

WOMEN'S
COMMUNITY
SHELTERS

2018 DONOR'S REPORT

SUPPORTING
HOMELESS
WOMEN

CORPORATE INFORMATION

WOMEN'S COMMUNITY SHELTERS LIMITED

Public Benevolent Institution with DGR1
(Deductible Gift Recipient) Status

BOARD

Kris Neill (Chair)	Paul Kelly
Peter Hunt AM	Emily Hodgson
Julie White	Shenaz Khan
Paul Say	

WCS HUB STAFF (4.5 FTE)

Chief Executive Officer – Annabelle Daniel (f/t)
Chief Operations Officer – Simone Parsons (f/t)
Office and Finance Manager – Paige Thompson (f/t)
Shelter Network Officer – Lieske Dowd (p/t)
Partnerships & Communications Manager –
Nathalie Peacock (p/t)
Efforts to Outcomes (ETO) Officer – Gen Sini (p/t)

AUDITORS

Foster Raffan
PO Box 629
North Sydney NSW 2059

SOLICITORS

Hicksons Lawyers
Level 32, 2 Park Street
Sydney NSW 2000

OFFICE

125–127 Little Eveleigh Street
Redfern NSW 2016
w womenscommunityshelters.org.au
e hello@womenscommunityshelters.org.au
m 0432 630 359
t 02 9539 6859
t @WCS_CEO
f <https://www.facebook.com/WomensCommunityShelters/>

ABN

54 153 006 556

CONTENTS

P 04	MISSION AND VISION
P 06	THANK YOU
P 08	FROM THE CHAIR AND CEO
P 11	WCS BREAKFAST FUNDRAISER
P 12	SOCIAL FRANCHISE MODEL
P 13	CASE STUDIES
P 18	COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION
P 20	IMPACT TO DATE
P 23	INDUSTRY BEST PRACTICE - INITIATIVES
P 27	EFFECTIVE USE OF TECHNOLOGY
P 29	FINANCIAL REPORTS

“

The work Women's Community Shelters is doing is literally life changing – not just for the women and children the refugees support, but for the communities they empower to own the issue too.

DANIELLE RIMMER

The Sanctuary Board Member

”



**MISSION
& VISION**

WHO ARE WE?

Women's Community Shelters (WCS) is an Australian charity based 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 Government. We welcome the NSW Government's ongoing commitment to supporting our model.

PURPOSE

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 transitional housing.

PLAN

Our vision is to expand our network to at least 10 shelters across NSW by the end of 2020, all linked together through technology, shared purpose, operational guidance and support.

WE BELIEVE

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

WCS hub

\$550,000 per annum, underwritten by philanthropy

Each shelter in our network

\$410,000 per annum to run tri-partite funding model through philanthropy/business, local community and government contributions.



GOVERNMENT SUPPORTERS

- X NSW State Government
- X Australian Government
- X Bayside Council
- X Parramatta City Council

PRO BONO/IN KIND

- X The Big Issue
- X OIC
- X John Kell – Hicksons Lawyers
- X Squared Impact
- X Equilibrium Design
- X Two Good
- X Maurice Blackburn
- X PAYCE
- X Bridge Housing
- X Evolve Housing
- X N-Able IT
- X Unitex International

WORKPLACE GIVING

- X Greenhill
- X Guardian Australia
- X Suncorp Group
- X Hometrack Australia
- X National Australia Bank Ltd
- X PwC Australia
- X Baker McKenzie
- X Sumitomo Mitsubishi Banking Corporate
- X Westpac Group
- X Blackmores
- X Macquarie
- X Sydney Water

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

Thank you to the shelter boards, staff, volunteers, donors and all the amazing individual and corporate supporters who have made the establishment of our current network and opening of our new shelters possible.

CHAIR

KRIS NEILL CHAIR

Women's Community Shelters is deeply grateful for the support we have received over the past year from the NSW Government, businesses small and large, philanthropists and an army of individuals raising funds, volunteering and providing in-kind items for our five shelters.

As part of our funding agreement with the NSW Government, WCS this year commissioned for the first time an independent evaluation of our operations. This involved financial data review, one-on-one interviews, focus groups and surveys of our diverse range of stakeholders and contributors.

The evaluation assessed WCS' performance against five indicators: cost-effectiveness; viability; sustainability; community capacity building and, most important of all, client outcomes.

We are delighted with the findings of the report and to share some of them with you. The evaluation found that:

- More than 60% of direct financial support for WCS was derived from community, business and philanthropic sources. We believe this represents great value for money for NSW taxpayers;
- The report also found that WCS had exceeded minimum government requirements for client numbers at a rate of 1.7 - almost double that required;
- The engagement of stakeholders at every level of WCS was consistently well-regarded;
- WCS working with local champions offered a viable and alternative way of supplying social services;
- In-kind contributions facilitated by the WCS model were a valuable contributor to each of the shelters;
- WCS had made "impressive efforts" to develop a data base of its clients and their progress against key outcomes;
- The WCS network performed favourably when compared to two 100% Government-funded providers;
- 97% of clients surveyed from two WCS shelters believed they had achieved their case management goals.

Our shelter operations would not be possible without the dynamism, tenacity and commitment of those communities in which our shelters operate. Our shelter board members and staff are drawn from these communities and they are supported by local business people, members of parliament, support services, three tiers of government agencies, local schools and individuals. These are diverse groups and individuals united to set aside any differences and take on the challenge of homelessness and domestic violence (DV) in their own neighbourhoods. We believe this is the power of the WCS model. Its ability to activate local

communities in a unique and collaborative, 'sleeves rolled-up' sort of way.

As one of the first WCS board members, it has been truly wonderful to be part of this community movement and to watch this start-up grow and flourish in five short years. We now have five shelters in operation - soon to be six - offering kindness, hope and safety to some of our most vulnerable citizens. We are partnering with other communities to open additional shelters and believe that together, we are doing good and important work.

I would like to thank and acknowledge our former founding Chair, Gina Anderson, who stepped down from the WCS Board on 3rd July 2017. Gina laid strong and important foundations for the continued growth of WCS..

I also thank and congratulate our outstanding CEO, Annabelle Daniel, and her Chief Operating Officer, Simone Parsons, for their leadership of WCS and the shelter network and for their unwavering commitment to best practice and policy innovation. They are doers.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank the WCS board and the shelter boards, WCS and shelter staff for their above and beyond contributions to the organisation. Let's keep going - opening shelters and operating them to the very best of our ability.



Thank you to all who are part of WCS for your generosity. And my sincerest best wishes to our clients for a future free of violence, fear and uncertainty.

KRIS NEILL CHAIR



CEO

ANNABELLE DANIEL CEO

It is with great pleasure I report on 2017 for Women's Community Shelters. A year packed with hard work, success, incredible people and constant reminders of what a privilege it is to lead this organisation.

In 2017, thanks to wonderful support from generous donors and the NSW Government, WCS was able to fast-forward our shelter development, working with the Penrith and Bayside (South-East Sydney) local communities.

This came, in part, to fruition with the successful opening of Penrith's The Haven – Nepean Women's Shelter in April 2018.

