

NAIDOC Celebration at Ashmont

THRIVE

WINTER 2023





Message FROM THE CEO

As we enter a new financial year, it is right to reflect on our organisational goals and our pathways to meet them. As always, we remain committed to supporting and empowering the vulnerable members of our regional, rural and urban communities; a role that is of significant import during times of economic distress, like these.

Despite our 2023 Rental Affordability Snapshot that reveals an ever worsening housing situation for those on government supports or low income, despite food pantries struggling to keep up with demand and Emergency Relief services seeing twice as many clients as last year, our commitment only grows.

With that in mind, we have recently undergone an organisational restructure which we hope will

further enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of our services, while keeping always at the forefront our mission—alleviating poverty and suffering and reducing disadvantage.

In this we are guided by the words of Jesus, who said *"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you"* (Matthew 7:7) and remember that it is our duty to answer, our duty to help, and our duty to give what is needed.

While we may continue to weather changes in how and where we operate, in our managerial arrangements and our areas of highlighted focus, we will not lose sight of our ultimate purpose—using our resources to care for others.

We thank you for continuing to walk beside us on this journey.

Brandon Howard
Anglicare CEO



NAIDOC WEEK

Celebrating our Elders

Anglicare was thrilled to plan and participate in a number of NAIDOC Week events this July focusing on the theme of 'For Our Elders'. It was an opportunity to honour the important role elders play in the community as cultural knowledge holders, nurturers, leaders, teachers, advocates and more.

Our largest NAIDOC Week event was our annual NAIDOC Celebration at Ashmont Community Resource Centre where more than 200 people gathered to enjoy traditional dancing, cultural activities, and to witness a Thread Together fashion parade featuring local elders as models. *"That was so fun"* said one community member who witnessed it all.

Anglicare's Senior Coordinator for Child and Family Services for the Riverina, Jasmine Woodland, was pleased

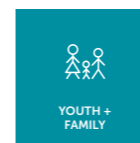
with how the day went. "We were a little worried about rain, but were thrilled with the turnout and the feedback received from those who attended", she said. Community members agreed, one stating "That was the best NAIDOC Week event I've been to!"

Jasmine and all of Anglicare are extremely thankful to Auntie Isabelle Reid for her Welcome to Country and to the team at Ashmont Community Resource Centre for making the day a success.

Other Anglicare services celebrated NAIDOC Week in various ways, including indigenous-led smoking and dance ceremonies in Moruya, special morning teas in Goulburn, Marulan and Liverpool and at a Community Sector NAIDOC Week event in Canberra.



Pictured: NAIDOC Celebration at Ashmont Community Resource Centre.



THE JUNCTION WITH LAUNCH OF NEW MOBILE HEALTH VAN



In May, Anglicare unveiled a new health van to provide clinical health services for young people who experience barriers to accessing traditional supports. The service is the first of its kind, designed specifically to support hard-to-reach young people, aged between 12 and 25, in the Canberra region.

Funding for the purchase, outfitting and stocking of the van was provided through a grant from the ACT Health Directorate.

"With this new mobile clinic, we are ensuring young Canberrans who are experiencing or facing homelessness, vulnerabilities and isolation from the general community are able to access crucial healthcare services", said ACT Minister for Health, Rachael Stephen-Smith, who spoke at the launch event.

As an extension of the services delivered by the Junction Youth Health Service, the new outreach van will employ clinicians and youth workers who will provide access to safe medical treatment. "We want to make health access as easy as possible", said Sarah Murdoch, Anglicare's Manager of Youth, Family and Health Services in the ACT, *"especially for young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and who have experienced trauma"*.

Common barriers to accessing traditional services include age, financial difficulties, transportation challenges, domestic violence, anxiety, disability and/or other health concerns. There are currently over 1000 young people registered with The Junction, and with the current high cost of living, the need is only increasing.



Community Recovery Grants IN COOTAMUNDRA, PARKES AND EUGOWRA



Residents in flood-affected communities are invited to apply for grants to fund projects that will support recovery and promote community cohesion.

Generous Anglicare supporters from across NSW and the ACT have donated funds specifically to

promote recovery in Cootamundra, Eugowra and Parkes. The idea behind distributing funds directly to those living in the impacted areas is that locals will know best how to help their own communities. If you have an idea for a project to bring your community together, we would love to hear it!

