88 King Street, in partnership with Energise Gloucester, meaning the system is now fully-owned by BWNG.  
Blueprint Kitchen moved operations to Gloucester Country Club.  
BWNG is recognised as a semi-finalist in the Prime Super Excellence in Aged Care category of the Regional Achievement and Community Awards.
- 2021** BWNG takes delivery of a custom-made food trailer purpose-built for our Meals on Wheels service.

## CEO's Report

---



The grit, resilience and social cohesion that our rural communities are famous for have been tested and strengthened by all that we have shared during the 2020-2021 year.

The ongoing global health crisis has had a profound impact, both socially and economically. Australia has fortunately been spared from much of the devastation we have witnessed in other parts of the world. Nonetheless, the impacts of COVID-19 on the community and the limitations it has placed, such as social isolation, has been felt widely. The impact of the pandemic has highlighted to me the critical role we fulfil in providing community and social services. As many of our clients have family elsewhere, the connections we have in place and have built upon has been fortifying to observe. Nothing outlines this more than the Yarn Connection Project we ran last year.

The Yarn Connection Project had a fantastic response. Many crocheted and knitted squares were received, which were joined into Christmas trees and displayed throughout the community. The extraordinary reach and response about our 'forest of trees' drew national and international comments. In our small way, we highlighted what it is to be a community. I would like to thank all involved in this project. Let's see how this develops further, this year.

During this extraordinary year, our staff and volunteers have served our community with great compassion, dedication and professionalism through this challenge. You should all be extremely proud of the difference you have made whilst adapting to 'the new normal'.

The safety of staff, volunteers, students and clients was our paramount concern when we decided to review service delivery and close our office at the various times. This saw a move that some services be delivered via telephone or online. As an essential service provider, we always reviewed and carried out services after risk and benefit assessment was completed. I'd like to thank the Board of Management for their exemplary leadership and invaluable contribution to supporting safe service of BWNG during this time.

A further challenge was faced during this year through the tragic loss of a senior staff member. With your indulgence, Kylie Tull, Ageing and Disability Services Team Leader was the model of what it is to grow local capacity with our local people. Kylie started with BWNG around 2012. She progressed through various roles within the aged care team. It was evident that her chosen career pathway was due to her own passion and volition for the older person, and combined with her thirst for learning, her dissection of legislation and focus on advocacy, saw many good outcomes for clients and the wider community. Coupled with her love of a good discussion and her love of family, Kylie is and will be sorely missed. We could never have anticipated this event, but, be assured her groundwork will show dividends into the future.

It causes me to reflect with pride on what our incredible team has achieved. The application and launch of the Home Care Packages has meant that we have the capability to offer higher-level support within the homes of elderly clients. We are the largest local provider of in home aged care services in Gloucester. This has seen changes in service support, such as having a registered nurse on staff and the ongoing development of our community connectors and other crucial roles. The ultimate aim to provide a holistic service – one very much applicable to our client's needs.

Added to this was the purchase of a food van to facilitate the daily production of meals under the Meals on Wheels program. The purchase secures the ongoing delivery of hot, freshly-cooked meals for many of our elderly clients. Meeting and excelling all regulatory guidelines and legislation, the food van safeguards our local Meals on Wheels service into the future. The daily delivery of meals provides good health via good nutrition, but also offers a connection between our volunteers or staff and clients.

With so much that we have endured, let's not forget that this year saw the ongoing impact of drought and bushfire. The recovery is underway, but the loss of landscape, and the impact to homes and lives requires energy and time to recover. I see the incredible contribution of BWNG staff to be that of safeguarding the wellbeing of residents of Gloucester and surrounding areas. This ongoing and persistent presence assists many people, and our unceasing work matters.

*“ These are challenging times; however, we also know the resilience of the human spirit, the importance of our services of care and support and the difference it makes to the lives of many. ”*

BWNG has continued to offer a broad range of training programs for staff, and the wider community. Yet again we have had to adapt due to COVID 19 and had to adjust the delivery of courses. Into the New Year, a primary focus of our training within the organisation will be to grow our own workforce to cater for community needs.

These are challenging times; however, we also know the resilience of the human spirit, the importance of our services of care and support, and the difference it makes to the lives of many. For the organisation, this year was a chance to strengthen our voice and take steps to set ourselves up for the future, so we can continue to be a strong advocate for the needs of the residents within the Gloucester area.

The 2021-2025 Strategic Plan is under development and will be in place soon. Yet again major changes are in the pipeline due primarily to the Royal Commissions into Aged Care and Disability services. I am sure BWNG will adapt and accommodate to these changes plus will be innovative in the delivery of services to meet the needs of the community.

I would like to express my gratitude to the Board of Directors for their thoughtful and diligent contribution to BWNG over the past year. I wish to express my thanks to all the staff for their great skill and dedication. I have deeply appreciated your personal and professional support. I would also formally like to thank my family and close friends for their backing and tolerance throughout the year.

Let's get into the next year.

Anna Burley

Chief Executive Officer

## President's Report

---



It is with pleasure and a sense of reflection that I present this, the Board President's Report for the 2020-2021 year.

What can be said about the previous year?

It has been challenging, exciting, sad and fulfilling in almost equal measure. The Organisation has not only maintained the usual high standard of service that is the best practice benchmark for BWNG but has surpassed it, to the great benefit of the Gloucester community. There will be others in this Annual Report who will speak to and demonstrate this growth. Suffice for me to voice the pride I feel to be involved with these services and the people who provide them.

The dedicated staff have continued their work, no matter what has impacted the organisation during this tumultuous year, with strength and compassion for each other and clients alike. To each and everyone who works within the BWNG family I offer my heartfelt congratulations and respect, for the way you have gone about your tasks during the difficult times. The focus and aims of the organisation have not been lost or lessened. Support and service to clients and the community have remained at the forefront of all actions and interactions.

