



# WOMEN'S COMMUNITY SHELTERS

2017 DONOR'S REPORT

# SUPPORTING HOMELESS WOMEN

# CORPORATE INFORMATION

## WOMEN'S COMMUNITY SHELTERS LIMITED

Public Benevolent Institution with DGR1  
(Deductible Gift Recipient) Status

## BOARD

Gina Anderson (Chair)	Christine Parker
Peter Hunt AM	Paul Say
Kris Neill	Julie White

## WCS HUB STAFF (2.9 FTE)

**CEO** – Annabelle Daniel (f/t)  
**Shelter Network Manager** – Simone Parsons (p/t)  
**Shelter Network Officer** – Lieske Dowd (p/t)  
**Fundraising & Development Manager** – Nathalie Peacock (p/t)

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## SOLICITORS

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It is important to acknowledge the game-changing enterprise that is Women's Community Shelters for the extraordinary funding, support, advocacy and gravitas they provide The Sanctuary every single day.

Any success that The Sanctuary has experienced as a shelter, every life that has been touched and changed, is only because we are a Women's Community Shelter.

YVONNE KEANE

Chair, The Sanctuary Board

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# MISSION & VISION

## WHAT IS WOMEN'S COMMUNITY SHELTERS?

Women's Community Shelters (WCS) is an Australian charity set up on a social franchise model to provide emergency accommodation for homeless women in NSW, in partnership with local communities. WCS operates under an innovative groundbreaking funding model involving collaboration between business people, philanthropic foundations, local communities and the Commonwealth Government. We welcome the NSW Government's recent commitment to supporting our model.

### PURPOSE

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WCS offers vulnerable women at risk of homelessness or domestic violence shelter, active case management, support, dignity, self-esteem and a chance to start anew, through the establishment, operation and/or supervision and support of Women's Community Shelters and low cost accommodation.

### PLAN

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Our vision is to expand our network to at least 10 shelters across NSW by 2019, all linked together through technology.

### WE BELIEVE

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Communities engaged around local initiatives are key to addressing women's homelessness and domestic and family violence.

Best practice specialist women's shelters are a critical service for women and children.

### FUNDING

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#### WCS hub

\$550,000 per annum, underwritten by philanthropy

#### Each shelter in our network

\$400,000 per annum to run, tri-partite funding model through philanthropy/business, local community and government

The Board and Chief Executive Officer of Women’s Community Shelters (WCS) would like to thank every one of the following donors for their generosity and on-going support. Every gift has contributed enormously in making a difference to the lives of the women and children across our network of shelters.

PHILANTHROPIC SUPPORTERS

- × The Gray Family Foundation
- × The Neilson Foundation
- × Hunt Family Foundation
- × Perpetual (Adolph Basser Trust; Baxter Charitable Trust; Ronald Geoffrey Arnott Trust; Mary Alice Foundation and Myee Codrington Foundation For Homeless Women)
- × Lenity Australia
- × Sisters of Mercy – St Michael’s Grant Program
- × Hummingsong Community Choirs

CORPORATE SUPPORTERS

- × Macquarie – Macquarie Group Foundation and the Macquarie MSIS Higher Purpose Team
- × Westpac



GOVERNMENT SUPPORTERS

- × NSW State Government
- × Australian Government

PRO BONO/IN KIND

- × The Big Issue
- × QIC
- × John Kell – Hickson’s
- × Squared Impact
- × Equilibrium Design

OTHER GENEROUS DONATIONS

- × Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation
- × Hutchinson Endowment Fund
- × Plenary Group
- × Wilson Endowment Fund
- × Snow Foundation
- × Roberts Family Foundation
- × Several anonymous benefactors
- × The Mostyn Foundation
- × Ecodirect

And many other individual donors, some of whom have made an ongoing commitment to support WCS each month.

EXISTING SHELTER NETWORK AND NEW SHELTERS IN DEVELOPMENT

We would like to thank the Boards, staff, volunteers, donors and many wonderful individual and corporate supporters who have made the establishment of our current network and opening of our new shelters possible.

## GINA ANDERSON CHAIR

It has been another very good year for WCS.

The operation of our four shelters in partnership with local communities has again proved the immense community care, engagement and contribution to meeting the plight of vulnerable women in their own communities. It is always so inspiring!

As we expand WCS, our key differences around local community engagement, innovation, measurement and governance, continue to build local community capacity at a rate and to a level that I underestimated when we began our journey. I believe this investment by WCS in local community capacity will prove to be a very important contribution to our society over the long term.

From my perspective the three key developments over the past twelve months have been:

1. Securing our first significant contract with NSW Government meaning that in partnership with local communities we will double our network to eight shelters in the next two years. This first NSW Government contract was a result of great teamwork and an engaged Board.
2. A focus on fundraising was another big development this year. With each new shelter, WCS takes on greater long-term financial commitment and consequent liability. Building our financial reserves is critical to underpinning the long-term viability and sustainability of our shelters.
3. The implementation of Efforts to Outcomes IT system across our shelter network has been a major achievement. We are now part of building a community of practice with other key organisations. Measuring outcomes, efficiencies and best practice are critical to ensuring better outcomes for vulnerable women.

On behalf of the Board and the Shelter network I would like to congratulate Annabelle Daniel and her team as they continue to build the organisation with their enthusiasm, dedication, skills and commitment.

To Greg Hutchinson and Richard Spencer, who stepped down from the Board of WCS, thank you for your knowledge, expertise and support. We are very grateful.

Lastly, I personally want to thank each and every Member of the WCS Board – Peter Hunt, Julie White, Kris Neill, Christine Parker, and Paul Say – for their ongoing commitment, engagement, advice and invaluable contribution.

## ANNABELLE DANIEL CEO

In 2016, WCS' impact in the crisis accommodation sector doubled, with the incredible support of community, philanthropy and government. Our two new shelters, the Great Lakes Women's Shelter and The Sanctuary – Hills Women's Shelter, opened their doors and each has now completed a full year of operations, supporting 43 women and 74 children (Sanctuary) and 39 women and 53 children (GLWS) with accommodation and case-management. With four shelters operating, we've become an established, essential and innovative provider in the sector.

Our partnership with the NSW State Government was secured in late 2016. This partnership will partially fund our existing shelter network, and expand our network by another 3–4 shelters over the next two years. We are now embarked on exciting shelter development activities in a number of communities. Starting in late 2016, we held community forums in South East Sydney, Penrith and Orange (regional NSW), explored opportunities for the Blacktown LGA in North-Western Sydney and began discussions with a diverse range of interested groups and individuals around the State.

In reflecting on the year that has passed, several key themes stand out for me. Firstly, that our shelter network is maturing and along with it, the skill in our local communities. Our Shelter Boards and their sub-committees continue to attract and retain extraordinary and diverse talent at the local level. Over the next year, we want to say thank you to these committed volunteers through the provision of extra training and networking opportunities – embedding additional skills they can invest in other projects within their communities.

