

THRIVE

AUTUMN 2022

"If I hadn't met Anglicare, I don't know what my life would be like now" says Beryl.

Beryl moved to Australia to escape domestic violence but as the sole carer to her son with additional needs, she couldn't work and was not eligible for any government support. Fortunately, a friend suggested she contact Anglicare for help.

Story continued on Page 3.



Beryl pictured with her son and Anglicare case manager, Mel.



Message FROM THE CEO

Embarking on what – for most of us – will be the biggest recovery process of our lifetimes, our Anglicare teams are approaching this time with flexibility, humility, and a willingness to learn the lessons of the past. Since the COVID-19 pandemic first hit, our sector has been faced with major challenges. One of the biggest challenges we face is the national housing affordability crisis.

Anglicare recently launched our latest Rental Affordability Snapshot report highlighting the catastrophic rental market facing people in low incomes right across Australia. The data showed that for most people relying on government supports, there was simply no affordable housing available. Some of the regions we work in face unique housing challenges. The NSW South Coast, Eden/Monaro and Snowy Valleys areas are still in the process of bushfire recovery. Many homes are still to be rebuilt, putting pressure on already tight rental markets. The easing of COVID-19 lockdowns has also seen tenants face no-fault evictions as property owners choose to sell, increase rents to meet market demand, or offer their properties as more lucrative tourist rental options like

Air BnB. For local people, it means being locked out of finding a home in their own communities.

As an organisation we seek to be open to new challenges and opportunities, while looking for innovative and inclusive solutions for those we support. One of these proposed solutions, outlined on page 5, is our intention to acquire a property in Eden that previously operated as an aged care facility. The building currently sits empty in a township facing a rental crisis. Our plans to repurpose this site would see safe and affordable housing offered to between 16 and 19 people who are over 55 years of age or living with the disability. We believe that solutions like this can make a real difference and complement our other services, especially in regional areas that can often miss out on supports.

The challenges of the past few years, difficult as they have been, have highlighted what wonderful team members, donors, volunteers and community organisations we have working with us and supporting the ministry of Anglicare so faithfully and generously. Thank you.

Jeremy Halcrow
Anglicare CEO



CASSANDRA'S STORY

Cassandra is a young mother from Orange who was able to find secure, affordable housing for herself and her daughter with help from Anglicare's Survive and Thrive team.

"I was really stressed and anxious. I ended up staying in a motel for four nights because we had to move out of our old rental property and we still hadn't found somewhere else to live," explains Cassandra.

"Fortunately the team at Anglicare were amazing in supporting my baby daughter and me. They advocated for me so I could go onto priority housing lists and I was able to find a safe and affordable home that allows me to stay in the area. Without their help I don't know what I would have done. I feel so fortunate because I know there are so many other people who are struggling too."

Cassandra continues to receive occasional food support from Anglicare and includes her daughter in their play group activities.

Left: Cassandra (L) with her Anglicare case manager, Emma.



BERYL'S STORY

Continued from cover page.

"I was enduring domestic violence every day and I didn't know how to go on. I'd had enough of my life."

This is how Beryl describes her life before she contacted Anglicare for help. Several Christmases were spent alone watching families in the nearby units receiving visitors and celebrating. But Beryl and her young son were completely alone, struggling to make ends meet.

"I heard about Anglicare from a friend who goes to an Anglican church in town. She introduced me to Anglicare's financial counsellor." After learning about Beryl's difficult situation, the Anglicare team immediately assigned a case manager to assist her. They also helped to enrol Beryl and her son in the HIPPY program to help prepare him for school.

"The staff there are always looking out for the people they work with. When I feel down, I call my case manager, Mel. I find communicating in English hard sometimes, but she helps me to understand. She's a really great case worker," says Beryl.

"The Anglicare team check on me every week and I'm so thankful. Worry and anxiety used to affect me so much. I was getting chronic headaches and I had no one to talk to and share with. Now I have someone. They are like my family here, and now I can stand on my own two



feet," says Beryl. "If I hadn't met Anglicare, I don't know what my life would be like now."

The Anglicare team assisted Beryl as she moved into a private rental. But sadly many other people like Beryl, are still waiting for help.

Anglicare's Rental Affordability Snapshot was released last month. It measures how many properties are affordable for people relying on government supports.

Sadly, this is also affecting many people in the ACT and southern and western NSW. Housing markets in many regional areas, which used to be considered more affordable, are now tightening and putting significant strain on lower income households.

Our 2022 Rental Affordability Snapshot surveyed 45,992 rental listings across Australia and found that only

2%

rentals were affordable for a person earning a full-time minimum wage.

