

Together

DECEMBER 2025



God grant us the compassion to care deeply for others; the wisdom to discern how best to help; the energy to transform emotion into action, and the joy of wholehearted service. Amen.

- Anglicare Prayer for Anglicare NSW South, NSW West & ACT

From Our CEO



Anglicare is here to serve. We're not just a service provider; we're a community of care. Whether someone walks through our door needing food relief, housing support, financial counselling, or just someone to talk to – we're there.

This Christmas, the cost of living crisis is hitting harder than ever.

The latest Anglicare Australia Cost of Living Index reveals a sobering reality: after paying for rent, food and transport, a minimum wage worker has just \$33 left each week. For parents with two children, it's \$5. For a single mother, \$1.

It's not just families on government supports who are struggling. Every week, more people reach out for help – for food, for warm clothing, for tents and sleeping bags, and for hope. We see people couch surfing, sleeping in cars, and even public servants, once considered financially secure, unable to afford basic essentials.

For over 95 years, Anglicare has been part of this community – and today, our role is more critical than ever. We are committed to being a place of care and compassion this Christmas. No matter the reason someone comes to us, we take a "no wrong door" approach, walking alongside each person to empower them through care.

Our work is deeply relational, grounded in dignity and respect. But demand is growing fast.

Last year, we supported nearly 15,500 people in the ACT and regional NSW, far beyond what our funding covers. More than 40% were new clients, many seeking help for the first time.

The need is urgent. Together, we can make this Christmas brighter for families, young people and individuals who rely on Anglicare every day.

Thank you for standing with us – and with those who need hope most this festive season.

Wishing you and your loved ones peace, joy, and a very Merry Christmas.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Trevor Ament".

Trevor Ament

CEO | Anglicare NSW South, NSW West & ACT

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Christmas Message



THE RIGHT REVEREND DR MARK SHORT

Diocesan Bishop of Canberra & Goulburn

Sometimes there is beauty in disruption.

One of my childhood Christmas memories was the ever-present 'snow-globe.' A small liquid filled sphere, it usually contained a streetscape that looked fairly nondescript – until you turned the globe upside down and gave it a little shake. Then the globe would be filled with tiny flecks of dazzling tinsel, settling to the ground like multi-coloured snow flakes. As I sweltered in the midst of the Australian summer it suggested a more exotic, more enticing Christmas.

We live in an era of disruption. Changing technologies, cost of living pressures and international tensions are unsettling many of us.

Life in the Middle East two thousand years ago was not all that different. Improved roads allowed the Roman Empire to spread its rule further and faster. Peasant farmers struggled to make end meet under the dual burden of local rents and Roman taxes. There were rumours of wars and revolutions and no one quite knew what was coming next.

Yet none of these were the great disruption. That occurred amongst the animals in an out-of-the way village as a first time mother welcomed her child into the world. For it was in the birth of Jesus that God came in person to fulfill the words which Mary herself had sung months earlier – "He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble. He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty." (Luke 1:52-53)

At Christmas God turned our world upside down and gave it a shake. If we look carefully, there is dazzling beauty to be found here. The beauty of grace. The beauty of forgiveness. The beauty of restored relationships and a world put right under the rule of its rightful King.

May you and those you love be dazzled this Christmas and may God bless you as you strive to bring the good gifts of justice and compassion to the world He loves.

Bishop Mark Short



Behind the Scenes of Emergency Relief

The Logistics Challenge You Never See—and How You Can Help Solve it

When Libby and her 4-year-old son arrived at Gordon community Centre on a Friday morning, they were incredibly thankful to receive a bag of food to get them through the next week. But unfortunately, the centre had just run out of laundry detergent—so their washing would have to wait.

Meanwhile, in Queanbeyan, our Emergency Relief team had plenty of detergent—but no pasta sauce for Roger, who was preparing dinner on a hotplate in his temporary accommodation.

These stories highlight a key challenge in delivering Emergency Relief: logistics. It is impossible to predict which items will be in highest demand, or where, in any given week.

With half of renting households in NSW and the ACT experiencing food insecurity*, families are prioritising rent and utilities—leaving gaps in their ability to afford food, hygiene products, and household essentials like dish soap and detergent. That's where Anglicare steps in.

But operating without a regular, consistent funding source makes this work even harder.

That's why flexible, financial gifts are so important.

While we deeply appreciate donations of food and essentials, monetary gifts give us the flexibility to respond quickly and effectively. They allow us to buy exactly what is needed—whether it's detergent for Libby or pasta sauce for Roger—without the added cost of transporting goods between centres or renting storage units.