To the members of the Board I offer my thanks for your support for the organisation over this year. Whatever has occurred you have calmly and capably risen to the task. Your dedication to, and desire for the continued success of BWNG is evident and appreciated by all involved.

BWNG is very fortunate to have a CEO who can bring into play her knowledge and wide skills base for the benefit of the organisation and clients. Particularly so during these times of rolling Health Department mandates, lockdowns, confusion and concern for staff, clients and the community at large. Someone who gives of her own time to be involved with Area Committees and other peak bodies to ensure that BWNG is working to current best practice in all undertakings. Thank you Anna for your capable and on-point handling of these situations, which have formed a large part of the landscape of this year. This is just one reflection of your ongoing care for and dedication to BWNG and our Community. The Board appreciates all you do and look forward to what the future brings.

*“ The dedicated staff have continued their work, no matter what has impacted the organisation during this tumultuous year, with strength and compassion for each other and clients alike. ”*

In the next year I am excited to see the continuing success of BWNG, its' expanding and reformatted services, also the advances made therein.

Let's hope for a less hectic and trying 12 months of working for the benefit of the Gloucester community.

Donna Kemp.  
President



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

## Our Mission

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



Board members (L to R) Jodie House, Robert Sparke, Vicki Harris, Beverley Fagan & Donna Kemp

## Our Management Board

At our Annual General Meeting each year members elect seven board members to oversee the organisation and guide the strategic direction of BWNG.

The board is responsible for ensuring that the organisation meets legal requirements and remains accountable to our donors and stakeholders, including the NSW State and Federal Governments.

This year president of the Board Donna Kemp, is marking five years of service on the board of BWNG. Robert and Jodie are not far behind, having served four years and three years respectively.

Board service is recognised as one of the toughest volunteer roles. We thank this year's board members Donna, Jodie, Robert, Vicki and Beverley for the dedication, experience and generosity that they have brought to the role, and extend a special thanks to Vicki and Beverley for stepping in at the last minute.

If you're interested in becoming a member of BWNG, and having a say on the direction of the organisation please call our office on Ph: 6558 2454 to request a membership form.

## Vale Kylie – a valued team member and friend



*Kylie Tull. Although difficult to pin down for a photograph, we feel she would approve of this one.*

***Your crown was the branches that reached right across this town, offering an impenetrable shelter for those that surrounded you.***

***Your trunk was as solid as your loyalty and unwavering unapologetic self.***

***You did not move from your position in this world.***

***You held a space we cannot define, that cannot be replaced.***

***And while we suffocate in your absence, we acknowledge the irony of the one thing you could not withstand.***

***For you were the tree of life, a mother, a wife.***

***Your bark was rough, you were the toughest.***

***Your centre was marked by the rings of the years you lived and lives that you changed and nourished.***

***You could not see the roots you grew that held for so many,***

***the ground on which you walked.***

***That we must now walk without you.***

***But we see them now.***

***They are ripped from the ground.***

***We hope that you see them too and feel the abundance of love that spills, like the tears we cry for you.***

***- A poem for Kylie by former BWNG team member, Laura Fraser***

Our community was hit by unprecedented tragedy in May, when a key member of our team, Ageing and Disability Services Team Leader Kylie Tull lost her life in a car accident.

The sudden, painful loss of the person at the helm left our Ageing and Disability Services reeling, and to be honest, the shock is still reverberating through both our team and the community.

The Kylie we knew was a complex creature, made up of many unique (and sometimes contrasting) qualities.

A powerhouse of intelligence and determination, she had a mischievous sense of humour, and was never one to back away from a fight, either on her own behalf, or for the rights of someone in need.

She had a natural talent for research and self-education, and had the foresight to never let an opportunity slip by.

Personal experiences fostered a passion in Kylie for elder care, especially in the area of dementia, and at the time of her passing, Kylie had been considering furthering her education through a Diversional Therapy in Dementia course.

After joining the organisation in the junior role of reception trainee, Kylie's sharp intelligence and strong personality led to a meteoric rise through the ranks, reaching the pinnacle of Ageing and Disability Services Team Leader in 2020.

Kylie led her team - although firmly - from the front. Her experience of BWNG at a grass-roots level gave her leadership a certain credibility, as did the varied qualifications she attained along the way, which included Business Administration and Aged Care.

In spite of her heavy responsibilities at work, Kylie's love of her family motivated her to achieve a healthy work-life balance. A proud Worimi woman with strong family values, she was extremely dedicated to her daughters Ayrleah and Rubi, and Husband Daniel.

Our thoughts remain with Ayrleah, Rubi, Daniel, and Kylie's extensive network of family and friends.

It is safe to say that Kylie's leadership and personal strength has left its mark on our services and our team. If anything, her loss has brought us closer together, and in a small way we are honouring her memory as we continue our work in a field that was so important to her.

# Ageing & Disability Services

## Snapshot Ageing & Disability Services



### Disability Services

Percentage of ADS hours spent assisting community members living with disability.



### Ageing Services

Percentage of ADS hours spent assisting older people in our community.



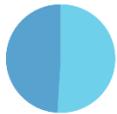
### Home Care Package

21% of hours of service provided were funded through a Home Care Package



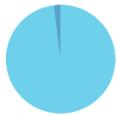
### CHSP

29% of hours of service provided were funded through the Commonwealth Home Support Programme



### NDIS Funding

49% of hours of service provided were funded through the National Disability Insurance Scheme



### Brokerage

<1% of hours of service hours were provided through a brokerage arrangement with other providers