A further theme has been a greater enlivening of the philanthropic sector towards issues of women's homelessness and domestic and family violence. We welcome the additional support we've received from our corporate partners, private donors and family foundations. We're aware of the importance of good governance and that dollars generously given need to have impact. As we grow, we're conscious of remaining lean, agile and effective, drawing in community assets at a ratio of 3:1 for every dollar in cash given to WCS.

With four shelters, growing to six and then eight in the next two years, I'm also conscious that we have a platform to roll out new and innovative programs at the local community level, including those around education of school students, better support for homeless women and children with a disability, and evidence-based programs to support kids who

have experienced the trauma of domestic and family violence. We're also seeking to grow our Outreach program for women and children who've left our shelters and are now in stable housing. Maintaining the supportive connections they've built with our shelter staff helps keep them on the path to a better and brighter future.

Thank you to our generous donors and supporters. We couldn't do it without you. To our fantastic, engaged WCS Board, led by extraordinary Chair Gina Anderson – thank you. You continue to give freely of your time, your skills and your networks to further our endeavours. And to WCS and shelter staff, our local boards and volunteers, whose focus is relentlessly on the women, children and communities we support – my eternal thanks. We are changing lives, together.

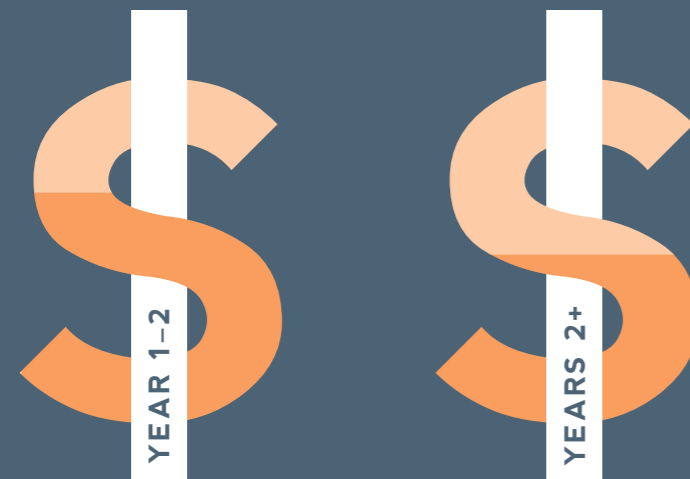
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Thank you to our generous donors and supporters. We couldn't do it without you.

ANNABELLE DANIEL CEO

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WCS underwrites up to 2/3 of each shelter's funding for the first two years, and up to 50% per annum in following years.



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There is a great deal of progress being made to combat violence against women in my electorate of Berowra. Women's Community Shelters operates the Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Women's Shelter and The Sanctuary – Hills Women's Shelter. These shelters are run locally and help provide help and support to women in my electorate who need it most. Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Women's Shelter, led by president Sallianne McClelland and vice-president Dick Babb, provide crisis accommodation to homeless women in need of support services.

The Sanctuary, chaired by Yvonne Keane, is a crisis shelter in Castle Hill for women and their children who are fleeing domestic violence. Both of these shelters have been filled to capacity since opening, and I am proud to support both of them.

These shelters come under the umbrella of Women's Community Shelters, led by their extraordinary CEO, Annabelle Daniel. I met with Annabelle and board member Kris Neill to hear about their plans to further expand their shelters into other suburban areas and provide a different experience for women and children from that which many of us think a shelter would be.

## MP JULIAN LEESER

Taken from MP Julian Leeser's International Women's Day speech in the House of Representatives.

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One of the things that affects women mostly is the violence that we face in our own homes. Just because of who we are and the anatomy we were born with, we are far more prone to becoming victims of abuse and domestic violence.

It gives me great pleasure to announce we are going to be working with Women's Community Shelters and we are going to build our own women's shelter.

## EMMA HUSAR

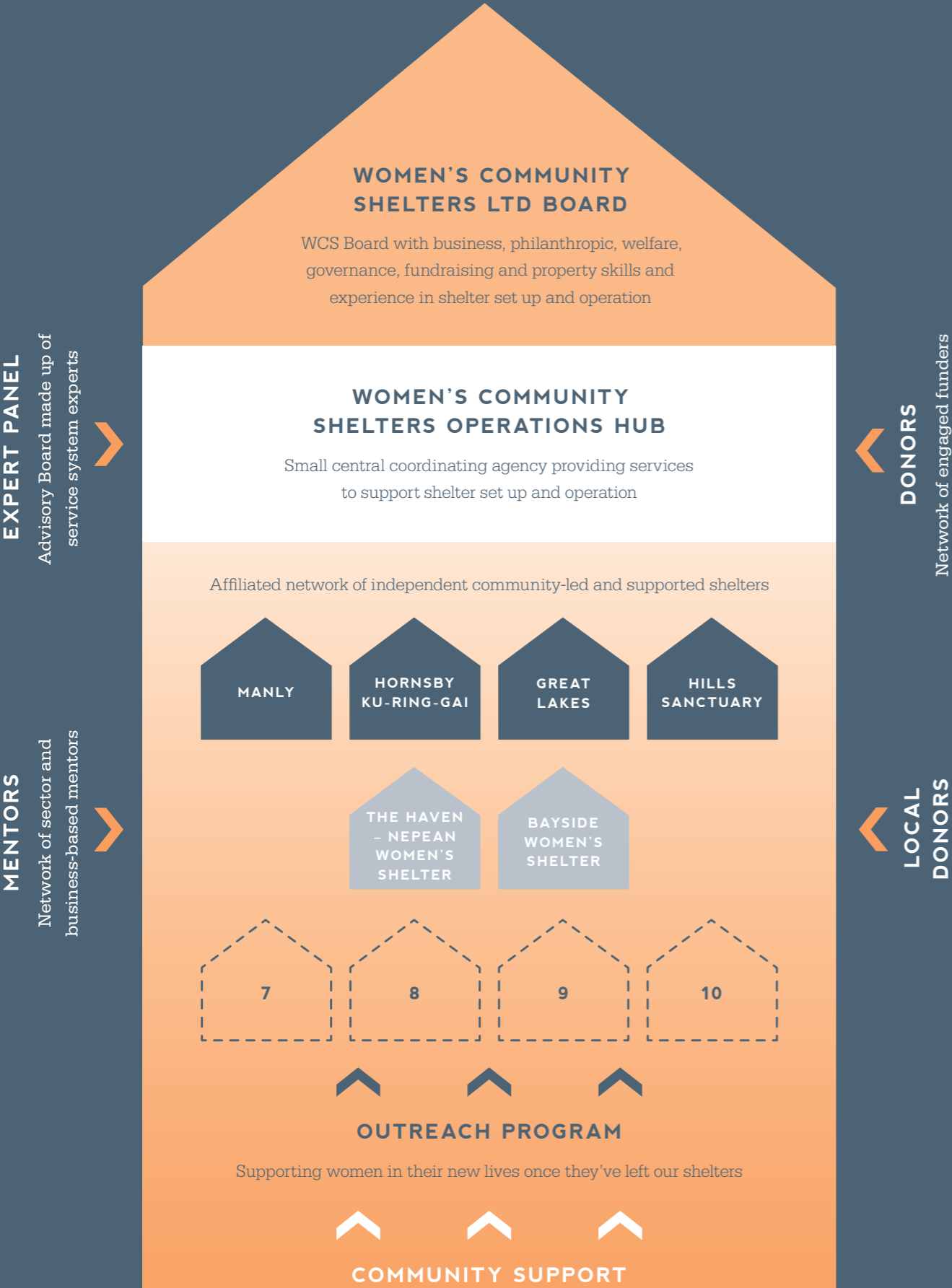
Taken from a speech by Federal Member for Lindsay, Emma Husar, who announced a community campaign to open an additional women's shelter in Penrith in partnership with not-for-profit organisation Women's Community Shelters (WCS).