With Bayside, we have successfully located a property in Botany with major preparations for opening occurring right now, including the coordination of project management, the application for a development approval and pro bono renovation assistance.

We have also commenced, with local communities, shelter development in Parramatta and Blacktown LGAs. We have significant support from each local government area. We continue to be contacted by numerous communities in New South Wales and interstate, looking to work with us to establish a new shelter owned by their community.

I'm struck by the turnaround since the early days of Women's Community Shelters, when I undertook a great deal of outreach to explain our shelter model and encourage communities to consider it.

Today, we have more requests for assistance than we can accommodate. I see this as a reflection of the success of our shelter network, the constant need for emergency accommodation and a heartening community awareness of the impacts of domestic and family violence and women's homelessness.

I could not be prouder of the work of the Manly (now Northern Beaches), Hornsby Ku-ring-gai, Great Lakes and The Sanctuary – Hills Shelters for their strong – and properly measured - performance and ever-growing capability during 2017.

They have managed increasing client demand, complex case-work, the implementation of our outcomes-based computer system and new partnerships which challenged and extended them throughout the year.

I welcome The Haven and shortly, Bayside into the fold. My congratulations and thanks go to the incredible boards, shelter managers, volunteers and staff in each. They are smart and they are kind. And they go over and above, every day of the week.

This year, we brought into reality some of the ideas we'd had brewing for a while. We implemented board governance training to provide our local shelter boards with extra skills. We built our Outreach Program with the support of key donors, meaning we could extend our excellent case work, and the strong

relationships we build with our residents beyond their stay in the shelters.

We formed innovative partnerships with developers and community housing providers, implementing the 'Pathways Home' project with PAYCE developments and 'Safe Foundations' and with Evolve Housing. Both these projects provide secure and affordable housing for up to three years, with support, for the women and children moving out of our crisis shelters.

We worked with DVNSW (the NSW Domestic and Family Violence Peak Body) and People with Disabilities Australia (a disability peak body) on a NSW Government Innovation Project to enhance the accessibility of shelters to women or children with a disability.

This is all something very special. In a complicated, fast-paced world, where it can feel like there is a constant barrage of criticism and bad news, something tangible to contribute to at the local community level makes a huge impact on well-being – not just for our residents but all involved with the shelters.

Thank you to our very generous donors and supporters, and to the NSW Government. It's been a pleasure establishing and deepening our relationships with you in 2017.

To our corporate partners, thank you for your support with your time, your resources and your venues. To a small charity like WCS, your infrastructure and pro bono expertise is vital help!

Last, and by no means least, my huge thanks and gratitude to the incredible WCS Hub staff and our fantastic Board, led by our Chair, Kris Neill. WCS is a collaborative effort in every sense. The knowledge, skill and expertise that underpins this organisation is second to none.

We are changing lives, together.

“

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

ANNABELLE DANIEL CEO

”

WCS underwrites up to two thirds of each shelter's funding for the first two years, and up to 50% per annum in following years. We also have philanthropic and corporate partners who support additional shelter programs, such as our Outreach Program.



What Women's Community Shelters do so well is the emotional support, counselling, practical advice, regular meetings to check progress against goals, the safety of being at an 'unknown' address, the regular deliveries of food essentials, and the low cost of living - to be able to save and get back on track.

I am so grateful for the opportunity to start again and to actually enjoy my life. My long-term goals are to keep working, to stay single and independent, and to travel overseas with my son.

Thank you so very much!

Quote from a shelter resident who had been living in a psychologically and emotionally abusive relationship for 15 years, with many friends concerned for her over the entire period.



Clockwise from top left: (L-R) Northern Beaches Women's Shelter staff at an EquiTable dinner. Natasha McClaren Jones, MLC NSW at Gr Lakes. James Griffin MP and Minister Goward at our NBWS. Student Sophie England presenting a cheque from funds she raised to WCS

WCS BREAKFAST FUNDRAISER

On Tuesday 13th March 2018, Women's Community Shelters held a breakfast fundraiser in partnership with the Westpac Group, at their headquarters at Barangaroo.

Minister Pru Goward, Minister for Family and Community Services, Minister for Social Housing, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault was the keynote speaker and the event was hosted by our very own Sanctuary Chair, Yvonne Keane.

All money raised was donated to WCS to raise awareness and funds in support of the elimination of homelessness and violence against women.

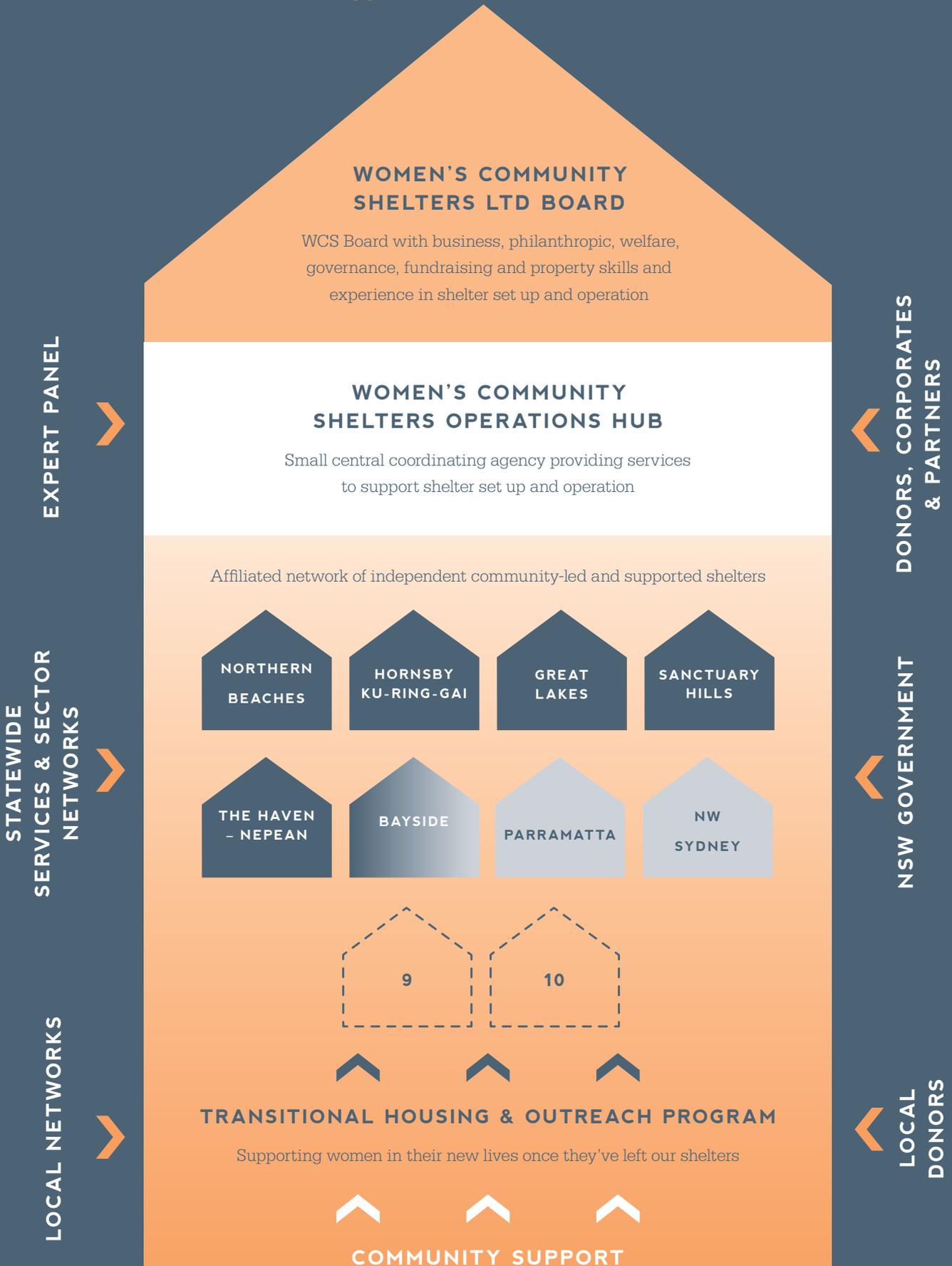
The event was a huge success and
WCS would like to thank everyone involved.