Examples of past projects include art workshops and exhibitions, a bonfire night, ballroom dancing, horse trail riding, art therapy workshops and a family event with bands and activities. Available funding ranges from \$200-\$2000 per project.

www.anglicare.com.au/crg

Reopening of The Church Pantry

ANGLICARE'S BATHURST EMERGENCY RELIEF SERVICE

The Church Pantry in Bathurst, which operates as a partnership between Anglicare and the All Saints Anglican Cathedral to provide emergency relief to a growing number of vulnerable community members in the local area, hosted an official opening on the 20th of July.

While The Church Pantry resumed operations following renovations at the end of 2021, the official reopening was a way of introducing the services on offer; including food relief, chaplaincy support and social connection to the wider community. The event also provided an opportunity to honour the work of former Anglicare Bathurst Emergency Relief Coordinator Barry "Baz" Porter who was instrumental in the pantry's conception and who tragically passed last year.

Over the past 12 months The Church Pantry has seen a rapid increase in demand for emergency relief. *"It has been hard to keep up with the growing demand"* said Dallas Holmes, Anglicare's Emergency Relief Hub Coordinator for Bathurst and Orange. *"In just a few hours we can see as many as 40 clients seeking emergency assistance, and many of these are seeking help for the first time. We recently helped an 82 year-old woman who has never needed services before, but who can no longer manage with her soaring rent"*.

While The Church Pantry is struggling with the increase in demand for services, and additional donations are always welcome, they also recognise the importance of being visible in the community. *"A few weeks ago I happened to be out walking and noticed a community member approaching passers-by, asking for help"*, said Dallas. *"He had nowhere to*

stay that night and nothing to keep him warm. The temperatures in the region go into the negatives overnight and if he hadn't run into me—someone with access to a sleeping bag and food—that could have been the end for him. This is why it is so important that people know that The Church Pantry is here."

Anglicare CEO, Brandon Howard, spoke at the event about the growing need facing regional service providers and the significant role volunteers and community parish partnerships play in meeting community demands. Long-running volunteer at the pantry, Sue West, also spoke about the current climate of need in the Bathurst area and gave insight into the role the pantry plays for vulnerable locals.

Volunteers like Sue are the backbone of The Church Pantry, which could not continue to operate without their efforts. In the limited hours the service is open, (10:00-12:00 - Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays) they assist upwards of 70-80 individual clients per week, with a team of just 10 volunteers and Dallas. Volunteers come from the community and from the parish, which also supports the pantry through weekly collections of non-perishable items and occasional financial donations.

Community leaders who attended the event included Bishop Mark Calder of the Bathurst Anglican Diocese; Member for Bathurst, Paul Toole MP; local NSW Police Chief Inspector, Glen Cogdell, and Margaret Hogan of the Bathurst Regional Council. A highlight of the event was the unveiling of a memorial bench, created to honour the life and work of Barry "Baz" Porter.



Pictured: Bathurst Church Pantry reopening with staff, clients and members of the public.

CYCLOPS YOUNG CARER GIVES BACK TO HELP OTHERS

Laura, a participant in Anglicare's CYCLOPS young carer program never expected to receive recognition for looking after her two younger siblings, though the strain has been considerable. The constant stress of assisting her mother to care for her sister, whose rare and serious medical condition has required no less than 21 surgeries and her brother, who experiences severe autism, has led Laura to her own diagnosis of PTSD.

Laura's Nan, however, thought of her granddaughter straight away when she saw a Facebook advertisement for Panadol's Care Collective, a program that *"champions exceptional Australians"* by collecting their stories of care and awarding them gift cards and other rewards.

Laura had no idea her Nan had nominated her until she received an email from Panadol, advising her that she was a finalist. After communicating with Panadol by email and zoom to discuss her story, Laura was chosen to receive a \$1000 Prezzy gift card to spend as she liked, and was asked to choose a worthy organisation to receive an additional \$2000 in vouchers.

Laura's mother, Krystle, explained why she chose CYCLOPS. *"It has made a real difference in her life"*, she said. *"Laura's two siblings have NDIS packages and a lot of time is spent making sure their needs are met. It can be hard to focus on the other kids in that situation, but CYCLOPS has helped give her access to so much that she wouldn't have otherwise. She has had driving lessons and tutoring. They've done so much to help her and it feels really good to be able to give something back."*

CYCLOPS Case Manager, Lisa Tolhurst, said, *"We are incredibly thankful to Laura for choosing us to receive the award. The gift cards came at a really good time, as it was starting to get cold out in Canberra. We were able to use them to assist young people experiencing disadvantage with the purchase of winter clothing and clothing that allows them to participate in sport"*.