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Clockwise from top left: (L-R) Terri Butler MP, Emma Husar MP, Annabelle Daniel CEO WCS, Sharon Levy Chair – The Haven; Nepean Steering Committee; Table at the HKWS Gala 2016; The Apron Project and display – HKWS

INNOVATION:  
THE SOCIAL FRANCHISE MODEL  
Community participation, industry best practice,  
effective use of technology



CASE STUDY  
HOW DO SHELTER MANAGERS CHOOSE WHICH CLIENT TO TAKE?

Research suggests that women who seek the safety of a crisis bed through a referral or government hotline represent the tip of the 'tip of the iceberg' of those needing help.

Many women attempt to self-manage through periods of homelessness if they are unaware of, or unable to find a crisis bed – sleeping in cars (sometimes with children), couch-surfing with friends, sleeping rough, travelling around on public transport, or accepting exploitative relationships for protection.

For every bed that we have available in our shelter network, we receive, on average, 5 requests for it. That means our dedicated shelter managers have to make difficult choices, every day, around who we accommodate when so many women need help.

Imagine being the Manager in one of our shelters. You can only take 6 women at a time and there's a vacancy in one room. Two desperate phone calls come in.

The first call is from Cara, she's 21, pregnant and has been really unwell. She lives at home with her step-father and mother, but he's told her if she can't work to pay the board then she must leave. He's been verbally abusive to her, she's left the house and she's at the local service station where she's calling from a payphone. She has no car, has only a small bag with her and doesn't have anywhere to go where she feels safe that night.

On the other line is Katherine. Her 30-year marriage broke down and she's living in a rented granny flat. She can't find enough work to pay the bills and is a couple of weeks behind on her rent. Her ex keeps ringing and harassing her because he wants her to drop the claims in their property settlement. She's just seen his car drive past her house and she feels really unsafe. She's called the police and they've told her that she needs to get out but she doesn't have anywhere to go.

Who would you choose?

Sadly, this is a scenario that is going on in shelters across NSW and Australia every single night. Every day, our shelter managers must make the tough decision and choose which woman to help.

And so, how do we choose?

It is a professional, skilled task, which is why we have experienced Shelter Managers and Case Workers in our services. We weigh up a number of factors such as risk of violence and vulnerability for the woman and her children (if she has them), the urgency of the need, compatibility with a shared living environment, the support needs of other families staying in a shelter, and the availability and continuation of other support services the woman and children may be engaged with, amongst a number of other factors. In instances where we cannot accommodate a woman due to lack of space, we endeavour to find places in other services, or refer to government hotlines which can make placements in 'temporary accommodation' – usually a hotel, for a few days.

Donna Cavanagh, Manager at The Sanctuary – Hills Women's Shelter, commented:

"The impact of domestic violence can be lifelong. It doesn't leave you. The only part of my job that I find challenging is turning these women away, and trying to find other services who can help, when all our beds are full.

We need to be able to help at this critical point ... when women are asking for help. Providing the right support at the critical time can be the beginning of a new future free from abuse and violence."

WCS believes the best way to respond to the demand for beds is to establish and open more shelters in partnership with communities. It is our aim to expand our current network of 4 shelters to 10 by 2019.



CASE STUDY

THE SANCTUARY – HILLS  
– 1 YEAR ON

In its first year of operations, The Sanctuary – Hills Women’s Shelter has provided crisis accommodation, for up to 3 months, for 6 women and their children at any one point in time. Women and their children are provided with around the clock care, support and assistance to then start a new life.

Thanks to the support of QIC Castle Towers, who provided a purpose-refurbished home, rent-free, The Sanctuary has set a new benchmark for women’s shelters in the quality and environment of the home itself – an important factor in allowing women and their children to feel safe, comfortable and secure as they rebuild their lives.

Under the care of the Shelter Manager and support workers, including a specialised child support worker, staff have provided support, care and healing hands to help women and children get back on their feet and re-enter the world to enjoy safe and wonderful futures.

The Sanctuary has proven, day in and day out, to be a much-needed service in Sydney’s North-West. Over the past 12 months The Sanctuary has been a safe-haven for 43 women and 74 children and has added 7,117 “bed nights” into the sector. (This means that on 7,117 occasions a mother and/or her children slept safely in a bed at The Sanctuary.)

At The Sanctuary, 100 percent of the 43 women and 74 children who have been accommodated have transitioned safely on to new independent lives, and not one has returned to a violent home.

This is a previously unheard-of statistic in the shelter sector, and most importantly it means lives have been forever changed for the better.

SANCTUARY INDIVIDUAL CASE STUDY

Mala\* entered The Sanctuary with her two young children in October 2016. She and the children had been staying out in a park until late at night for a number of months as they were too scared to go home. They waited away from home until they were confident Mala’s husband, the children’s father, had gone to sleep, so they could avoid physical and verbal abuse.

After a brief stay at The Sanctuary – Hills Women’s Shelter, it became apparent to shelter staff that the children had been victims of sexual assault, evidenced through particular behaviours. Mala had been concerned also that this had occurred at home. The Sanctuary staff made appropriate reports and referrals, sought counselling for the kids, and



once they moved with Mala into transitional accommodation, continued to offer outreach support and kept them connected to counselling.

The children felt safe and protected both at The Sanctuary and through the ongoing support, and shortly afterward felt confident enough to disclose the abuse to Police. This resulted in the perpetrator being charged by Police and taken into custody.

Mala told shelter staff that they already saved her life when they provided the safe space of The Sanctuary for her to stay in, and while what has happened to the kids was terrible, further pathways of support and justice were made available. If that space had not been there, the children would still be subject to witnessing violence and suffering abuse themselves.

The Sanctuary helped give the family a solid foundation for a brand-new life.

CASE STUDY

GREAT LAKES – 1 YEAR ON

Opening in January 2016, the Great Lakes Women’s Shelter (GLWS) was the first Regional Shelter to be established under the WCS business model and is the blueprint for future regional development.