INNOVATION:

THE SOCIAL FRANCHISE MODEL

Community participation, industry best practice, effective use of technology



CASE STUDY

WCS CASE WORKERS - SOMEONE TO WALK ALONGSIDE HER

When women go through domestic violence they often enter one of our shelters with no self-worth and no self-esteem because they have had it stripped completely from them. The most integral part of a woman's journey through domestic violence is having someone to support her.

Case Workers at Women's Community Shelters are an integral part of a woman's healing. Workers offer an experienced, guiding hand and advocate on behalf of the women who often cannot advocate for themselves. They do not stop until they get the results and the outcomes the women need.

Often the journey through a WCS shelter starts with providing a safe and secure environment for the women and children.

An ex-shelter resident said: "It wasn't until we stayed in the shelter that we realised how much more calm and peaceful it was and I was really happy for the kids to see that this is the way life should look."

According to a Case Worker at our Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Women's Shelter, "They walk out as independent women who feel strong and feel in control, and that's why I do what I do."

WCS CEO Annabelle Daniel commented: "The best gift you can give to a woman experiencing homelessness and family violence is someone to walk alongside them."

WCS aims to set up more shelters in order to offer more safe spaces for women and children. Just two more shelters in 2018 would provide up to 250 places for women and children every year.

“

It wasn't until we stayed in the shelter that we realised how much more calm and peaceful it was and I was really happy for the kids to see that this is the way life should look

EX SHELTER RESIDENT

”



CASE STUDY

THE SANCTUARY HILLS - TWO YEARS ON

The Sanctuary has now been operational for two years. With over 150 residents, their journey involves escaping domestic and family violence and moving into a life free from fear, free from hiding, free from bruises and free from having no self-worth.

The shelter case model has proved overwhelmingly successful in providing positive outcomes for the families who transition through The Sanctuary. The Case Workers provide a holistic, client-centred, trauma-informed, goal-orientated approach combined with networking with government and non-government agencies to ensure best practice.

In the past year, The Sanctuary has progressed significant projects in partnerships with WCS and community housing providers and Outreach funds have enabled them to continue to provide support to women once they exit the shelter, ensuring women feel connected to local services, supported and enabling them to sustain the outcomes they achieved while with us.

Three families have recently been housed at the new transitional properties, which have been made available thanks to a new partnership between WCS, PAYCE and Bridge Housing.

Sanctuary mums have enjoyed a collaborative partnership with Monji Tea, who facilitate bi-monthly 'Yarning Circles' at the shelter to provide the mums with paid work and the opportunity to get together, relax and chat, whilst their Child Support Worker provides activities for the children.

In 2018, The Sanctuary embarked on a new project with People with Disabilities Australia and DVNSW to improve their service delivery and accessibility for women with disabilities. The Sanctuary is one of six services across NSW participating in the project in Year One. This will ensure The Sanctuary provides stand out service to families and a stand out reputation as a quality service provider in the Sector.

CASE STUDY

SANCTUARY RESIDENT

Suzanne* was referred to The Sanctuary from a sister shelter. Suzanne had lost a child, suffered a broken jaw, perforated ear drums and many other physical wounds requiring hospitalisation.

Suzanne and her two children had been in the cycle of domestic violence for eight years and were transient for the previous eight months, as her ex-partner would locate her and subsequently breach Apprehended Violence Orders (AVOs).

Her two children aged three and one had witnessed many violent acts. The ex-partner had a total of 469 charges against him from previous years, with the majority of them assault related.

On arrival to The Sanctuary, shelter staff ensured all safety protocols were put in place as per shelter standard practice (i.e: changing of bank statements; disconnecting of social media; changing phone SIM cards; Centrelink information).

The local police station were advised of her arrival and information regarding the perpetrator was provided to shelter staff to assist with safety measures.

Suzanne was required to provide a new statement regarding further breaches of the AVO. She was supported by shelter staff in the provision of these statements.





Due to many court dismissals of previous charges, Castle Hill police assured the anonymity of Suzanne, the location of where the new AVO and breaches had been raised was suppressed (police ensured that all identifiers had been removed).

The extreme trauma Suzanne and her children had experienced over an extended period was evident in their behaviours, with trust being a major challenge.

Over the next few weeks, staff and the Shelter Manager built a rapport with the family. The Sanctuary's Child Support Worker assisted with parenting skills, allowing mum to effectively parent the children.

Staff commenced goal setting with Suzanne, with safety and housing being a priority. Assistance was sought from WCS head office to ascertain Suzanne's eligibility for social housing with a view to transitional housing.

Unfortunately, Housing NSW could not provide assistance to her. Start Safely was applied for and approved, staff advocated with agents, and Suzanne and the children were successful in obtaining a three bedroom property in a local area.

Suzanne received a significant rental subsidy for six months. Suzanne and the children moved into the property, partly furnished with the support of staff, Volunteer coordinators, community members and household goods courtesy of Castle Towers Pantry.

Suzanne was assisted by staff to complete a Victims Services application and after three weeks she was approved for ongoing counselling and family therapy, and for a removal company to transport her personal belongings allowing the children to access familiar toys, photos and personal items.

Suzanne told staff that her progression whilst at the shelter has been phenomenal and congratulated them on the work they do.

By providing a holistic case management approach to shelter clients, Sanctuary staff ensure that needs are met on all levels, which is supported by statistical evidence of mums and children transitioning from The Sanctuary and maintaining wellness and independence as single parent families.

*Names have been changed for client confidentiality.

CASE STUDY

GREAT LAKES WOMENS SHELTER (GLWS)

– TWO YEARS ON

Two years on and our Great Lakes Women's Shelter (GLWS) has come so far and achieved so much in such a short amount of time. The shelter has housed and supported 69 women and 98 children since opening its doors in January 2016.

74% of those entering the shelter have experienced domestic or family violence, 26% entered due to homelessness and 52% of all families identify as indigenous.