For people who receive income support payments, the findings were even worse.

LESS THAN 1%

of rentals are affordable to people receiving income support such as Age Pension or Youth Allowance.



CONGRATULATIONS JO!

Anglicare team member in Batlow, Jo Murrell, has been recognised by the Tumut VIEW Club for her outstanding service to the local community as an Anglicare Bushfire Recovery Coordinator.

Jo is celebrating two years in her role with Anglicare and we are so grateful for her dedication in serving local community members in the aftermath of the Black Summer Bushfires.

Jo has also commenced a Bus Stop Breakfast project for school students in and around Batlow. This initiative has received strong community support and is designed to help young people from local families to prepare for the school day.





Fostering THROUGH THE PANDEMIC

Fiona Matthews chose to become a carer in 2020 during the first COVID-19 lockdowns. After going through the approved checks and training, she began fostering with Anglicare later that year.

"Initially I was a short-term and emergency carer," explains Fiona. "But now I care specifically for one young person who is in her early teens. Teenagers are already going through massive changes in their lives, and for young people in care, those changes can be even more traumatic."

Now in her 40s and living without a partner, the reality of not being able to have her own biological children made Fiona look elsewhere. "I decided that even if I couldn't have children of my own, if I could help just one other person, it would be worth it. I know that the young person I care for is not my daughter. Your family is your family and no-one can change that. That's why it's important for her to still have a connection with her biological family. Anglicare helps to facilitate that in a way that keeps her safe," says Fiona. "But I care for her like she's my own. My dream would be that in the future she'd have a family of her own, and perhaps I could still be there to help her on that journey, even after she's

reached adulthood and left my care." Fiona's own mother passed away from cancer when Fiona was just 15 years old. The tragedy she experienced, and the love and support she received from people in her own community made her see that care can come from many places. "These people aren't my blood relatives but they feel like it because of the love they showed me. It's these same people; this same community who came alongside me after my mum died who are now helping me support the young person I care for. Everyone has experienced some sort of trauma in their life, but for a young person in care, often that trauma can be quite deep," says Fiona.

While she admits that some days can be rocky, Fiona knows to celebrate every win, no matter how small. "The young person I care for is a really great person who just needs someone to offer stability for her. When other people notice how great she is and they say something to her, or to me, it makes me so proud."

Fiona encourages anyone considering becoming a foster carer to really understand the importance of being that stable person. "I figure I set out to help one child," says Fiona, "so sometimes I turn to her, and I tell her,

"I'm pretty certain you're my one." Other children and young people need carers like Fiona. They need a stable home where they can heal and feel safe, especially with the uncertainties of COVID-19.

For more information about becoming a foster carer, visit www.anglicare.com.au/fostercare

The Anglicare team also host online foster care information sessions each month to help you decide if foster care is suitable for you and your family.

SCAN THE QR CODE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT BECOMING A FOSTER CARER WITH ANGLICARE



RAY WOTTON GARDENS Open Day

Anglicare hosted an open day at the Ray Wotton Gardens in Eden to share plans to repurpose the facility into affordable housing for seniors and people living with a disability. The open day highlighted the overwhelming support from Eden locals and community leaders to provide quality and accessible housing for the most vulnerable in the community.

In order to see this proposal fulfilled and give a voice to the lack of available and affordable housing options in Eden, Anglicare is asking community members to sign the Letter of Support to help secure funding and government support.



SCAN THE QR CODE TO SIGN OUR LETTER OF SUPPORT



Pictured above: State member for Bega, Dr Michael Holland (L) and Bega Valley Council Deputy Mayor, Liz Seckold (R)



HARMONY WEEK

The Anglicare team at Southern Cross Early Childhood School included a traditional smoking ceremony as part of their Harmony Week celebrations to recognise their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.

"I'm so so happy you were able to capture those lovely moments of me with my beautiful little family celebrating our culture and country" says the family.



RELAUNCH OF JUNCTION Social Groups

Anglicare's Junction Youth Health service team recently announced the relaunch of their Social Groups, which provide connection, creativity and practical support for young people aged between 12 and 25 years of age. The groups, which are free and include a Thursday art session and Friday hangouts and job-seeking support.

"We're so pleased to finally relaunch the groups for 2022. The purpose of these groups is to provide a fun and safe space to socialise, connect, and develop creativity and life skills," says Anglicare youth worker, Taylor Jackson, who was instrumental in establishing the groups and was a recent winner of the ACT Youth Coalition Best Young Talent YOGIE Award.