In 2014, BOCSAR (Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research) statistics showed that the Great Lakes area was the fourth highest ranking ‘hot spot’ for domestic and family violence in NSW, with a DV rate of 569 assaults per 100,000 of population.

In January 2016, the Great Lakes Women’s Shelter opened. Comprising two properties and offering support to up to 15 women and children at a time, the shelter provides accommodation and active case management to support residents and their families get their lives back on track.

Since opening, the shelter has experienced a level of demand way beyond its capacity.

In January 2017, the waiting list included 13 women, clearly demonstrating the local need for the service. This means that shelter staff must triage each potential resident according to “need”, and safety and suitability criteria.

Left side, top to bottom: Sanctuary Board and staff; A lovely gift from a former resident; HKWS gala 2016; The Sanctuary’s First Report Card

Right side, top to bottom: Australia Day Awards for The Sanctuary; Yvonne Keane, Chair and Martin Ollis, Board Member, The Sanctuary; Great Lakes Gala 2016; Generous Community Donations



In the words of the Manager: “Prioritising these women in crisis is a devastatingly hard job. It’s so sad that we can only offer refuge for one with each bed available, but thank goodness we can at least do that”.

## CASE STUDY

### HORNSBY KU-RING-GAI WOMEN’S SHELTER (HKWS), UPPER NORTH SHORE

Our Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Women’s Shelter has been open for residents for two years and has gone from strength to strength, engaging its local community in fantastic levels of fundraising and in-kind support, and building a powerful Board with amazing skills.

In the past year, the Board has continued to raise awareness of the shelter through a bi-monthly campaign at St Ives Shopping Village, community events such as White Ribbon Day, Council driven events and most recently at the well-known Festival on the Green in St Ives that had an attendance of 5000 people.

The “buy-in” from local community groups, schools, Councils plus State and Federal MP’s, has ensured that events large and small fill the calendar and importantly help the bottom line.

Shelter staff are extremely proud of their school program. Started by retired board member Dorothy Babb, the program is now run by volunteer Heidi Tamlyn. The shelter has a connection with every high school in the two council areas and speaking commitments combined with goods/food drives are a constant.

Shelter staff work tirelessly to support the clients they have in the house. As well as working with clients in-house at the shelter, staff spend time assisting women who have additional needs that the shelter may not be able to meet or service. Staff reach out to associated services and hospitals to ensure a woman requesting assistance finds the help she needs.

### HKWS INDIVIDUAL CASE STUDY

Jessica\* was referred to HKWS from Link2Home, the NSW State Government hotline. She had been living with her adult children who moved out and she couldn’t afford the rent on her own. Jessica had lived in the same property for 10 years after fleeing domestic violence from her husband with her then teenage children. Prior to arriving at the shelter she’d been living with a friend for 2 weeks.

Jessica was severely underweight when she arrived due to stress and anxiety of her current situation and pending homelessness. She was frightened, anxious and had severe low self-esteem (her own words).

Following the three and a half months that Jessica was at HKWS and undertaking a comprehensive case management plan, her general health had improved and she’d secured a part time cleaning job.

Jessica had never lived independently before and this was highly anxiety provoking for her. She moved out into independent living in September 2017 and developed her sense of self and self-confidence.

Jessica commented many times about how her self-confidence had developed because staff guided her and gave her the space to sort her issues knowing that they would step in if necessary to assist her where necessary.

## CASE STUDY

### MANLY WOMEN’S SHELTER

Manly Women’s Shelter opened its doors in 2010. Since then the shelter has assisted over 300 women from a range of backgrounds and circumstances in providing a safe place to stay, to access a range of services for improved outcomes and facilitated moving on to find a better place to live.

The Shelter is a local community initiative that arose in response to the unmet need of the many homeless women living in the community. These women approached a range of local services to find that very little accommodation and support services were available to single women across the Northern Beaches of Sydney. These women’s homelessness arose as a result of a variety of experiences such as family and domestic violence, sexual assault, mental health and prolonged trauma, drug and alcohol abuse as well as financial hardship. Services are provided by a dedicated and highly skilled team of case managers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Manly Women’s Shelter provides three models of service delivery:

- ✕ short term crisis accommodation with case management support
- ✕ medium term transitional housing with case management support and
- ✕ outreach support, referral and advocacy services.

The Shelter can accommodate up to 10 women at any one time for a period of up to 12 weeks. Occasionally,

residents may require a lengthier stay and are offered medium term accommodation in the Transitional House which can accommodate up to three women for a period of up to twelve months.

The Shelter team also provide Outreach services to ex-residents or those living in the community who may be waiting for accommodation or are unable to leave their current home.

### MANLY INDIVIDUAL CASE STUDY

Suzy\* witnessed the deaths of both her parents as a teenager. The remaining family unit slid into breakdown and soon Suzy found herself estranged from her siblings and relatives.

Suzy eventually married and had a son. Sadly, by the time he was in his teens Suzy’s marriage had broken down and she again experienced disassociation with her own son. It had been twenty years since she had contact with any member of her family. During the following years Suzy slipped in and out of homelessness, living on the edge of society due both to her trauma and fallen socio-economic status.

In 2016 Suzy arrived at the shelter after several months admittance to a psychiatric unit where she was diagnosed with mental illness and provided a treatment plan. While in hospital Suzy was reunited after many years with her estranged sister. Suzy also received a letter from her now adult son seeking a reconciliation.

**Left to right:** HKWS Strategy Day 2017; Our amazing Shelter Network Staff; HKWS Gala 2016; Manly Shelter event with Rosie Batty and committee

Suzy's entry to the shelter saw a very withdrawn person who was in the early stages of treatment and still suffering from trauma induced delusions. The Shelter provided Suzy with a safe, reassuring and comfortable place to begin her recovery.

The Shelter Team worked closely with Suzy over the coming months providing intensive case management and support. Gradually, gaining Suzy's trust, Suzy began to engage more confidently with the Shelter Team. The Team were able to advocate with local social services including housing and further medical assistance. A very different person began to emerge from the shell of her former identity, bringing with her confidence, self-worth, and an outlook to the future for herself.

Suzy now lives independently in the community participating in local community programs and social activities. Her enjoyment of life extends to include family and friends on a regular basis. Through the shelter's Outreach Program they were able to stay in contact with Suzy, providing her with ongoing support and advocacy when required.

*\*Names have been changed to protect identities*

# CASE STUDY

## THE BAYSIDE WOMEN'S SHELTER PROJECT

The Bayside Women's Shelter project, under the auspices of WCS, was the signature awardee of the Bayside Council Awards Presentation for the Stronger Communities Grants event, with MPs for Rockdale and Mascot lauding the project as a fantastic community initiative. They strongly welcomed the new crisis accommodation service for women who are homeless or leaving domestic violence and spoke in an informed way about the community-based model. A wonderful launch towards opening the shelter!