Left to Right, top to bottom: An abundance of toys generously donated to GLWS. Gt Lakes staff. Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Shelter Manager Hylette Evans and President Sallianne McClelland celebrate three years of HKWS. Steph Flower White Ribbon book. Weaving the Net Program at Forster. The Haven Board and Emma Husar, MP. The Sebastian Foundation at the NBWS after refitting 2 kitchens. Great Lakes Staff with donor, Elizabeth Algie

The shelter has also grown over the last year, and now has two transitional properties, offered by agreement with St Vincent de Paul.

This enables the shelter to provide further short-term housing to families for an additional three to six months to gain rental histories whilst transitioning back into the broader community, with a view to gaining their own private rental property.

GLWS now has an Outreach Worker and a Child Support Worker. The Outreach Worker currently works with the women and children who have left the shelter to help them to maintain their tenancy and/or offer support and referrals to those not in accommodation.

The Child Support Worker is a new and vital role which works to support the shelter children emotionally, academically, clinically and cognitively all while being mindful to support their general well-being.

Shelter staff are also working with a local high school by delivering a Domestic Violence and Healthy Relationships workshop to all year 11 students in the area. This engages the students about early intervention and has been highly effective. 2018 will be the third consecutive year of delivery.

CASE STUDY

GREAT LAKES

In March 2018, GLWS worked with a young woman who was approved for and moved into her first (independent) rental, after leaving a long term serious DV relationship.

Shelter staff saw, in just a matter of weeks how the young woman went from strength to strength with the support from GLWS.

She gained self-confidence, which she identified she didn't have before leaving the relationship. She was proactive in looking for and applying for rentals and meeting all the goals set when entering the shelter.

Shelter staff stated: "It is so lovely and heart-warming to see those changes come about in a woman, from arriving with her head hanging low, to exiting with her head held high with confidence and brimming with happiness."

CASE STUDY

HORNSBY KU-RING-GAI WOMEN'S SHELTER (HKWS)

Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Women's Shelter (HKWS) has been open for three years and has safely housed 231 women and continues to provide much needed crisis accommodation for up to ten women at any time.

The shelter has gone from strength to strength, thanks to the motivated staff, volunteers, board and President Sallianne McClelland – who was awarded the Hornsby Woman of the Year Award for 2018.

During 2017 the Shelter has held many successful fundraisers such as the Apron Project, The Bobbin Head Cycle Classic, International Women's Day, HKWS Coffee Crew Table, Carols at Asquith Oval, and the Lisgar Live fundraiser.

In 2018, HKWS will coordinate two Domestic Violence Alert Training Sessions in Hornsby with the goal of getting the community, Hornsby Ku-ring-gai area services, businesses, volunteers, board and staff to gain a broader understanding of domestic violence and the services available.

Three clients from HKWS have taken part and successfully graduated from a three-month work scholarship run by Two Good*.

Shelter staff have recently formed a partnership with a qualified solicitor who visits the shelter and talks to the clients about AVOs, breaches of AVO's, Family Law and other legal issue that clients are experiencing.

The shelter also runs, with the help of its volunteers, a Well Being Program where clients can take part in activities like Yoga, Meditation, Reiki, Pilates and art classes.

*Two Good make and sell celebrity chef designed lunches and for every lunch sold, one is donated to Domestic Violence Shelters around Australia.

CASE STUDY

HKWS RESIDENT

Jenny* was a 61-year-old lady who was referred to HKWS from Link 2 Home. Jenny had been married for 15 years. Jenny's husband was an alcoholic and she finally made the decision to leave but needed some support. Jenny worked as a cleaner and took four weeks' annual leave to try to get her life on track. On entering the shelter, Jenny's case plan started with a full medical check-up as she was very frail and unwell.

Shelter staff also helped Jenny apply to Victim's Services where she was provided with counselling and compensation for the violence she had experienced. Staff also assisted in the application to St George Community Housing and Jenny found a one-bedroom apartment close to her work.

Jenny was helped to obtain a storage unit and the shelter provided Jenny with a gift card so she could buy some belongings to make her unit a home. Jenny also received some basic computer lessons at the shelter.

When the time came for Jenny to leave the shelter it was very emotional. Jenny told staff that she would never forget them and that she didn't feel alone anymore. She now has the strength to lead a happier and fulfilling life.

Jenny now has a job and has an AVO in place enabling her to feel safe and secure.

NORTHERN BEACHES WOMEN'S SHELTER – NBWS (PREVIOUSLY KNOWN AS MANLY WOMEN'S SHELTER)

2017 marked the 7th year since the establishment of Manly Women's Shelter (MWS) by the local community. In February 2018, the shelter rebranded to Northern Beaches Women's Shelter (NBWS) to reflect their establishment remit: aiding women in crisis right across Sydney's Northern Beaches.

NBWS provides crisis accommodation with wrap around intensive case management support for up to ten women for a period of three months. The Shelter assists another three women at any time with up to 12 months medium term transitional accommodation with case management support. In 2017, ten women were assisted via their transitional accommodation service.

Additionally, NBWS recently initiated an Outreach service that provides support to women who are transitioning back into the community or who are living in the community and require support services.

Since opening in late 2010, NBWS has assisted over 350 women in the shelter to rebuild their lives and regain their self-determination.

CASE STUDY

NORTHERN BEACHES RESIDENT

In her own words:

"I was a resident of the Manly Women's Shelter from February to June 2015.

The situation that saw me seek refuge with this organisation was homelessness, and two St Vincent de Paul's gentlemen picked me up from where I was staying at the time, placed me in a local backpackers for the weekend, and drove me to the shelter the following Monday.

This message is really, a genuine and heartfelt THANK YOU for having me for those three necessary months. My experience in the shelter is one I always think about daily, and I think about it daily because I'm grateful for how far I've come since that experience, and how for the first 3-6 months after it, I did it on my own with no help from my family.

I also think about the different women I encountered at the shelter from staff to residents, to the rescue of Jacob the Possum and I always tell people confidently about my time there. In my five years in Sydney, it's the highlight event of my living here and people are blown away by my story whenever I tell it (largely because they can't believe I could've ever been homeless).

I always finish my story by saying one can never pinpoint the face of homelessness, and one can never judge a person by their cover. The biggest lesson I learned from the refuge is that God never puts anything in front of you He knows you can't handle.

I dreaded knowing I was going to the refuge, but one of the gentlemen said to me 'well, where else are you going to go?' and I had no answer for him, let alone myself. So maxing out the three months stay the way I did, is something I'm grateful to God for, and to yourselves too, because that experience rates as the most life-changing experience I've ever had (and I've had a few).

I know words can never describe the enormity of my gratitude for my being able to stay at the shelter, but to all staff, past present and future, I thank you so very much for helping me in my time of need.

I will never forget the generosity you gave me."

THE HAVEN – NEPEAN WOMEN'S SHELTER

In 2017, WCS worked with a local steering committee to establish a new shelter in the Greater Penrith area to address the pressing local need for more crisis accommodation for women and children in the area.