Simply put, dollars go further. They're more efficient, more adaptable, and more impactful.

As we enter the Christmas season, when demand is at its peak, consider shifting your giving. A dollar donated today provides exactly what is needed tomorrow.

Thank you for standing with us—and with the families who rely on Anglicare's Emergency Relief services.

Pictured: Volunteers at Arawang Emergency Relief Hub

*FoodBank Hunger Report 2025





Pictured: Belle and Jas at a fundraising lunch in Wagga Wagga

Turning a House into Healing: *Creating a Sanctuary for Women and Children*

An established property in Wagga Wagga will soon begin a new, meaningful chapter—as will the women and children who take refuge in its walls.

Thanks to a generous \$252,000 in funding from the Department of Social Services' (DSS) Housing Australia Future Fund – Crisis and Transitional Accommodation Program, Anglicare will transform the donated home into transitional housing for women and children escaping domestic violence.

The property has deep connections in the Ashmont community, it has long been a place of refuge and support for those in need.

With support from the team at Kitson Property, our Wagga team has managed the property for several years—providing wraparound support to residents through case management, structured playgroups, and access to services at our nearby Ashmont Community Resource Centre. Now, as the official owners of the three-bedroom, two-bathroom home, we are set to renovate the space into a culturally safe, secure, and independent living environment—that fosters healing, dignity, and hope. “We are thrilled to see the legacy of this home continue,” said Jasmine Woodland, Senior Manager of Child, Youth, and Family Services at Anglicare. “This funding will allow us to make crucial upgrades, providing women and children in crisis

with a safe and nurturing environment as they rebuild their lives.” In addition to the DSS funding, we are also grateful for the support we’ve received through the Wagga Wagga Takes Two charity singing competition. Local realtor and co-owner of Kitson Property, Belle Humbert, participated in the event and generously donated her earnings toward furnishing the new domestic violence refuge. Wagga Wagga Takes Two is a beloved annual event that pairs 10 local celebrities with 10 musical mentors for an evening of entertaining duets—all in support of local organisations. Each participant selects a cause close to their heart, and we are deeply grateful to Belle and her mentor Amber-Rose Walker, for choosing Anglicare. Their generosity, along with the support of the wider community, will help furnish the new transitional home and contribute to building resilience and equity for families in need.

Over the past two years, Belle developed a deep connection with Anglicare, leading her team at Kitson Property to collaborate with Anglicare Wagga in managing eight of our Community Housing Innovation Fund properties. Visit our Safer Places page to learn more about Anglicare’s Family and Domestic Violence support programs or visit the Ashmont Community Resource Centre page to learn more about how we are serving the Wagga Wagga community and how you can help.

Resilience in Action:

David's Story of Community and Belonging

David Gumring has an infectious smile. Whether he's organising craft activities, participating in parenting role plays or arranging information packs—his cheery outlook elevates everyone around him. But behind his smile is an amazing story of resilience and hope.

"We have been so fortunate to have David involved with the HIPPY program", said Mel Crawford, Coordinator for Anglicare's Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY). "From his time as a participant, with his beautiful daughter Miriam, to now, as a HIPPY Tutor, he has brought so much energy, joy and willingness to learn."

The journey that brought David and his family to Wagga Wagga was not simple or easy. Forced to escape ethnic and religious persecution in Myanmar in 2013, his family spent 9 years as refugees in Malaysia—living in temporary housing in a crowded camp. As a refugee, David was prohibited from working, yet he still needed to find a way to support his family.

Though there was risk involved, David took on informal work as an interpreter for UNHCR, assisting asylum seekers planning to resettle in the USA.

Through UNHCR, the Gumring family received sponsorship from an Australian family in Wagga Wagga. It was this family who encouraged them to complete the immigration process and to settle in the Riverina region.

When they eventually did, the family was incredibly thankful but also overwhelmed by the magnitude of the change. However, despite his initial fears and challenges accessing information, David quickly began to adapt to life in his new country: "On the first day in Australia, I couldn't understand the Aussie English, Australians use a lot of slang and shorten their sentences. But after a while, when I had engaged more with the local community, I began to understand. The people are very kind and helpful."

It was not long before a neighbour introduced David and his family to Anglicare's Ashmont Community Resource Centre (ACRC) and the HIPPY program. "It is a very good program for children. We became interested and enrolled straight away", said David.

Through the HIPPY program, David watched his daughter Miriam overcome her shyness, gain confidence interacting with others and develop her fine motor and language skills.

Pictured: David at the 2025 Anglicare NAIDOC event with the HIPPY team



As an adult participant, David learned strategies for positive parenting, supportive communication and flexible time management.