# CASE STUDY

## THE HAVEN – NEPEAN WOMEN'S SHELTER

WCS is working with a local Steering Committee to establish a new shelter in the Greater Penrith area to address a pressing local need for more crisis accommodation for women. In the space of a month in early 2017, more than 56 women and 95 children sought crisis accommodation from local services and were unable to be assisted. There is a glaring gap for more safe beds in this growing area.

The Steering Committee recently achieved their fundraising target of \$25,000 and WCS has given the project the 'green light' to go ahead. Our next steps will be to establish the legal structure of the organisation, commit to a Funding and Support Agreement, locate the shelter property and fit it out appropriately, and find the right staff to provide case-management and care. The Haven – Nepean Women's Shelter is looking to open before Christmas 2017. We recognise and thank Local MPs, Councillors and dedicated community members for their support in this exciting new shelter project.

**Clockwise from top:** Bayside Council Grant Awards 2017; Fundraising at Glebe Markets for WCS; Macquarie Group Fundraiser for WCS, October 2016; With housing providers in Orange

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

The crisis accommodation our shelters provide is a vital component in ending domestic violence and women’s homelessness, but the shelters themselves do more than just help the women (and children) who stay there.

Preventing violence against women and children cannot be accomplished without coordinated effort on multiple fronts. There is enormous power in leading, teaching, and channelling the goodwill of communities into a positive outcome.

The strength and innovation of the WCS Shelter model is in building collaboration and capacity amongst ‘non-traditional’ groups at the local level in each shelter location.

Our shelter model is outward-facing and encourages active involvement with, and support from local businesses, service clubs and schools through volunteer time, in-kind support, professional skills and donations. It’s also important to collaborate with police, courts, health services and child protection services to coordinate efforts at the local community level. We can resolve domestic and family violence, and resulting homelessness, if we work community by community.

Using local shelters and their boards as a point of beginning for governance training, school education and other forms of community outreach represents a fundamental shift towards a ‘grass-roots’ approach to solving domestic and family violence, rather than utilising a ‘top-down’ imposed strategy.

Every nook and cranny of each of our shelters bears testament to a community or business partnership. Ranging from flowers delivered once a week to brighten a hallway; individual quilts on the beds that residents can keep when they leave; cupboards filled to overflowing with corporate donations of linen; a building gifted by a local organisation because we said we needed help and they wanted to ‘pay it forward’. When a community has ownership of a project, they don’t look away and are invested in its success.

CURRENT PORTFOLIO



**MANLY WOMEN'S SHELTER**  
77 women assisted in 2016 and 3284 bed nights provided so far



**HORNSBY KU-RING-GAI WOMEN'S SHELTER**  
53 women accommodated per annum, with 5 requests for every bed available



**GREAT LAKES WOMEN'S SHELTER**  
39 women and up to 53 children accommodated per annum



**THE SANCTUARY - HILLS WOMEN'S SHELTER**  
43 women and up to 74 children accommodated per annum



**Top row, L-R:** HKWS Strategy Day 2017; White Ribbon Day 2017 with The Sanctuary; The Sanctuary Gala 2016 with Australian of the Year 2016, David Morrison, AO



**Bottom row, L-R:** Great Lakes Staff and Community Donors; Simone Parsons, WCS, Amanda McIntyre, Prime Minister and Cabinet and Sallianne McClland, HKWS Chair; The Sanctuary Board receive a Hills Council Australia Day Award

# IMPACT TO DATE

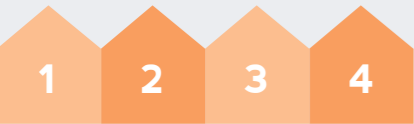
“From nothing, we have created two safe places for families and single women and delivered support and skills building programmes that in 2016 helped 39 women and more than 50 children. This is an achievement of which we are justifiably proud.”

**JULIE BRADY**

Chair, Great Lakes Women's Shelter



SOCIAL CAPITAL AND RESILIENCE BUILT IN COMMUNITIES



4 SHELTERS ESTABLISHED,  
4 IN THE PIPELINE



RAISED AWARENESS ON  
WOMEN'S HOMELESSNESS  
AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

**\$3M+**

COMMUNITY ASSETS  
SOURCED

**20K+**

'BED NIGHTS' PROVIDED  
PER ANNUM

**180**

WOMEN PER YEAR HELPED  
ACROSS OUR 4 SHELTERS  
WITH AN ADDITIONAL 127  
CHILDREN ASSISTED ACROSS  
OUR GREAT LAKES (53) AND  
HILLS DISTRICT SHELTERS (74)

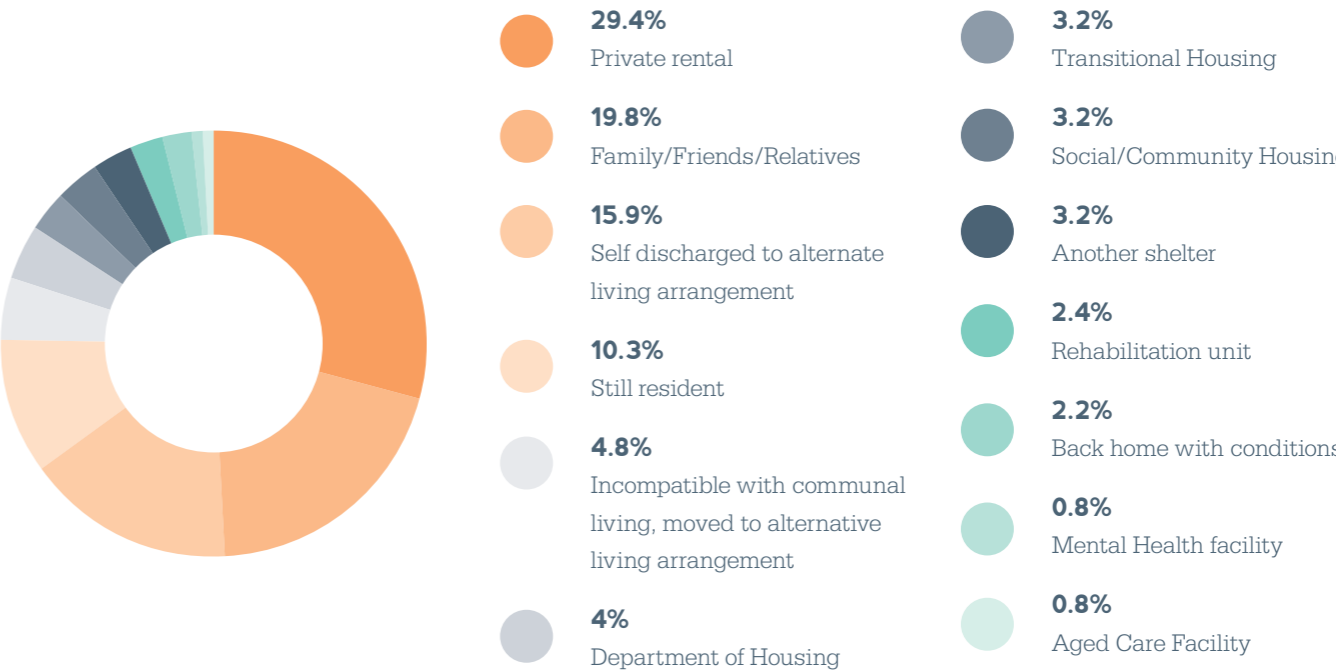
## KEY SHELTER OUTCOMES MEASURES

GOAL	STANDARD ACHIEVED	
Tailored case plan within 72 hours of shelter entry	85%	97%
Clients achieving sustainable housing on exit from shelter	85%	90%
Clients assisted with Employment/Training/Income stream	80%	90%
Clients experiencing mental health conditions: support to access or continue appropriate care	80%	99%
Clients with specific cultural or linguistic needs connected to appropriate services	90%	98%