Pictured: Laura, a participant in Anglicare's CYCLOPS program.



Pictured: Kasy Chambers speaking to media at the RAS launch.

2023 RENTAL AFFORDABILITY SNAPSHOT CONFIRMS HARSH REALITY FOR RENTERS

Statistics from Anglicare's Rental Affordability Snapshot, released at the end of April, confirm that unprecedented rental rate increases over the past few years have culminated in a devastating reality for people surviving on low incomes.

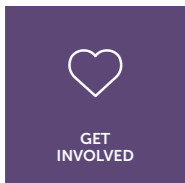
This year's Snapshot showed that for the regions of ACT & Queanbeyan, NSW Southeast, NSW West and NSW Riverina, between 1-8% of rental listings were appropriate and affordable for households surviving on income supports, while overall vacancy rates remain at record lows of 1%.

As a result, social housing waiting lists across Australia have grown by over 17% in just three years, pushing current wait times out to between 5-10 years.

The shortage of affordable rental properties has significant implications, leading to overcrowding, homelessness, unemployment or financial hardship. Research shows that single-parent families and women with children experiencing violence are particularly vulnerable, the latter making up 42% of Specialist Homelessness Services clients in Australia in 2020-21.

Many of the vulnerable individuals and families seeking assistance are working and earning minimum wage, but the high cost of housing means prioritising rent over other essential expenses like food, utilities and healthcare which has created a surge in need for emergency relief services.

With significant spikes in demand for our emergency relief services since December 2022, Anglicare sees an increase in funding for specialist crisis and homelessness services as essential to support those who have been displaced and are struggling to secure housing. *"In the 14 years Anglicare has produced the Rental Affordability Snapshot, we have never seen an outlook as dire for our vulnerable community members"*, said Anglicare CEO Brandon Howard.



Friendship, fashion and laughs VOLUNTEERING AT ANGLICARE'S PHILLIP OP SHOP

Customers visiting Anglicare Retail in Phillip on Fridays may find themselves chuckling as they peruse the bargain wares. That's because, among the dedicated team of volunteers that generously and regularly give their time to make the newly-updated op shop operate, is local comedian Trish Hurley.

Trish is a member of the all-female comedy group The Women's Room, a winner of the 2023 ACT RAW Comedy Festival and a finalist in the 2023 Melbourne International Comedy Festival. She is also an old friend of part-time Anglicare Retail store manager Tanya Smith, which is how she began volunteering with Anglicare just over two years ago.

"I love being there", said Trish, "I love talking to the customers when they come in and I love being with the other volunteers." In addition to making a difference in their community, friendship and comradery are a big part of what motivates the team at the Phillip shop. "It can be hard to make friends as an adult," said Trish, "but we've been out to dinner and had pot-lucks. Tanya is really good at organising things for us. I feel lucky to have her and the other volunteers in my life".

The other Philip volunteers agree. Vicky, who started at the shop after an injury left her unable to work, said *"I found I was spending a lot of time at home before, but I like being here. Everyone is nice and Tanya is just wonderful."* While Helen, who volunteers during the times her husband receives medical treatment, said her favourite part is meeting people—both volunteers and visitors, and 5-year volunteer Sue comes because *"I like being with the other volunteers on my days. They are kind and lovely".*

In addition to the people, another highlight of Trish's role at the shop is more fashion-related. *"I love dressing the dummies", she said. "I look at them as works of art. I want visitors to the shop to enjoy their time, they may come in and find a red sparkly glove being used as a belt. I do try to make it a visual experience".*

Besides volunteering and performing comedy, Trish also works full time at a pharmaceutical company which offers volunteer leave. *"It's really good, it covers the hours I work at the shop and allows me to do things like cover for Tanya when she needs a day off".*

For more information on volunteering with Anglicare call 02 6232 2488 or visit www.anglicare.com.au/volunteer

National Volunteers Week

Anglicare is blessed to have over 600 volunteers contribute their time, skills and kindness towards helping us serve the community. Many of our services could not continue to function without their efforts.

To show our gratitude, and in recognition of National Volunteer Week, Anglicare hosted a Volunteer Morning Tea on the 18th of May where we celebrated the amazing contribution made by volunteers.

The event was held at St John's Care in Reid, where Anglicare CEO Brandon Howard spoke about the important role volunteers provide to our organisation and how inspiring it has been for him, when visiting Anglicare services, to see their efforts in action.