## Meals on Wheels

2,823  
Hot  
Meals



1,684  
Frozen  
Meals



> 900  
Hours spent  
in delivery



## Health Transport

580  
Trips  
to Medical  
Appointments



1,684  
Kilometers  
Driven to medical  
appointments



> 2,000  
Hours  
Driven by  
Volunteers



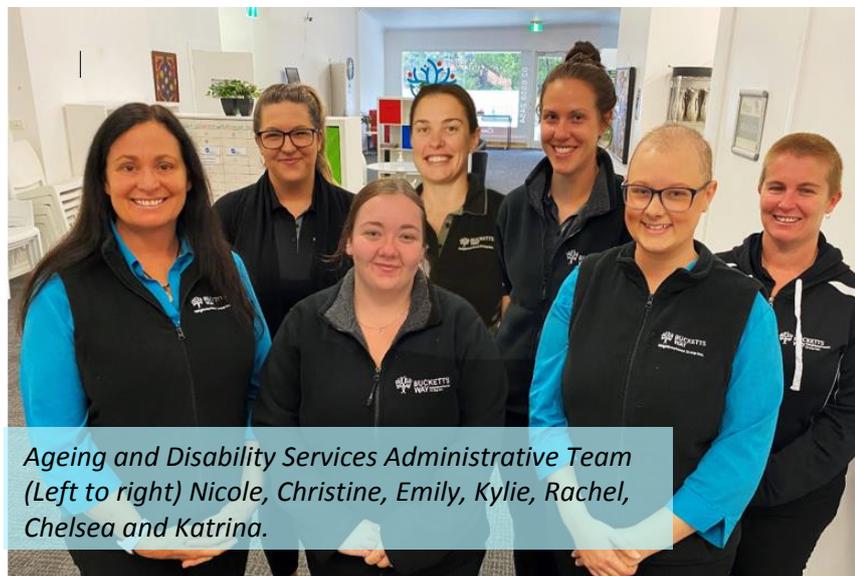
It has been quite a year for the Ageing and Disability Services Team. Aged Care Services and Disability Services - previously two separate programs – now fall under one umbrella. This merger has proven successful as we often see an overlap in the way that services can be accessed by clients. The merger also joined our two teams of support workers who now provide services under both programs, ensuring continuity of care, choice and control for our clients.

This merge was implemented by then-team Leader, Kylie Tull, who seamlessly brought both programs together.

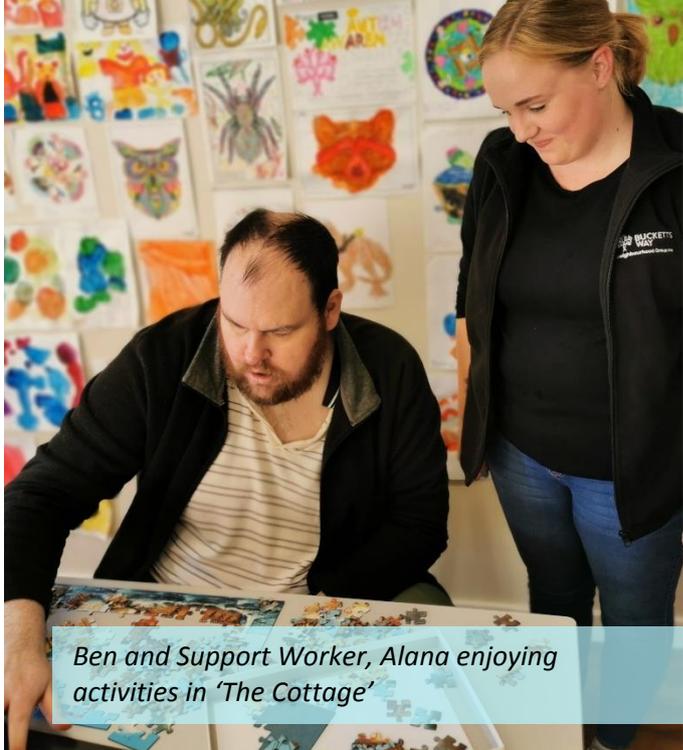
Following the immense loss of Kylie in May, I cannot express enough how much strength and resilience our administrative staff, support workers and volunteers showed during this time.

Many new faces have joined our ranks, including Support Workers, Volunteers and administrative staff; and we have welcomed the energy and experience they have brought to our team. This expansion of our workforce is due to an explosive increase in demand for our services, and is very much in line with the forecast growth of the organisation.

Four of our new faces came to us from Kimbara and Hillcrest lodge, which was Gloucester's original residential Aged Care Facility. The Lodges closed in 2020 to make way for a new privately run facility.



Ageing and Disability Services Administrative Team (Left to right) Nicole, Christine, Emily, Kylie, Rachel, Chelsea and Katrina.



*Ben and Support Worker, Alana enjoying activities in 'The Cottage'*



*Tracey doing some baking*



*Ellie with Support Worker Kate, sharing some cupcakes around*

**Disability Services** - COVID-19 management continues to impact the delivery of our programmes, but our dedicated staff and volunteers are ensuring those who need services and supports receive them.

We've been part of the vaccine rollout, with many staff and volunteers electing to receive the vaccine as soon as it became available.

BWNG has once again taken part in the mid-term auditing process from the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission. Full accreditation takes place every three years. This process ensures that we as an organisation are complying with the regulations of the disability services industry.

As part of our ongoing aim to continually engage and assist local people living with disability, we've been able to test some exciting new assistive technology. In particular, we have been road-testing a communication device which is controlled by the user's gaze. Known as 'Eye-Gaze Technology' this exciting development in tech tracks the user's eye movements like a 'mouse' to move a cursor on a computer screen, allowing them to control their environment, access their message bank, browse the internet, use social media, send emails and text messages, listen to music and more.

Clients continue to access the services and supports they need through BWNG as their NDIS Provider.

Outcomes to date have been :

- Assistance in maintaining a home effectively
- Learning how to cook a nutritious meal on a budget
- Accessing the community in a meaningful way
- Participating in community activities
- Participating in group or centre-based activities
- Maintaining health and wellbeing through using the gym, hydrotherapy pool and community exercise equipment

Due to COVID-19, we have seen restrictions placed which have affected clients being able to do all the activities that are meaningful to them, but we continue to balance the safety of clients with ensuring their choice and control is maintained. We have been innovative in our approaches and we have been able to provide and capture many rewarding moments, as our pictures show.