## ACTIVE CASE MANAGEMENT

- ✕ Client-centred case management to assist women to work towards individual goals and help for children who have experienced domestic violence
- ✕ Referrals to doctors, counsellors, legal advice, immigration experts, work and education
- ✕ Help to find secure, affordable and sustainable housing

## WHERE CLIENTS GO ON TO



# INITIATIVES



As part of our innovative business and social franchise model, WCS continues to grow and diversify in order to improve our front-line services to benefit women and children staying in our shelters.

Each shelter in our network has developed a number of unique partnerships with members of the local community and local businesses.

## SHELTER NETWORK OUTREACH PROJECT

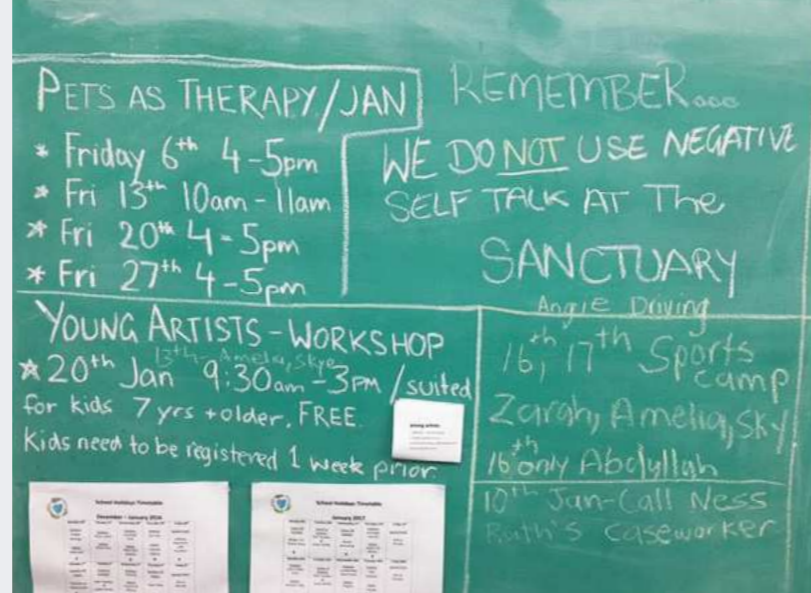
In 2016, thanks to funding from Lenity Australia and Hummingsong Community Choirs, WCS began a pilot Outreach Program to provide support to vulnerable women and children as they transition from crisis to long term housing. The project also provides additional resourcing to support accompanying children, particularly in our regional shelter in Forster NSW.

The funding has helped provide additional case work support for each of our shelters. The case work support focuses on facilitating transition to independent living and supporting women to access to the community resources available to her in the community, so as to prevent the cycle of violence and homelessness in the longer term.

As our shelters have a strong client and community focus, outreach support differs at each shelter. The outreach activities in our Manly Women's shelter are largely (but not solely) focused on women with mental illness and will enable staff to continue their excellent partnership with the mental health team at Manly Hospital and support women who receive service from our shelter and the mental health team when the hospital relocates.

The focus on outreach for our HKWS in Hornsby will be to sustain housing and access employment and training as women will have completed their pre-employment training program prior to leaving the shelter. As many women in the Hornsby shelter move further south west, outreach is necessary to provide stability through the transition.

In our two shelters for women and children, Great Lakes in Forster and The Sanctuary in Castle Hill the focus is on providing support with parenting, resilience and coping strategies and facilitating strong links to local community through facilitated activities and advocacy.



## PETS AS THERAPY – THE SANCTUARY

In October 2016, The Sanctuary had ‘Pets as Therapy’ visit the shelter for the first time. The partnership was developed by the Shelter Manager who met a local lady who wanted to offer her services to the shelter residents.

Pets as Therapy uses dogs to help people overcome difficult periods in their life and the day proved a huge success.

According to the Shelter Manager: “The children were beside themselves! Whilst the children had fantastic interactions with the dogs, I noted the mums joined the children which provided a platform not only for effective therapy for the children, but also a space for the children and mums to enjoy some significant bonding and quality time together. A ‘win-win’ in every aspect.

The activity has now become part of the shelters “group days” and will be a regular event at the shelter.

## THE CASTLE TOWERS INITIATIVE – THE HILLS COMMUNITY PANTRY

Castle Towers’ parent company, QIC, provided and renovated The Sanctuary’s home at no cost to enable us to run a shelter. As a Christmas 2016 and New Year initiative, Castle Towers set up a space in the fresh food level of the shopping centre, with an appeal to the local community to buy and donate items for families transitioning from the shelter to their new homes, as well as pantry goods to support the shelter too.

The Pantry was staffed morning and evening by staff members from Coles, K-Mart and Target. Castle Towers sent a direct mailout to 10,000 people, highlighting the important work of the shelter in the community, and local papers covered the story on several occasions.

The success of the initiative was overwhelming. There were over a thousand individual donations (and over 100 shopping trolleys filled!) by generous members of the local community looking to make a difference for women in the shelter. In total, over 30 full ‘transition packs’ were put together, meaning families across a full year will be ready to leave with all new items for their new homes!

## WCS – CONNECT, RESPECT, EDUCATE PROGRAM

The Connect and Respect Schools Education Program builds upon our Pilot project of 2015/6, connecting The Sanctuary – Hills Women’s Shelter and its work with Oakhill College Boys Secondary School.

This Pilot Program provided a 2-hour training session in which all 220 of the Year 10 boys participated as part of the English curriculum. They were briefed about why a shelter was needed in their local area, and about what they as young men can do to help curb violence. They then did further self-paced research, including looking at the underlying issues that drive domestic violence such as gender inequality and sexism and started creating their own anti-violence posters.

The boys carried these posters at the White Ribbon Day Marches of November 2015 and 2016.

WCS is looking at expanding this program across our network of shelters.