The Steering Committee achieved their fundraising target of \$25,000 and WCS gave the project the 'green light' to go ahead.

The Haven – Nepean Women's Shelter opened its doors on 20th April 2018 and is able to support 16 women and children across six bedrooms.

The Haven is the 5th shelter in the WCS network and WCS thanks everyone involved and welcomes The Haven to the WCS network.

THE BAYSIDE WOMEN'S SHELTER PROJECT

The Bayside Women's Shelter will be the 6th shelter in the WCS network once open. In 2017, WCS received a Stronger Communities Grant towards the establishment on the new shelter in the Botany area.

A property has now been sourced and WCS are working towards next steps in the shelter establishment process. The shelter is due to open shortly.



TOP TO BOTTOM: Children's gifts donated to our shelters. Governance training for staff. A brand new kitchen at NBWS. Staff catching up at a Shelter Network meeting.

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 co-ordinated 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.

While experience tells us this is true, it was also confirmed by over 100 survey responses from community members who identified the growth of community connections as a result of their involvement in the shelter.

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 co-ordinate 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.



67 **NORTHERN BEACHES WOMEN'S SHELTER**

- Number of clients accommodated: 67
- Number of bed nights provided: 3581
- Number of clients moving on to independent living: 73%

71 **GREAT LAKES WOMEN'S SHELTER**

- Number of clients accommodated: 71
- Number of bed nights provided: 5986
- Number of clients moving on to independent living: 52%

58 **HORNSBY KU-RING-GAI WOMEN'S SHELTER**

- Number of clients accommodated: 58
- Number of bed nights provided: 2558
- Number of clients moving on to independent living: 71%

109 **THE SANCTUARY-HILLS WOMEN'S SHELTER**

- Number of clients accommodated: 109
- Number of bed nights provided: 3465
- Number of clients moving on to independent living: 72%

17 **TRANSITIONAL HOUSING**

12 women and children have been assisted through our transitional housing programs and an additional five families assisted through partnerships with other sector providers.



INDUSTRY BEST PRACTICE

IMPACT

TO DATE

“Walking around The Sanctuary it is impossible not to be moved by the hard work of those involved and the generosity of the wider community who helped make it happen. It really is a beautiful place — and that’s not the first word that usually springs to mind when talking about a shelter.

“There are lots of personal touches that will help make the women and children staying there feel at home, and hopefully help them know that they are not alone as they prepare to rebuild their lives.”

SARRAH LE MARQUAND, THE DAILY TELEGRPH COLUMNIST & MEDIA COMMENTATOR

WOMEN’S COMMUNITY SHELTERS CAN HELP UP TO 336 WOMEN AND CHILDREN PER YEAR ACROSS OUR FIVE SHELTERS. OUR GREAT LAKES, SANCTUARY AND THE HAVEN SHELTERS ARE OUR THREE SHELTERS THAT ACCOMMODATE WOMEN WITH CHILDREN.



16,000 BED NIGHTS PROVIDED PER ANNUM



GROWTH IN SOCIAL CAPITAL



**6 SHELTERS ESTABLISHED, (ONE PENDING OPENING)
4 IN THE PIPELINE**

INDEPENDENT EVALUATION SHOWS:



321 WOMEN AND CHILDREN ASSISTED THROUGH WCS CRISIS ACCOMMODATION AND OUTREACH PROGRAMS

62%

OF OPERATING COSTS PROVIDED BY LOCAL, CORPORATE AND PHILANTHROPIC DONORS

38% OF OPERATING COSTS PROVIDED BY THE NSW STATE GOVERNMENT

130

STAKEHOLDERS SURVEYED:

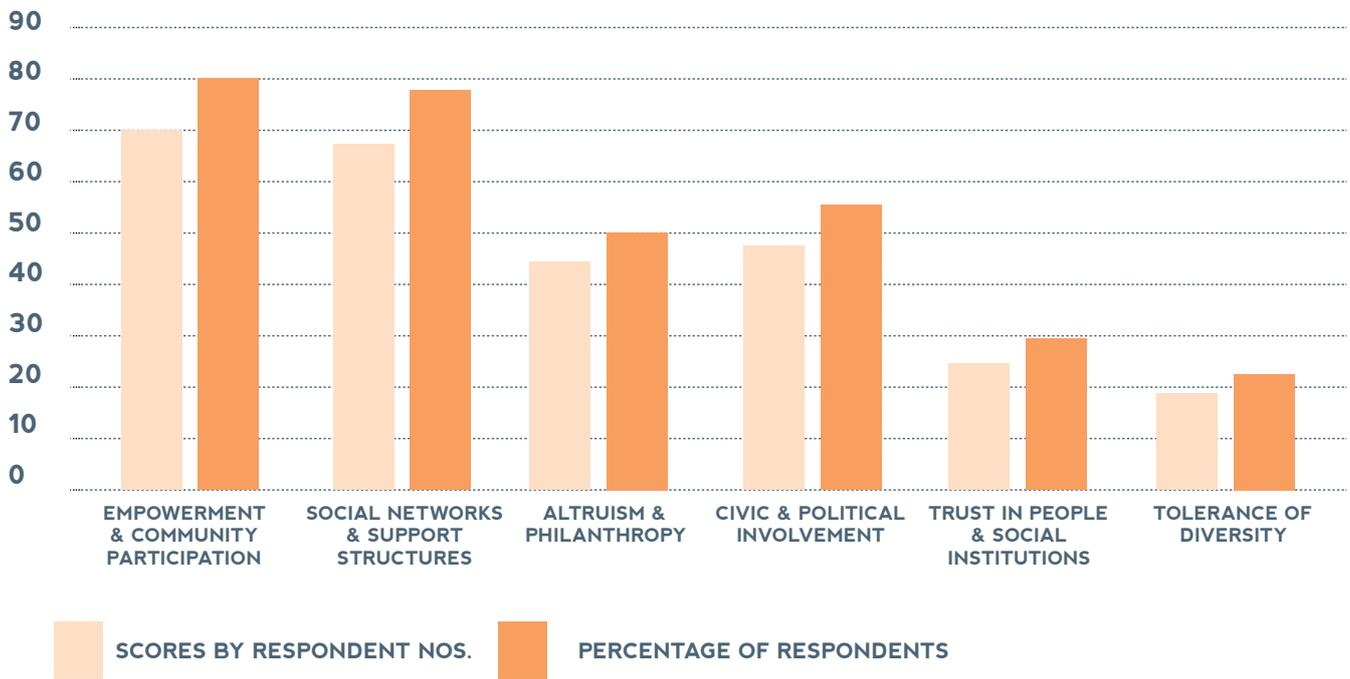
AN AVERAGE COMMUNITY COMMITMENT OF 14 VOLUNTEER HOURS PER MONTH (WITH A RANGE OF BETWEEN FIVE HOURS AND MORE THAN 30 HOURS).



VOLUNTEER EXPERTISE INCLUDING: SKILLS & EXPERTISE, FUNDING & FUNDRAISING, ADVOCACY, SUPPLY OF GOODS OR EQUIPMENT, ACCESS TO LAND OR PROPERTY.