*Joy and Volunteer, Priscilla*

**Aged Care services** - The continued growth in BWNG's aged care services, particularly through Home Care Packages (HCPs) has seen great benefits to clients. HCPs help people stay at home for longer through the use of services, supports and equipment. We continue to provide entry-level supports under the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP), as well as brokerage arrangements through other out of area providers. Our team of support staff has grown, including the introduction of Rebecca Whitton, Registered Nurse, who provides nursing care for HCP clients in the comfort of their own home.



*Gail – one of our wonderful Support Workers*

We welcomed back our Eating with Friends program successfully, however, we only got two outings in before COVID-19 locked us down again. These outings are a great way to support local businesses, eat delicious food, meet up with friends and make new ones. We hope to have the eating with friends programme up and running yet again, as soon as COVID-19 allows!

Meals on Wheels is thriving with our new Food Van located at 88 King Street. The meal numbers have increased by 35% since last financial year. We thank Jamie Neilson for the work she undertook whilst undertaking her traineeships and have now engaged another Meals on Wheels Trainee, Emily Davies, who has been doing a fantastic job connecting with clients and coordinating meals to date. Jamie has now completed her traineeship and is continuing her employment with BWNG as a Support Worker.

We were very pleased when another Food Safety Audit was conducted with the Department of Primary Industries in June. The audit was due to the new format and location, and we maintained our 'A' rating. The inspector was very impressed with the set up and quality of our processes and meal production. The Department of Primary Industries is the governing body for the NSW Vulnerable Persons Act 2007 and the whole team did a great job in ensuring compliance.



*Meals on Wheels trainee Emily, with Ruth*

A key achievement during 2020 - BWNG was nominated for, and made it to the Semi Finals in the Prime Super Employer Excellence in Aged Care Award, which forms part of the 2020 NSW/ACT Regional Achievement and Community Awards. The Regional Achievement and Community Awards encourage, acknowledge and reward the valuable contributions that individuals, communities and businesses make throughout regional NSW and the ACT. Although we didn't make it through to the final round of judging, we're excited to have received this recognition of our service and staff.

## Aged Care Week 2020

Bluey and crew enjoyed working beside support workers to serve a special morning tea to the residents of Kimbarra and Hillcrest Lodges, the previous residential aged care facility in Gloucester, to mark Aged Care Week 2020.

The residents enjoyed barista coffee and home-made baked goodies as part of the occasion.



*Kerrie Cameron of Gloucester Hospital, with BWNG team members Erin & Taryn*



*Marketing & Communications Officer Kath, & HR assistant, Jess*

## Re-Launch of Website

After several years of in-activity BWNG's website was in need of a long-overdue re-vamp.

BWNG's Marketing & Communications Officer, Kathleen, worked with the team to design a responsive and informative site, over which BWNG now has full control.

The website features an acknowledgement of country before users may continue to the site.

## Customised Meals on Wheels Van

Equipped with microwaves, a cook top, oven, sinks and refrigeration, it has been purpose built for our Meals on Wheels Service. Recognising the importance of a dependable Meals on Wheels service, BWNG made the decision to purchase the new asset to protect the service for the vulnerable members of the community.



*BWNG Management Board inspects the new food van with CEO, Anna, & Social Ventures Team Leader, Erin. (L to R) Robert, Jodie, Vicki, Anna, Bev, Erin and Donna.*

## Volunteer Week

BWNG marked National Volunteer Week 2021 by presenting each of our volunteers with a certificate of appreciation, as well as a complimentary coffee card to use at 'I Need Coffee' café, Gloucester.

Our amazing volunteers give some of their time each week to deliver Meals on Wheels and help members of our community reach medical appointments, and stay active in the community.



*Volunteers Elly and Jennifer with their certificate of recognition*

## BWNG Donates Left-Over Colour Powder to Charity Colour Run

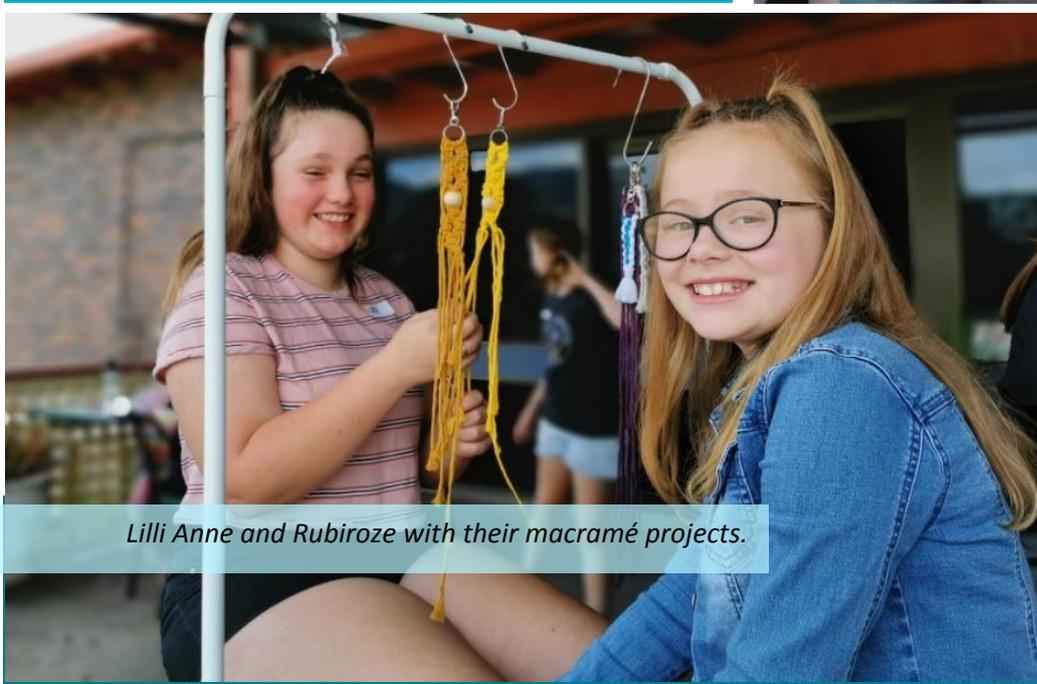
BWNG proudly donated colour run powder left over from our 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Colour Run, to Gloucester Showgirl, Taylah Hughes for the 'Colour Beyond Blue In Gloucester' event.