## GREAT LAKES ALUMNI SUPPORT

At our Great Lakes Women’s Shelter, our indigenous case worker informed us that the women and families who had successfully transitioned through the GLWS shelter to new lives were regularly checking in with shelter staff to advise progress and to stay connected.

As a result, shelter staff organized an ‘alumni’ barbeque for previous residents, who were also supporting each other. Today, this wonderful initiative is decreasing social isolation in regional areas and helps to sustain their progress.

Several of the women are also keen to put back into the shelter, helping staff develop a ‘transition tool’ for women living on their own, with or without children for the first time. This includes instructions and ‘to-do’ lists, including updating electoral rolls, notifying schools and health professionals, and connecting with services to promote well-being. The case-workers are keen and committed and doing an incredible job.

**Left to right:** Community Donations; The Sanctuary’s Support; Community Donations for Great Lakes; Great Lakes Women’s Shelter Gala 2016

EFFECTIVE USE OF TECHNOLOGY

PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

Quality data from our innovative software system tracks outcomes and provides real-time bed availability.

In 2016, the great outcomes WCS achieved were not readily available for governments and funders to 'see' as our data was not part of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) 'Specialist Homelessness Services' data collection. Only government funded services can contribute to this national data collection.

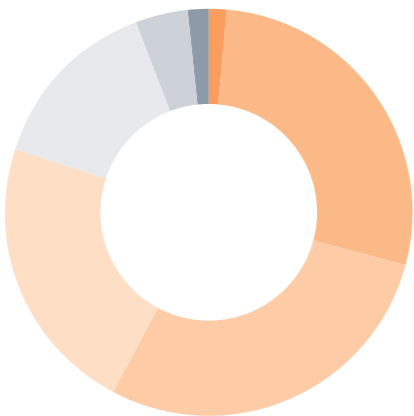
Committed to understanding and demonstrating our impact, WCS developed our own bespoke system to clearly track not just the positive outcomes we achieve for our shelter residents, but also the community contributions in time and in-kind. We continue to strengthen the quality of data collected and have undergone a significant testing and review process to ensure we are mapping clear progress around client outcomes that include:

- × Safety
- × Housing
- × Education and Employment
- × Self-efficacy
- × Law and Justice
- × Mental and physical wellbeing; Parenting
- × Social connection

Our system maps progress against individual client goals, records readiness to change, follows clients as they transition for crisis accommodation to outreach services and has capacity for longitudinal follow-up for 24 months after exit.

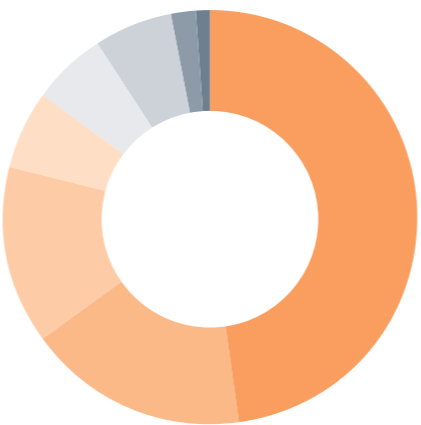
We are currently working through the process of system certification to provide data to the AIHW Specialist Homelessness Services Collection as this opportunity became available following our receipt of Government funding. Our organisation will be amongst the first in Australia, using 'Efforts to Outcomes software' that have applied for AIHW certification. All our services also comply with NSW Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS) service standards and contribute to the NSW Government's vacancy management system and initial assessment processes.

AGE OF OUR CLIENTS\*



18-20	51-60	Average
1.59%	14.29%	
21-30	61-70	Standard Deviation
27.78%	3.97%	
31-40	71-80	*Statistics from June 2016
28.57%	1.59%	
41-50		
22.22%		

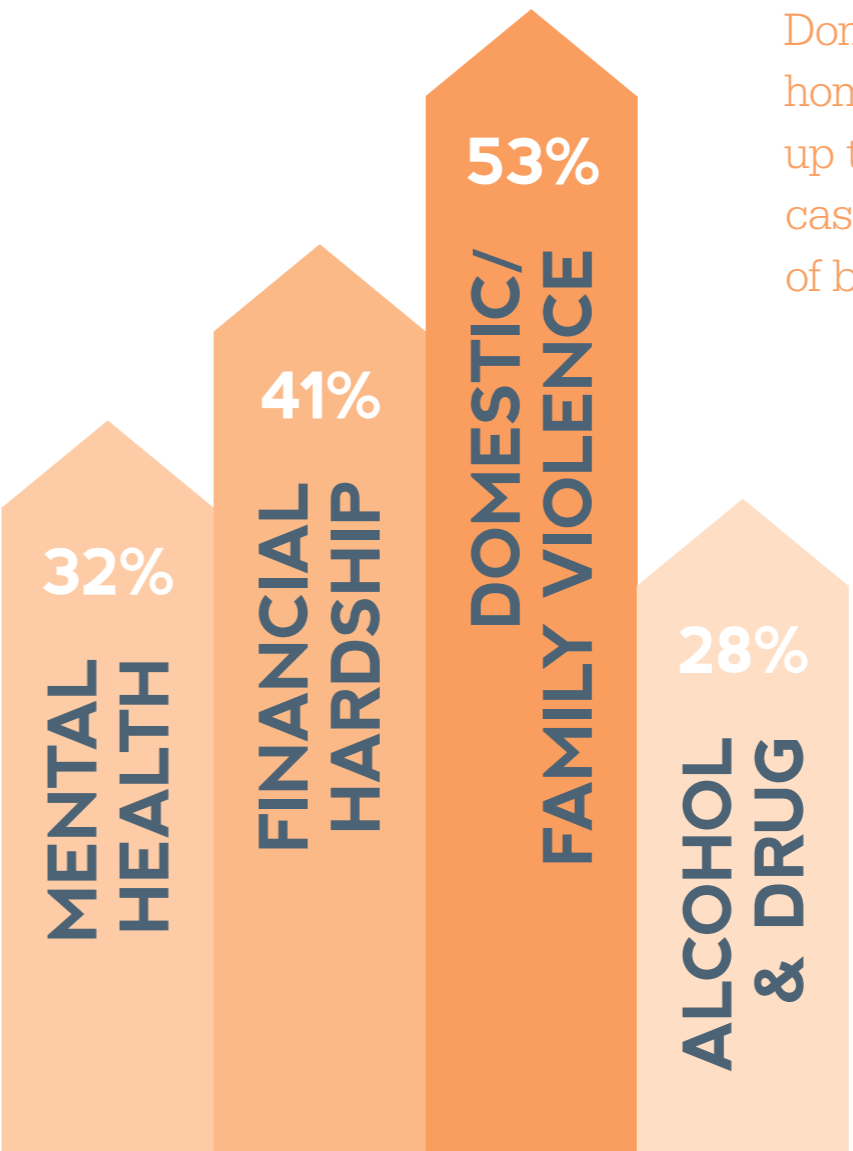
NATIONALITY OF CLIENTS



48%	Australian	6%	Middle Eastern
14%	Aboriginal/Torres Straits Islander	2%	European
17%	Asian	1%	American
6%	New Zealand/Maori		
6%	African		

\*From 61 responses, 14 women could not speak English (23%).