INDEPENDENT EVALUATION

GROWTH OF SOCIAL CAPITAL BY THEME



KEY SHELTER OUTCOMES MEASURES



70% OF CLIENTS MOVED IN TO INDEPENDENT LIVING



OTHER CLIENTS MOVED INTO OTHER SHORT TERM OR EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION, REHABILITATION SERVICES, PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITALS, OR OTHER.



PRIMARY REFERRAL SOURCES INCLUDED LINK 2 HOME, THE DV LINE, SPECIALIST HOMELESSNESS OR OUTREACH WORKERS AND GOVERNMENT AGENCIES



PRIMARY SERVICES PROVIDED INCLUDE CRISIS ACCOMMODATION AND ASSISTANCE WITH DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE. CASE WORKERS FACILITATED ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH AND OTHER PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES PROVIDED TRAUMA INFORMED SUPPORTS, SUPPORTED ACCESS TO GOVERNMENT ALLOWANCES AND EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS AND PROVIDED SUPPORT TO ACCESS LONG TERM HOUSING.



ADDITIONAL REFERRALS WERE FOR CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES, DRUG AND ALCOHOL SERVICES AND HEALTH AND MEDICAL SERVICES.



INDUSTRY BEST PRACTICE

INITIATIVES



WCS AND
NON-TRADITIONAL
PARTNERSHIPS

SHELTER NETWORK OUTREACH PROJECT

WCS offers emergency crisis accommodation to women and children across NSW. As part of our innovative business and social franchise model, we continue to diversify our offering to meet the growing needs of our clients and support more women and children in need.

Launched in 2016, the WCS Outreach Program allows WCS to support women who are leaving our shelters and need continued support as they move to independent living.

The program also provides capacity for early intervention as shelter staff can support local women who haven't been accommodated, but who need support to stay safe or maintain their accommodation.

One hundred percent of outreach funding received is allocated to the program, in the form of brokerage for clients and outreach staff salaries. WCS Outreach Workers provide case management, advocacy and support for women and children.

Funding has also enabled WCS to develop partnerships that extend available housing options.

In 2017, WCS partnered with Link Housing, Evolve Housing and Bridge Housing and are exploring further opportunities with local developers to source additional transitional housing.

KEY OUTREACH ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE

In 2017, Northern Beaches Women's Shelter (NBWS) provided 465 hours of assistance to 38 women in our Outreach Program to transition sustainably into the community whilst connecting to community support.

These 38 women often presented with a number of requirements. 28 women were supported due to domestic or family violence, 35 were assisted with longer term housing, 22 women required financial assistance, mental health and disability supports were provided for 28, drug or alcohol services to 22 and employment and education opportunities to 13. NBWS also supported six women in WCS's own medium term transitional accommodation during the year.

The Sanctuary - Hills Women's Shelter has provided an average 20 hours per week x 52 weeks = 1040 hours of outreach assistance to 45 women. The Outreach Worker arranges visits with clients during the week and attends home visits on a client priority basis each Friday.

Two women from The Sanctuary have recently been accommodated in The Sanctuary's transitional housing property, where the Outreach Worker contacts and visits them to provide regular support and to ensure the tenancy is maintained appropriately.

Outreach at our Great Lakes Women's Shelter (GLWS) began on 1st June 2017 and since the commencement of the



TOP TO BOTTOM: Pathways Home project launch. Evolve CEO Andrea Galloway and WCS CEO Annabelle Daniel.

Outreach Program, GLWS has provided outreach support to 17 women and 25 children.

Staff have worked with ex-residents to help them maintain their tenancies and access support services that they need to remain safe and secure. DV and self-esteem building have been the major focus with the majority of women to date.

GLWS were also successful in obtaining a transitional property through the Board of St Vincent de Paul, a three bedroom town house, and are working to secure another.

Currently each WCS shelter that provides Outreach is able to offer a set amount of Outreach hours of support per month as they are limited by the funds available.

In addition to providing fortnightly court support to women who may be attending court in relation to domestic and family violence matters, Hornsby has provided outreach support to 26 clients, including very intensive support to two older women occupying a shared transitional housing property.

One Shelter Manager stated: "I am only able to work with minimal numbers of women and the need is so much greater. It has been identified that women and children on the waitlist and the women who are unsuitable for residential support require an outreach service and are quite often being missed or 'fall through the cracks' due to different barriers and judgements of services, or sometimes just not having the right words for services to understand their needs."

In April 2018, WCS received funding towards outreach at our new Haven- Nepean Women's Shelter and Bayside Women's Shelter, from LUCRF Super Community Program. We are extremely grateful for their support.

TRANSITIONAL HOUSING PROJECTS

In 2017, WCS partnered with community housing organisation Bridge Housing and Sydney property developer PAYCE to house homeless women in properties earmarked for redevelopment.

The "Pathways Home" project offers intermediate accommodation and support services for vulnerable women and children currently in WCS shelters.

Under the pilot scheme, five existing homes have been made available to WCS in North West Sydney to house women and their children escaping family violence.

John Nicolades, CEO Bridge Housing said: "We are delighted to work with WCS to make this project happen. While transitional housing is only ever intended as a temporary solution, it will put a secure roof over the heads of women and their children while they get their lives back on track.

It also uses underutilised properties in a city with a severe housing shortage - at no cost to government."

Homeless women and children exiting WCS shelters will benefit from the transitional housing environment for up to 18 months and in that time a range of wrap around support services will be provided by WCS.

To date, under the Pathways Home project six women and seven children have been housed in shared accommodation and others will follow throughout 2018.

We are working to expand the Pathways Home pilot to other developers.

EVOLVE

WCS is also working with Evolve Housing to provide medium term housing in the Blacktown and Penrith Local Government Areas.

The Safe Foundations program will provide subsidised housing for women and children exiting WCS shelters and also help them stabilise their lives with employment and training.

Evolve Housing Chief Executive, Andrea Galloway, said: "The three-year program is designed to connect women to training and employment while they navigate family law issues and stabilise their lives, ultimately resulting in them moving into the private rental market and living independently."

Without providing transitional housing support, many women are faced with the reality of homelessness and can become trapped in a cycle of disadvantage. The aim is to expand the project across Sydney if the pilot is successful.



Transitional Housing is the vital next step for women and children coming out of a shelter. Without Transitional Housing, without having somewhere safe and comfortable with an affordable rent to go to within your own community, it's very likely you are going to return to the cycle of domestic violence. So Transitional Housing is the vital next step, so that women can go on to lead safe and wonderful lives away from abuse.



YVONNE KEANE

SPECIAL PROJECTS

MONJI TEA

In April 2017, The Sanctuary – Hills Women's Shelter announced a brand new partnership with Sydney start up Monji Tea. Monji Tea produces a unique collection of teabags with hand-crafted tags that feature well-known inspirational quotes and Haiku poems.

Monji's tags are hand-folded by women from shelters run by WCS, giving them employment and learning capacity whilst in a shelter.