The charity colour run raised funds for Beyond Blue to increase the awareness of mental health issues, with an emphasis on Regional and Rural Areas.

Thanks Taylah for organising this great local event!



*Taylah with the donated colour powder.*



*Lilli Anne and Rubiroze with their macramé projects.*

## Kid's School Holiday Workshops

2020 School holiday workshops included a macramé workshop with local business, Macramé with JA, held at Gloucester Country Club.

Participating children learned how to make macramé key rings and plant hangers.



*(Left to right) Josh, Alana, Sharon, Kate, Ian, Melinda, Penny and Troy having fun on Melbourne Cup Day.*



## Excellence in Aged Care Award

Our Aged Care team was recognised as a semi-finalist in the Prime Super Excellence in Aged Care Award – part of the annual Regional Achievement and Community Awards.

*Energise Gloucester Chairman David Marston with BWNG CEO Anna Burley*



## Solar Panels Now Owned Outright by BWNG

After making the final repayment to Energise Gloucester in mid-2020, BWNG now owns the solar rooftop system installed on the roof of 88 King Street outright.

As part of a joint project, the system was initially installed and owned by Energise Gloucester, who sold the power generated by the solar panels to BWNG at a reduced rate and used these funds to repay the projects' community investors.

The solar system has reduce operating costs for BWNG, allowing more of our funds to be diverted back into our essential services.



*Wendy – one of our wonderful Support Workers*

## Training Services



*Paige, Brooke & Emma participating in First Aid training.*

After two tumultuous years due to the effects of COVID-19 it's hard to remember what a 'normal' year looks like for our Training Services. Having been put on hold with the onset of COVID-19 in early 2020, courses such as First Aid and CPR Training, and Food Safety came back tentatively toward the end of the year. Working within the COVID-safe guidelines, BWNG evolved the delivery of these courses to allow the training to proceed in the safest manner possible. In the case of First Aid and CPR, students completed the theory from home, before completing the practical side of the course in small classes.

We have continued to support the training and development of our team through this financial year. Existing team members Chelsea, Amber and Julie have undertaken traineeships with BWNG in the fields of ageing support, community services and business respectively. Several core staff who completed a Leadership skill set through the Smart and Skilled programme, have this year been able to use those units as a springboard to fee-free diploma-level study in the same field.

Additionally, we have welcomed Emily to the team in the role of Meals on Wheels Trainee as she works toward Certificate IV in Community Services.

Trainees Jessica, Kate and Jaime have successfully completed the traineeships they commenced in 2020. We are pleased to see all three continue their employment with BWNG.

While there has been a great many changes to the list of Registered Training Organisations who provide a physical presence in Gloucester, we were pleased to again partner with TAFE NSW to deliver an introduction to Hair and Beauty 'Taster' course, and are excited to see where a newly formed partnership with Port Macquarie Community College will take us.

In late 2020 we also proudly hosted MidCoast Connect in the delivery of a work readiness programme aimed at 15 – 19 year olds. In one-on-one sessions, Youth Coordinator Brooke Williams helped local teens in career planning, job applications, resume and cover letter writing and finding the right courses to achieve career goals.



*Brooke Williams (MidCoast Connect) with student, Victoria.*



*SBAT participant, Brooke (pictured), is on track to complete her traineeship this year. When participating in the SBAT programme, students spend one school day per week in paid employment, gaining hands-on experience in the workplace whilst completing the practical components of their course. The on the job and off the job training undertaken by the students contributes to their HSC marks as well as a certificate-level qualification, with the students completing the theory-side of their traineeship by the end of their HSC year.*



*After both receiving nominations for Trainee of the Year in the NSW State Training Awards, Jessica and Jamie (pictured) were recognised as regional finalists. The NSW State Training Awards are conducted annually by Training Services NSW to recognise outstanding achievements within the vocational education and training sector.*

BWNG continues to participate in the School-Based Apprenticeship and Traineeship (SBAT) Programme. Racquel of Great Lakes Community College completed Cert II in Hospitality in December 2020. Current SBAT Trainees Brooke (of St Clare’s High School, Taree) and Chloe (of Gloucester High School) who have undertaken Certificate III – Community Services, and Certificate III Individual Support – Disability, respectively, are on track to complete their traineeships toward the end of 2021.

BWNG has also invested in an online, centralised Learning Management System, which provides tailored training specific to our industry. In tandem with online COVID-19 training provided by the Department of Health, this investment has allowed us to ensure our Support Workers are providing services and support safely, and are up to date with the latest industry advice.

Moving forward, COVID-19 has permanently changed the training and education landscape, training organisations are learning to embrace online training. Many courses previously delivered in face-to-face in a classroom have now moved online, or will be delivered face-to-face only in larger centres, which has been a blow for our community. Local students must now travel for study, or receive instruction via video link.

It is an uncertain time in the Training and Education industry, and we recognise that we may need to completely reimagine our training services. We don’t know what the next 12 months will hold, but we do understand the geographical challenges that face members of the local community who wish to further their education, and we will continue to liaise between Registered Training Organisations and potential students to bridge that gap.

# Social Ventures Report

---

For our Social Ventures programme, FY20-21 was a year of evolution and uncertainty. Never has our resilience been so tested, or our ability to adapt and to think on our feet been so important.