We also heard from two long-time Anglicare volunteers, Margaret

and Wendy from Food Fair in Queanbeyan, who shared their experiences of seeing first-hand the difference they make in the lives of the community members who access this essential food service.

The keynote speaker for the event was author, psychologist and social researcher Hugh McKay AO who addressed the concept of kindness as a human trait. In his speech, Mr McKay praised our volunteers as heroes, commending them for connecting individuals to communities through acts of kindness, despite a trend in modern times toward living in more and more isolated ways. Mr McKay reminded us that as social beings, humans are hardwired for kindness. As he explained, kindness is ingrained in our social nature, but it also must be nurtured, encouraged and exemplified.

We are so thankful to have an army of volunteers who exemplify and encourage kindness daily and nurture the community by giving of themselves.

Gifts of candles and cupcakes were given to volunteers. The candles were made by young people participating in The Junction's Mindfulness Youth Art group, using recycled jars. The gourmet cupcakes were created by the mother of a participant in Anglicare's CYCLOPS Young Carers program.



Pictured: Hugh McKay at Volunteers event.

DFAT STAFF SUPPORT VULNERABLE LOCAL FAMILIES WITH ONGOING ANGLICARE PANTRY APPEAL

The Anglicare Pantry Appeal is an opportunity to support struggling families and individuals in the community by collecting donations of non-perishable food and essential living items. While most Pantry Appeal collections are run by schools or churches, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)'s Social Club started an office-based collection to support vulnerable Canberra families. Beginning in April of this year, the DFAT Social Club's ongoing pantry appeal has provided multiple van-loads of non-perishable food items and toiletries to help stock Anglicare's increasingly in-demand Emergency Relief services in the Canberra region.

"It was a combination of the increased cost of living, going into winter, and knowing how hard some people are doing it in Canberra," explained DFAT Social Club Director, Samantha, as to why they chose to get involved with Anglicare.

"We wanted to do something ongoing," added fellow Social Club Director, Elise, "as it meant we could get a large group of staff, with varied work arrangements, involved." Accessibility was another factor the team at DFAT considered. "Everyone has to grocery shop and giving an item is both easier and makes people feel better than giving financial donations," said Samantha.

Anglicare's Emergency Relief Coordinator for the ACT, Rachael Tschark, was thrilled to collaborate with Elise, Samantha and the team at DFAT. *"Our Emergency Relief services across the ACT region are under extreme pressure to keep pace with the current demand for food and personal care items", she said. "More than 90% of the assistance we provide comes from community donations, so the generosity of groups such as the DFAT Social Club is absolutely crucial in supporting local vulnerable families. Elise and Samantha have successfully demonstrated how a Pantry Appeal can be tailored to suit a large and busy workplace and I would encourage other organisations to get involved."*

The DFAT Social Club was pleased to make a tangible, local impact. *"Something we're working really hard to do is making sure that, as Canberra locals, we support Canberra", said Elise. "We really want to help our local community".*

For further information on hosting an Anglicare Pantry Appeal collection contact 02 6232 2488 or visit www.anglicare.com.au/pantryappeal



Pictured: Elise and Samantha from DFAT Social Club with a boot full of donated items.



FOR I WAS HUNGRY



Each year we recognise Anglicare Sunday in conjunction with Anti-Poverty Week, as a way of expressing gratitude to the parishes and parishioners we partner with for the time, talent, and donations they generously give. It is a day to recognise how our shared efforts create positive changes for those struggling within our communities.

In 2023, Anglicare Sunday will occur on the 22nd of October, though parishes can choose to participate on a date that suits them best. This year's theme, **'For I was Hungry'**, is based on Matthew 25:35-37 and is a timely reminder of the challenge many community members face in feeding and housing their families this year—and our duty as Christians to help. Recently we have seen Anglicare food pantry shelves reach near empty levels, as high rents and increased inflation lead to spikes in demand for emergency food assistance.

Anglicare's connection with parishes and their dedicated members aids our ability to meet the needs of those struggling in our community. If your parish is not yet involved with Anglicare, the day is an opportunity to learn about joining us in our shared mission to alleviate poverty. A variety of resources will be available including posters, flyers, speaking notes, a prayer diary, video messages and the possibility of arranging in-person speakers.

Please reach out if you are interested in participating, in learning more, or in organizing a speaker by calling **02 6232 2488**.

Join us on **SUNDAY 22 OCTOBER 2023**

'For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.' - Matthew 25:35-37



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.

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