Donna Cavanagh, The Sanctuary – Hills Shelter Manager is delighted with the partnership: "The Morning Tea Circles are a new initiative for our shelter and I can't speak highly enough of it. It's very empowering for women who may not yet have the confidence to go out to work following a difficult period in their life. They do a day's work, earn an income, socialize with others in the safety of our shelter and it's a great confidence boost."

Following the success of the first few gatherings, Monthly Tea Yarning Circles are now held at The Sanctuary and sister shelter, the Northern Beaches Women's Shelter.

Tanya Boots, founder of Monji Tea, established the social enterprise in July 2017 and also believes in empowering women through working together.

"We believe strongly in the power of connecting women so basically Monji Tea is just about looking after each other," Boots explained.

"Women come together not only to earn an income but to enjoy social connections over a cup of tea. Many women we meet haven't had that in a long time," she continued.

"So far, we've worked with over 25 women and the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, which is exactly the impact we had hoped to make," she said.



NSW INNOVATION PROJECT – DV NSW & PWDA

WCS are collaborating in the new State project, 'Women with Disability and Domestic & Family Violence: Testing Approaches to Best Practice and Policy,' in partnership with People With Disability Australia and Domestic Violence NSW.

The project seeks to build access to domestic violence services for women with disability, through a community of practice model, service accessibility review and improvement process.

Being part of the Building Access Communities of Practice (BACOP) provides an opportunity to build relationships with members and learn from each other, engage in joint activities and discussions, and share information. The BACOP's practice will be to produce resources on improving accessibility of DFV services. These resources will be made up of experiences, stories, practices or tools.

Using an action research methodology, WCS is tracking our learning through the implementation phase and will share our experiences with the sector, from shelter operation through to design, thereby enhancing practice, improving access for women with disability and informing further resource and policy development.

WCS has participated in stage one of the project, with "The Sanctuary" completing an accessibility audit, participating in disability awareness training for staff and building a more comprehensive understanding of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

The Sanctuary Shelter is also in the process of developing a disability action plan. The Haven – Nepean Women's Shelter and the Hornsby Ku-Ring-Gai Shelter are already preparing for involvement in the second and third phases of the project.

TWO GOOD SCHOLARSHIP – HORNSBY KU-RING-GAI WOMEN'S SHELTER (HKWS)

In 2017, HKWS partnered with catering company, Two Good, on a new Scholarship program which allowed women in the shelter, to work in their kitchens for a three month period.

Two Good staff, in liaison with shelter staff, then work with the women to find them suitable full-time employment in a kitchen or catering environment.

To date, three women from HKWS have taken part in the Scholarship program and secured full time employment.

PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

In 2016-17 a key aim of WCS was to ensure our bespoke and innovative client software system Efforts to Outcomes (ETO) was operational across all shelters and uploading data to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW).

The ETO management system is currently in the final stages of certification by the AIHW. This is a significant achievement within the DV sector and will ensure all data capture by WCS is included in the AIHW Specialist Homelessness Services data collection.

The development of the ETO management system has not only allowed for a greater understanding of our impact for women in our services, but has also revolutionised case management for our staff, and created a platform that has allowed for synchronicity in case management throughout the network.

By mapping progress against key outcome areas such as a client's personal goals and their engagement in the service, ETO can highlight key client outcomes such as; safety, housing, education and employment, self-efficacy, law and

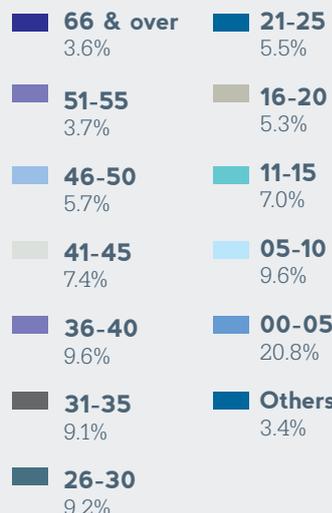
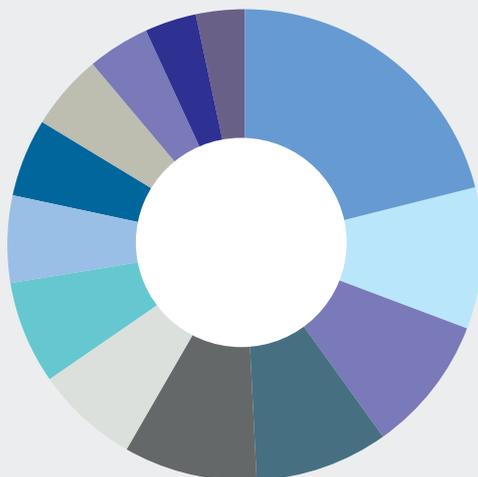
justice, mental and physical wellbeing, parenting and social connection.

The bespoke design of the system supports best practice case management and accountability throughout the client's transition from crisis accommodation, through to outreach, transitional housing, and into the longitudinal follow up program. The data collected through the longitudinal follow up program will not only strengthen our understanding of the impact of our work, but also allows us to reach out to women who may need assistance.



AGE OF OUR CLIENTS*

Combined demographic report: Active participants in Women's Community Shelters (aggregate)



Women's Community Shelters

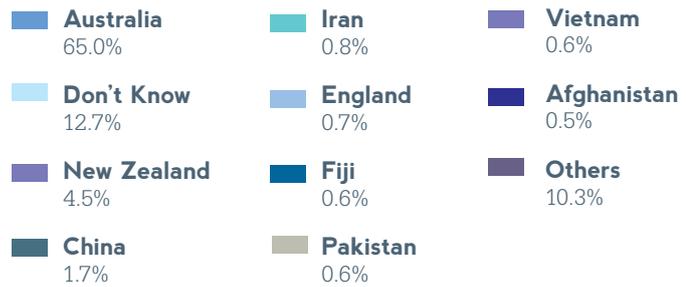
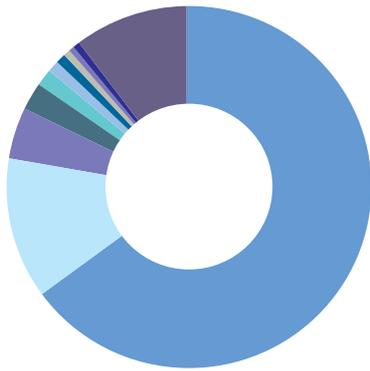
Total number of participants matching report filter: 1,073