As a way of connecting with the younger demographic of our community, and in providing employment and training opportunities to local school leavers seeking to enter the work force, we've always aimed to keep our Social Ventures programme fluid, adaptive, and responsive to community need. This year we provided this programme through Bluey the Mobile Coffee Cart, Bistro 2422, Gloucester Pool Kiosk & Ice Creamery, and Meals on Wheels.

Our social ventures generated over \$210,000 in revenue, employed 15 people at various times, and provided traineeship opportunities for three local young people.

**Bistro 2422** - When the COVID-19 crisis unfolded shortly after BWNG announced Bistro 2422 as a new venture, we knew we would face a challenge or two. By the end of 2020 we realised that the fight against COVID-19 was going to be a long and protracted battle. We recognised that we would need to focus our efforts on our core services, and made the decision not to continue the Bistro 2422 project into 2021.

During its time of operation Bistro 2422 made a valuable contribution to the local economy. At a time when local hospitality workers were struggling Bistro 2422 employed ten people, and provided COVID-safe delivery of nutritious and affordable food within the community, and although the Bistro didn't become an ongoing project, we thank Gloucester Country Club for the opportunity.

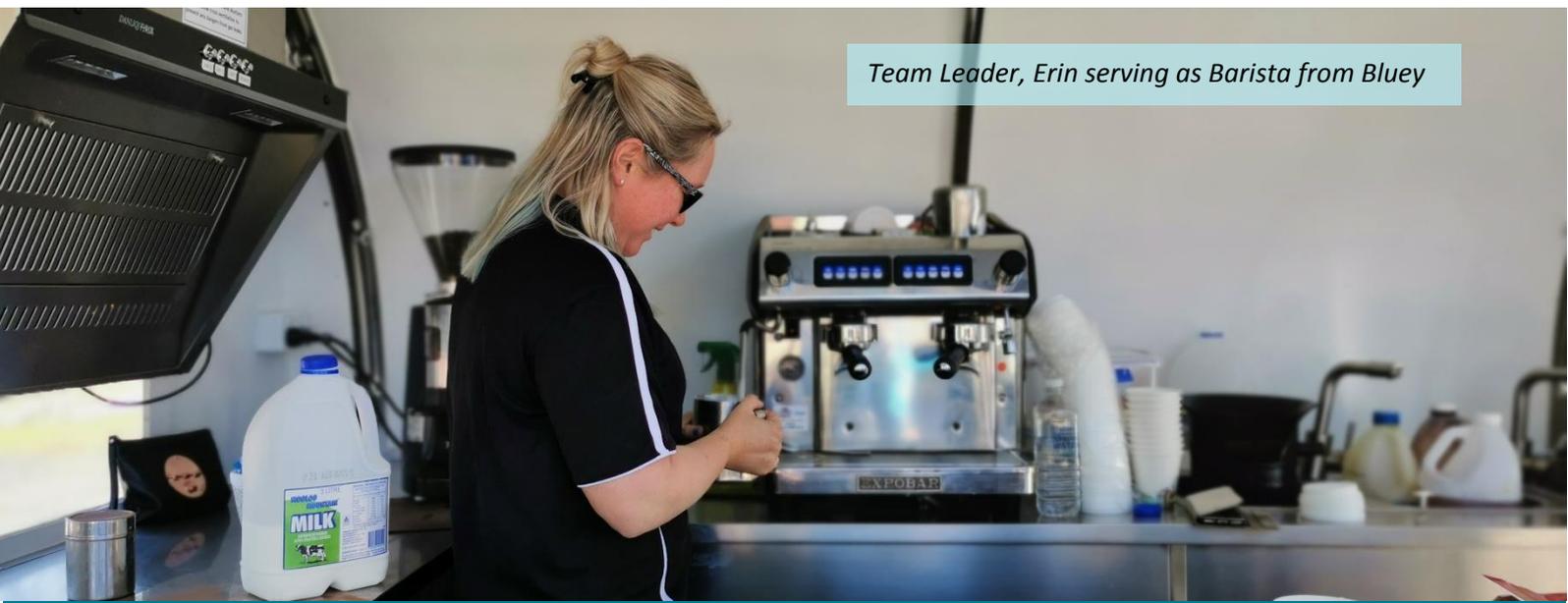
**Bluey the Mobile Coffee Cart** enjoyed a semi-permanent home in the carpark of Gloucester Country Club, and was a popular morning haunt for locals, golfers and travellers of the Bucketts Way.

With the Closure of Bistro 2422, Bluey relocated temporarily to Gloucester Caravan Park, selling beverages and light bites to visitors staying at the park.

Our Social Ventures team attend local markets with Bluey, and provide catering for within the community, generating extra revenue for our projects, plus boosting awareness of the organisation and our programmes.

Bluey has enjoyed support from local businesses and organisations such as Hillcrest, Kimbara Lodge and Gloucester Basketball Association.

**Gloucester Pool Kiosk & Ice Creamery** - From September to April the Social Ventures team operated the kiosk located within Gloucester Pool complex. This was a seven day per week food outlet, which proved to be a great soft entry point for younger members of the community to connect with BWNG's services and programmes.



*Team Leader, Erin serving as Barista from Bluey*

## Donations and Grants

This financial year BWNG received over \$30,000 in donations from local organisation, businesses and individuals, as well as physical donations of food and personal items.

Our donors include:

- MidCoast Council
- IGA rewards program
- The Lions Club of Gloucester Inc
- Winifred Try & The Good Shepherd Society
- Gloucester Tucker Patch
- Vicki Harris
- Gloucester Uniting Church
- CWA Gloucester – Day Branch
- Jennifer Burley
- Norma Wilson
- PT Trade Supplies
- Woolworths Gloucester

We would like to extend a special thankyou to our local Woolworths, who have donated over \$25,000 worth of food this financial year.

Through Winifred Try and the Sisters of the Good Shepherd BWNG received the donation of a Toyota Corolla, which has been very handy as an extra vehicle for use in our programmes.