Sarah Murdoch, Anglicare's Manager of Youth and Family Services in the ACT says, "Young people have gone through a lot during COVID, especially those who were already vulnerable. Challenges with schooling, relationships, housing, mental and physical health, domestic violence, and difficulties accessing some supports during lockdowns means that social groups like these are an important way to help people to reconnect, heal and move forward with their lives."



Harry and Taylor, Junction youth workers.

The art group encourages mindfulness and creative expression, and includes youth-led art projects such as collaborative murals, graffiti and street art, comics, watercolour, and custom tote bag painting.

The job-seeking group empowers and encourages young people seeking employment, with practical assistance in creating a resume, writing cover letters, and finding jobs that are a good fit.

Participant feedback shows that the initiatives are making a marked difference in their lives with some commenting that the groups gives them a sense of validity, acceptance and purpose. It also provides them with a creative outlet and a way to build independence. Over 100 young people have already participated in the programs.



DR VOLUNTEERS SUPPORTING FAMILIES

During the peak of the COVID pandemic, Anglicare Disaster Recovery volunteers and staff supporter families who are staying at the Ragusa COVID-19 Quarantine Facility in O'Connor, ACT. The facility was established in September for families temporarily requiring self-contained and separated cabin accommodation whilst in quarantine for COVID-19 related symptoms. Most requests for clothing and

children's toys or activities were received when online deliveries were largely unavailable or items were needed in a quick timeframe. Many Anglicare Disaster Recovery volunteers offered clothing, children's games, puzzles and other equipment to help these families pass their time in quarantine. Thank you all for your generosity.

Photo by Canberra Times.



ANGLICARE NSW SOUTH | NSW WEST | ACT

Disaster Recovery



NEW TEAM MEMBERS

Natasha is a proud Kamilaroi woman who recently joined the team at the Ashmont Community Resource Centre as Anglicare's first Community Development Trainee.

Natasha supports the team by providing emergency food relief and admin support at Ashmont. She will also have the opportunity to move between our other Child, Youth and Family Programs in Wagga Wagga to best support her work experience and knowledge growth in these areas as she completes her traineeship.

We also welcome Brittany Campbell as Anglicare's Volunteer Coordinator. Her role sees her supporting hundreds of Anglicare volunteers across regional NSW and in the ACT.

"I have a love for connecting and working with individuals, community members and groups for the betterment of our people, services and regions. There is nothing more rewarding than working with likeminded individuals striving for positive social impact, change and growth," says Britt.

EMERGENCY RELIEF IN

Moruya

Anglicare's emergency relief teams provide necessities such as food, clothing and new tents, along with case management through the Eurobodalla Homelessness Support Service to assist people to move into more permanent accommodation.

"I regularly visit local campgrounds and touch base with people who access our service, and the ground is already waterlogged and concerning. The catastrophic lack in local housing, made worse by the Black Summer bushfires, means more people are really struggling," says Anglicare's emergency relief coordinator in Moruya, Pauline Sullivan.

"Most importantly, our team members provide a listening ear for people who are alone or still recovering psychologically from the trauma of the fires and housing instability. Our emergency relief hub is a safe place where people can receive practical support," says Ms Sullivan.



Pauline at the Moruya ER Hub



CREATING 'SAFER PLACES'

The Federal Government's Safer Places Grant has enabled Anglicare to acquire six new houses in Goulburn for emergency and transitional housing.

"The Anglicare team are incredibly grateful for this additional support. Having safe and secure places for families to rebuild their lives and recover from trauma is so important and organisations like Anglicare need to be able offer further options like this to meet growing needs. Secure housing is essential. Without it, people are unable to focus on employment, education or building relationships. A secure home gives people a foundation from which to heal and move forward," says Toni Reay, Anglicare's Regional Manager, Housing and Social Services (pictured).

Anglicare seeks donations to cover operational costs and buy new furniture so families can take what they need when they transition into permanent housing. Ongoing donations will ensure the fridge and pantry is always fully stocked when a new family arrives and that we can provide soft toys to comfort children who are feeling scared and overwhelmed.

To find out more about ways you can help, email supporters@anglicare.com.au



Thank you again to our generous donors for making these wonderful projects happen.
If you haven't donated, or would like to make a further contribution, your donation would be appreciated.

Donate here or on
www.anglicare.com.au

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Thank you for your generosity. A receipt will be sent to you shortly. Donations over \$2.00 are tax-deductable

Please note: 100% of your donation goes to people in need. No funds are withheld for administration costs

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