Age

Number of participants represented: 1,069

NATIONALITY OF CLIENTS

COUNTRY OF BIRTH

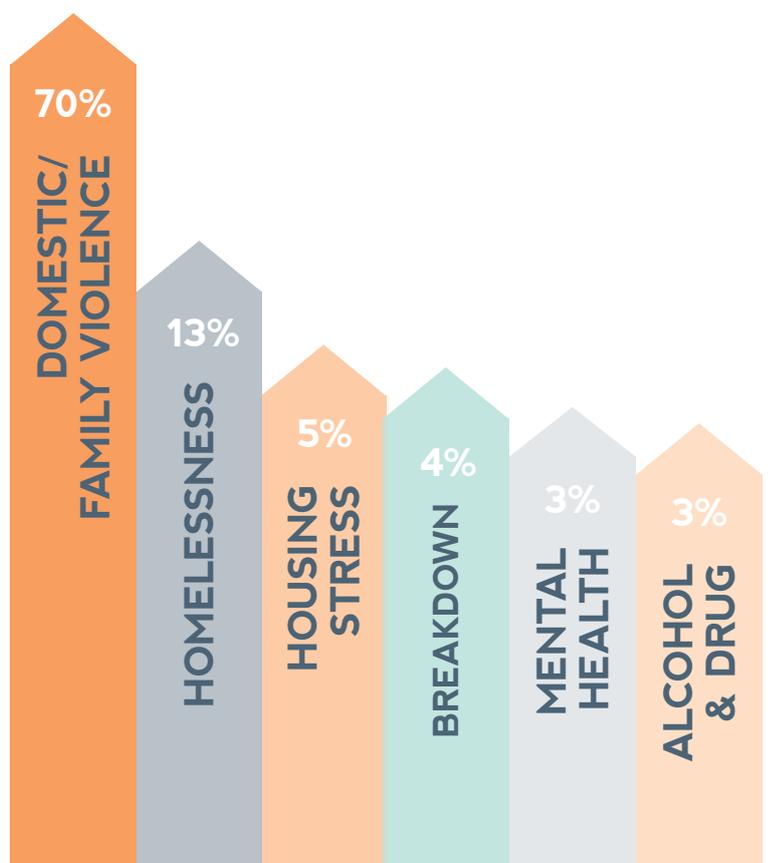


ABORIGINAL TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER



WCS CLIENTS REASON FOR REFERRAL

- D&FV 70%
- Homelessness 13%
- Housing stress 5%
- Relationship and family breakdown 4%
- Mental health 3%
- Problematic drug and alcohol abuse 3%



TRACKING & FORECASTING

WCS received good support from donors and partners during the 2017 financial year, providing a financial platform to commit to opening new shelters and continues support of existing shelters.

- Shelters were funded from a mix of NSW 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 five by year's end. WCS Hub expenses were well constrained, with the existing team managing the growth period.

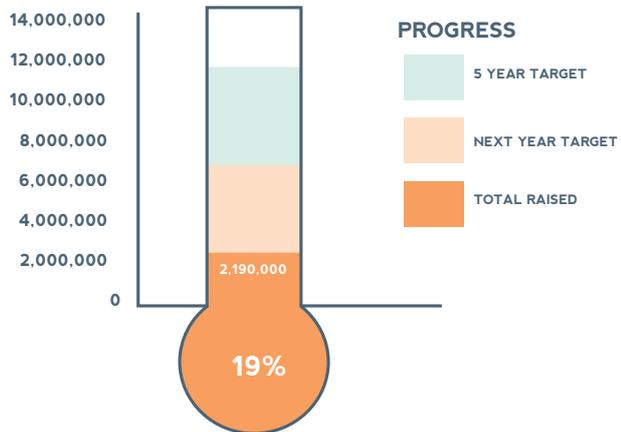
The audited balance sheet at 30th June 2017 shows a net asset position of \$2,844,760. Whilst the health of the balance sheet has improved over the past year, all funds are fully committed towards future shelter and WCS hub costs. In fact, as described in the fundraising targets of this report, there are significant funds still to be raised to achieve the planned expansion of the shelter network.

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 by up to ten shelters by the end of 2020.

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 via the Find a Charity function.

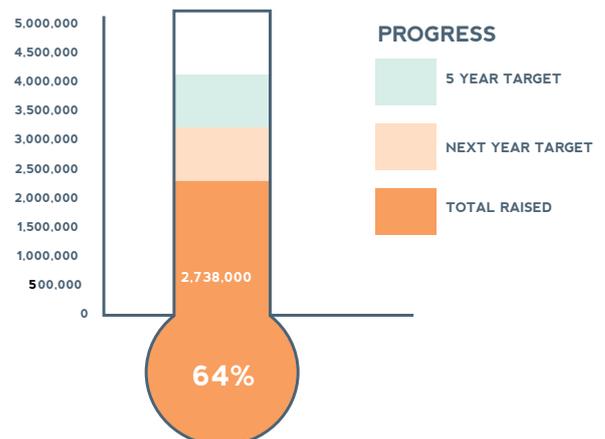
SHELTER FUNDRAISING

OVERALL	
5 Year Target	11,750,000
Next Year Target	6,500,000
Total Raised	2,190,000
Overall Percent	19%



WCS HUB FUNDRAISING

OVERALL	
5 Year Target	4,290,000
Next Year Target	3,400,000
Total Raised	2,738,000
Overall Percent	64%



MP Testimonials

“For the last three years the Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Women’s Shelter has given women a safe place to go when they have nowhere else to turn. Thank you to the Hornsby community for continuing to support such an important organisation.”

**THE HON. MATT KEAN, MP. MEMBER OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,
MEMBER FOR HORNSBY, MINISTER FOR INNOVATION AND BETTER
REGULATION**

“The Haven Nepean Women’s Shelter has been built from the ground up, by a team of smart, hardworking volunteers and a community of businesses and individuals - that is a fact I am proud of.

This shelter will bring much to the lives of the women and kids who call it home and be a source of pride for those in our community who support action against DV for the decades ahead.

All of the people who dedicated their time and money to this shelter support these women and their children. There is much in my short career I am proud of, this is in the top three.”

MS EMMA HUSAR, MP. FEDERAL MEMBER FOR LINDSAY, NSW

“I am incredibly proud and humbled to have been invited to be the Patron of the Northern Beaches Women’s Shelter. The work done at the Shelter on behalf of women across the Northern Beaches is vital for our community and I thank the team for their hard work!

**MR JAMES GRIFFIN, MP. MEMBER OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, MEMBER
FOR MANLY**

“The Sanctuary is an excellent initiative that sheds light on many different forms of domestic violence, raises awareness within our community, and opens up greater opportunities for more support services in our area.”

**THE HON. ALEX HAWKE MP. FEDERAL MEMBER FOR MITCHELL, NSW,
ASSISTANT MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS**

“On Monday 11 January 2016, following a significant community campaign, the new Great Lakes Women’s Shelter in Forster-Tuncurry opened and received its first resident; and the Great Lakes Women’s Shelter would not have been possible without the generosity and passion of local community members who fought tirelessly in support of victims fleeing domestic violence.

This House acknowledges the hard work and dedication of all involved in the establishment of the Great Lakes Women’s Shelter, particularly its President and founding member, Ms Julie Brady, who was also recognised recently as the 2016 Great Lakes Citizen of the Year for her community work.”

THE HON. COURTNEY HOUSSOS, MEMBER OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE
IMPORTANT WORK OF WCS:**



womenscommunityshelters.org.au



hello@womenscommunityshelters.org.au



02 9539 6859



0432 630 359



www.facebook.com/womenscommunityshelters/



[@WCS_CEO](https://twitter.com/WCS_CEO)

TO DONATE PLEASE VISIT:

www.givenow.com/womenscommunityshelters/donate