We also proudly took delivery of a donated copy of The Lion’s Club of Gloucester Inc publication celebrating 40 years of their service to the community of Gloucester, which is a very interesting read and a great resource when researching local history.

Through a partnership with Meals on Wheels NSW, and Reckitt (the parent company of Glen20 and Pin O Clean) we received 35 donated hygiene packs to pass on to local Meals on Wheels recipients.

BWNG received several funding grants this year to aid the provision of our programmes, including \$2,000 toward a commercial dishwasher, through MidCoast Council’s Annual Donations Programme, \$1,000 toward the Yarn Connection project through MidCoast Council’s Community Donations – 2020 Funding Round, and \$1,500 from Meals on Wheels NSW Bushfire and Drought Appeals. We thank the abovementioned organisations for their support and generosity.



*BWNG President Donna and CEO Anna receive Lions Club 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary publication from Lions Club Representatives Ronald Tilse and Beverley Fagan.*

We also received many smaller donations of items such as surplus fruit and veg, blankets and toiletries. It is this community mindedness, from large donors and small alike. This generosity allowed us to give dignity and empowerment back to locals suffering short-term financial hardship, and cover gaps in funding. For this we extend our heartfelt thanks.



## Finance Report

During 2020 we spent time consolidating our team and financial processes, and have had a very smooth transition between financial years. Thankfully, we've had no movement in our team, apart from some additional administration and data entry support to assist us with finalising our Hospitality Social Ventures. Our Team Members have developed and improved the processes they manage, and have shown initiative when faced with the many changes passed through to us from Government. We have had to apply for new funding streams and seen the growth of our Home Care Package Program, together with changes and disruptions due to the Pandemic.

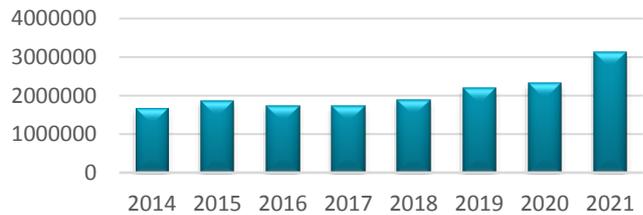
We all miss Kylie Tull. Her wealth of experience, the knowledge she had of her programs, the intelligence and speed with which she processed changes, and of course the humorous, frankness of her communication style. We feel very privileged to have worked with her.

The coming financial year will bring new funding streams, continued process improvements and plans for system and reporting enhancements. We all enjoy providing financial assistance to our board, management and program operators, and hope to continue to improve our service throughout 2022.

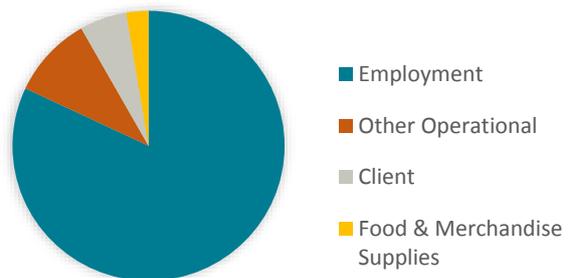
### 2021 INCOME %



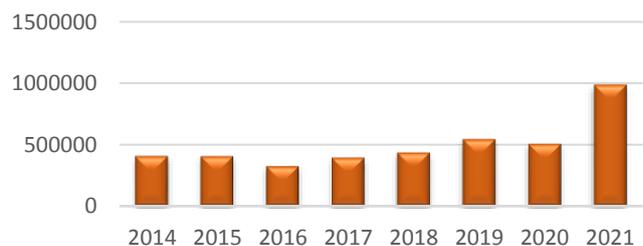
### REVENUE COMPARISON



### 2021 EXPENDITURE %



### NET ASSETS \$



# Safety Net & Community Connections Report



Community Connections /  
Safety Net Officer, Amber

## Community Connections Programme

This year BWNG excitedly announced our first Aboriginal Identified employment opportunity. The Connections Program has been working with the community to link services, provide support and facilitate referrals. (TEI). We have been busily working with the community on projects such as the newly established Gloucester Aboriginal Working Party, local NAIDOC events, weaving workshops and also started working fortnightly from Gloucester Pre School, along with dropping off daily food donations from Woolworths to make sure families have easy access to our services. However, Covid-19 has been a challenge, and has had some impact on what we have been able to achieve.

In the next 12 months we are hoping to continue to work with the community and service providers, to establish connections and referral services to benefit our town.

## Safety Net Programme

We provide a safety net to members of our community who may be doing it tough, through help with bills, donated food and referrals to partnering services.

Energy Accounts Payment Assistance (EAPA) Scheme (NSW Government scheme) provides energy vouchers to eligible residential energy customers experiencing a short term financial crisis or emergency, such as unexpected medical bills, or reduced income due to COVID-19, that leaves you unable to pay your current residential energy bill.

Telstra Bill Assistance program (Telstra funded) helping Telstra customers who are experiencing a financial crisis and are unable to pay their Telstra bill.

Through our partnership with The Salvation Army we have also been able to provide the community with food, fuel and pharmacy assistance to those experiencing financial difficulties.

BWNG's 'food pantry' is available to everyone in the community from 9am - 4pm Monday to Friday, and is based at our office, 88 King Street Gloucester NSW 2422. We are grateful to the local businesses, organisations and members of the community that donate to our pantry. A special thank you to our local Woolworths, who have donated a significant amount of food this financial year.

This year BWNG's Safety Net Hub has assisted the community with over \$100,000 in financial aid, through almost 300 appointments and 165 referrals to other services.

## Legal Aid

In 2020 – 2021, 31 people were assisted at the clinic. However, most of those clients (29) were assisted between February and June 2021 when we commenced with the new lawyers at the clinic.

People accessing the clinic were most commonly assisted with family law or civil law problems.