WCS CLIENTS REASON FOR REFERRAL



Domestic violence (47%) and homelessness (41%) make up the majority of referral cases, with a combination of both at 6%.

# FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

WCS received good support from donors and partners during the 2016 financial year, providing a financial platform to commit to opening new shelters and continue supporting existing shelters in the years ahead.

- ✕ Shelters were funded from a mix of Australian Government grants and donations from individuals, corporate partners and philanthropic trusts.
- ✕ The WCS Hub was funded exclusively from donations.

For both Shelters and WCS Hub a modest reserve was created to meet a limited period of ongoing and new shelter commitments.

Expenses also grew as the WCS hub expanded from one operational shelter to four by year's end. WCS Hub expenses were well constrained, with the existing team managing the growth period.

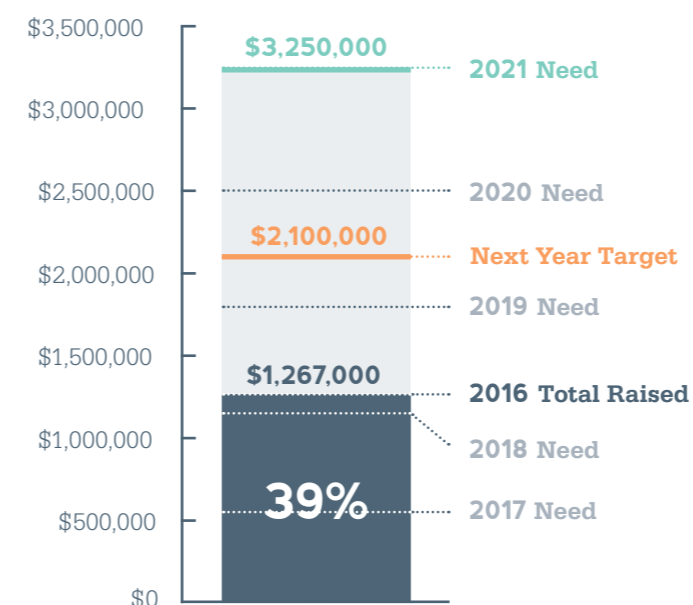
The balance sheet position at 30 June 2016 includes assets of \$1,316,606, the vast majority of which is cash at bank. Total liabilities are \$59,917. WCS has members equity of \$1,256,689 reserved for future Shelter and WCS hub commitments.

There remains a necessary focus for fundraising on the long-term, to support the ongoing work (and associated financial commitments) of WCS and its shelters as the network grows to 6 shelters in 2017 and potentially 8 shelters in 2018.

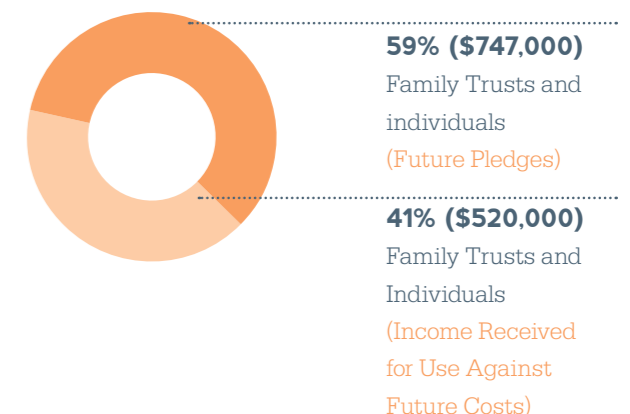
WCS's Directors have declared the organisation can meet all commitments as they fall due in the audited financial report, which is available in full at the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission website [acnc.gov.au](http://acnc.gov.au) via the Find a Charity function.

## WCS HUB FUNDRAISING – OUR PROGRESS

### 5 YEAR FUNDRAISING NEEDS

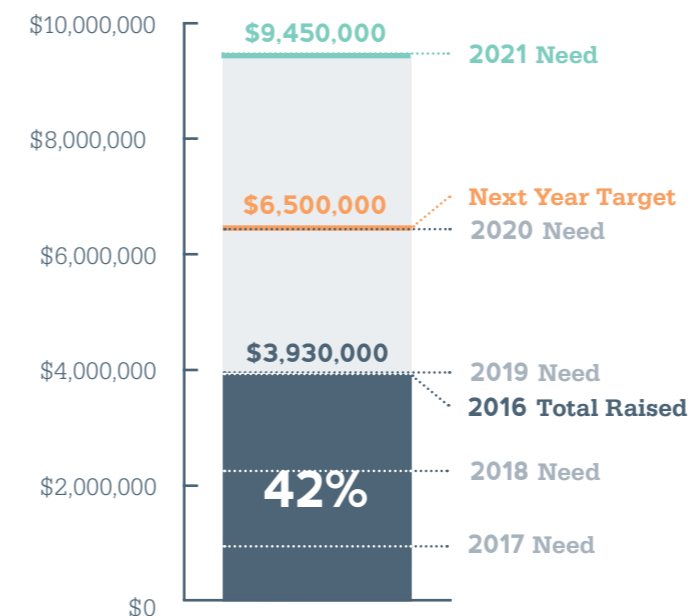


### FUNDRAISING TO DATE

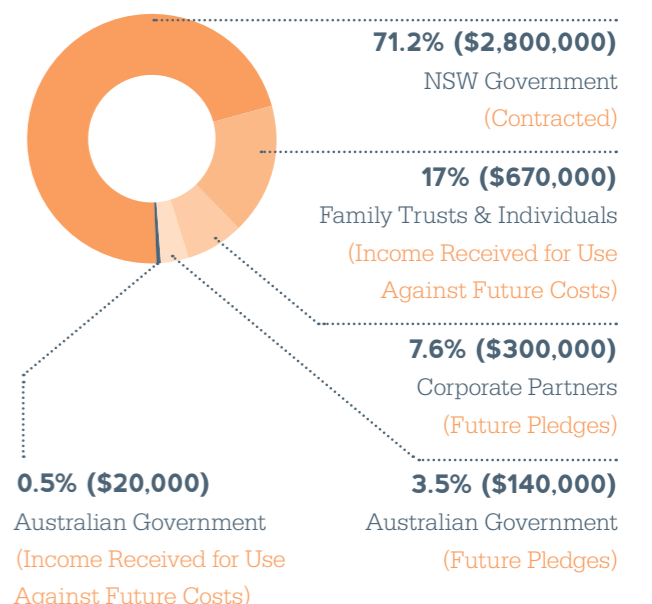


## SHELTERS FUNDRAISING – OUR PROGRESS

### 5 YEAR FUNDRAISING NEEDS



### FUNDRAISING TO DATE



### NUMBER OF SHELTERS