Jodie collecting the day's donation  
from Woolworths, Gloucester

## Financial Counselling Report

---



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

As with previous reporting periods, the majority of clients who accessed this service derive their income via Centrelink. (78%)

A theme that has become more prevalent during this timeframe has been the number of clients (eleven) who have presented with issues associated with financial hardship, impacting upon their mental health. This appears to be an entrenched issue whereby financial hardship exacerbates existing mental health conditions.

Again affordable electricity is an issue impacting the Gloucester region with seven new clients raising issues relating to electricity affordability.

In line with the consequences of financial hardship, an increased number of new clients (1) have sought assistance via this service in accessing their superannuation.

In relation to pre-emptive measures, three new clients have engaged with this service to enhance their budgeting skills to more effectively manage their finances.

One new client was assisted with bankruptcy.

Steven McWilliams  
Financial Counsellor

## BWNG's Pandemic Response



*Pandemic Officer & Acting Ageing & Disability Services Team Leader, Rachel Zimmerman.*

As a provider of essential services to some of the community's most vulnerable, BWNG continues to follow the most up-to-date advice from the Department of Health in keeping our team, our clients and our community safe.

In early 2020, in response to the unfolding COVID-19 crisis, we created the role of Pandemic Officer within the BWNG team to ensure we were staying abreast of the complex and rapidly-changing situation, as well as following reliable advice. Rachel Zimmerman, already experienced Aged Care Worker and key team member was given this responsibility. Rachel continues to monitor our processes, including the use of personal protective equipment, to ensure our team is acting in accordance with the latest advice, and we thank her for her diligence.

A system of temperature checks has been implemented for anyone entering the building. Government mandates around QR code check-in and the wearing of masks are also being followed.

Additionally, we encourage clients to use electronic means to communicate with us, or pay bills to minimise the comings and goings to the office.

All BWNG team members have completed Department of Health online infection control training

We also telephone clients to ask a list of questions about their health, recent contacts and if the client was experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms, before team members attend their home to provide services.

We continue to provide Group activities for NDIS participants, and out of town travel for medical appointments when deemed safe, but due to the ebb and flow of the COVID-19 infection rate, we have processes in place to suspend these services with short notice, should the need arise.

We continue to release regular newsletters for clients and staff, with the aim of informing and educating locals, as well as motivating everyone within our sphere of influence to keep themselves and those around them, COVID-safe.

With the cooperation and support of clients, carers, volunteers and employees we have been able to ensure continuity of service while keeping COVID-19 out of our community. This is no mean feat, and we thank everyone involved for their hard work and dedication.

## The Yarn Connection Project

With the aim to maintain a sense of connection and community through the challenges of 2020 and COVID-19, BWNG launched the 'Yarn Connection Granny Square Christmas Tree Project', encouraging people to create 10cm knitted or crocheted squares to be joined together to form Christmas Trees at the end of the year.

Over 500 crocheted and knitted squares were created and donated, which is over 20 m<sup>2</sup> of yarn work. Six Christmas Trees were created from the donated squares, and 31 local individuals and organisations participated in the project.

Jenny Burley kindly sewed all squares together to form six Christmas trees. Greg George (of Wingham) and John Burley volunteered their time to build the timber and wire frames of the trees.

The venture was the brain-child of BWNG President Donna Kemp and CEO Anna Burley. They saw images from a similar community project from Tuscany, Italy, and thought it could work well in a tight knit (pardon the pun) community like Gloucester. The idea started to take shape through shared concerns of the impact of COVID-19 and social distancing on the area's already geographically isolated residents.

BWNG was grateful to receive a \$1,000 grant from MidCoast Council's Small Donations Fund toward this project, which allowed us to purchase the materials for the frames on which the trees are displayed. We extend our thanks to the following

UNE Social Work Placement student, Leanne George, handled the initial coordination of the project and put a great deal of time and effort into applying for grants and working out the finer details. Leanne was particularly interested in the stories of the people creating the pieces, and dreams of incorporating the 'yarns' behind the trees into the project for next year.

After images of the project were shared from BWNG's social media by ABC MidCoast, the project received attention from all across Australia, with thousands of messages of support and 'shares'. Not a bad effort for our little community.

For hosting and displaying the Christmas trees over the holiday period we extend our thanks to; Gloucester Medico, Gloucester Branch of Regional Australia Bank, Mcrae's Fashion Centre, Gloucester Laundromat, and MidCoast Council's Gloucester Office.

Greg building frames for  
Granny Square Christmas Trees



Jennifer Burley – kindly sewed  
all squares together





*Wilma Murray, Gloucester Laundromat*



*Kath Woolley (BWNG) and Carly Landers (MidCoast Council)*



*Donna Kemp and Jennifer Wilson  
Regional Australia Bank, Gloucester*



*Jill Laurie, Macrae's Fashion Centre*

*The  
Yarn Connection  
Christmas Tree Project*

*“ We would like to thank the local individuals and organisations who got involved with this project. The commentary we are getting is that this project helped some of the more COVID-19 vulnerable members of our community through a really tough time, and gave them something positive to focus on and work toward. Looking forward, we would like to build on this project again next year, and grow our six trees into a forest of Christmas trees. ”*

*- Anna Burley, BWNG CEO*



*A few community members who participated in the project:  
L to R: Deborah Brookes, Donna Kemp, Vicki Harris, Lorraine Forbes.*



*Gloucester Medico - L to R: Jess Anniwell (BWNG), Dr Michele Hogg, Maddison McGovern, Harlee Davies, Lorraine O'Connor, Dr Karthikk Sajir, Dr Jennifer Shen, Sally Cox, Keely Yates (BWNG)*



**BUCKETTS  
WAY** Neighbourhood  
Group Inc.

[bwng@bwng.org.au](mailto:bwng@bwng.org.au) | [www.bwng.org.au](http://www.bwng.org.au)  
PO Box 101 | 88 King St | Gloucester NSW 2422  
Ph: 02 6558 2454