The HIPPY program runs for 24 months, and parents who have completed the course are often encouraged to act as HIPPY Tutors for the next round, an opportunity David was eager to pursue. "This is my first job in Australia," David said. "So, I was very excited to be a HIPPY Tutor."

The role not only gives David valuable work experience, but also a renewed sense of purpose and belonging. "I'm gaining confidence, learning how to work with people, and understanding more about community," he shared.

Now, David is helping other families navigate the same challenges he once faced—offering guidance, encouragement, and a smile that reassures them they're not alone.

From refugee to role model, David's journey is a testament to resilience, community support, and the transformative power of education. Through HIPPY, he's not only building a brighter future for his daughter, but also helping shape a stronger, more inclusive Wagga Wagga.



Interested in finding out more about HIPPY?
Scan the QR code.



More than a Pantry

How Food Fair is Changing the Game for Families in Need

Operating from the back of Anglicare's retail shop in Queanbeyan, Food Fair is a widely used community pantry with a unique format. Unlike traditional food pantries that primarily offer non-perishable food and essentials to those in crisis, Food Fair offers deeply discounted groceries—including fresh produce and meat—to low-income families and individuals. While the team at Food Fair also provides free emergency food and essentials to those in immediate crisis, the membership program is a longer-term option for those facing ongoing financial stress. Members gain access to affordable groceries in a way that preserves choice, dignity and autonomy.

With over 600 members, Food Fair has become a trusted resource for many who would otherwise struggle to afford nutritious food. Members are primarily from the Queanbeyan and Canberra region—but a considerable number also come from rural areas like Gunning and Tarago, where affordable options are limited. Recently, food relief programs across the country—including Anglicare's—were impacted by a loss of government funding. This loss means that the fundraising dollars that support Food Fair and other initiatives must be spread further than ever. Anglicare food pantries in Moruya, Yass, Wagga Wagga and Canberra have all been impacted—as have our parish partner food relief programs throughout the region.

Without any government support, our ability to purchase the provisions needed to meet growing demand is severely challenged. We now rely, more than ever, on the generosity of our donors to keep these vital services running.

Jennifer, a volunteer at Food Fair for nearly four years, sees firsthand how important the program is to the community. "We have so many people come in, and they are a real mixture of social demographics", she said. "Sometimes we see more than 30 people in a day."

Now retired, Jennifer is a former petroleum geologist and public servant. She volunteers because she wants to help people and feels confident that she is doing so through her role at Food Fair—giving both practical and social support. "The people that come in often want to tell you their story. For some we might be the only person they've talked to all week. Some, have issues going on in their life, be it mental health or something else. Many are elderly, and on a fixed income and may have no one else to talk to."

Jennifer and the team are incredibly grateful for the support they receive from the community. One local man delivers a full bag of food every fortnight. Another regular retail shopper donates cans of baked beans every time she visits. As we face this funding shortfall, community generosity is more essential than ever. While donations of food and goods are always welcome, the high cost of storage and transport means that financial gifts have the greatest impact. Monetary donations allow our Food Fair and Emergency Relief teams to purchase exactly what is needed, when it is needed—maximising efficiency and improving outcomes for those we serve.

Pictured: Food Fair Queanbeyan





Interested in
becoming a
foster carer?
Scan the QR code.



The Hope Behind Foster Care

How Fostering Changed Jennifer's Life

Like many Foster Carers, Jennifer didn't plan to take this path—but once she did, she knew it was exactly where she was meant to be.

It all began when Jennifer's five children were still at home, and she was working in real estate. "We started helping a young couple who were struggling," she recalls. "At the time, we didn't feel able to formally become carers. But later, once our own children were older, we revisited the idea and began investigating options."

That decision would lead Jennifer and her partner to become carers—and profoundly transform their lives.

After some initial weekend respite care placements, Jennifer received a call asking if she could take in a sibling group of four—long term. "The rest, as they say, is history," she smiles. That group eventually grew to seven siblings, two of whom she still cares for today.

Fostering, Jennifer admits, was not quite what she expected. "The sense of humour with the young people was different—that was the first surprise!" she laughs. "But I also wasn't prepared for the impact trauma would have on their development. Thankfully, we had access to great training and support, and we grew in our knowledge."

The challenges were real—navigating a school system not always equipped to be trauma-informed and confronting public misconceptions

about foster children and their families. But the rewards? Immeasurable. "Watching young people grow into caring, resilient adults... it's a huge amount of love—and a few grey hairs," she jokes.

Jennifer's passion didn't stop at her front door. After years of fostering—including short-term, emergency, and respite care, and even supporting a mum through restoration—she wanted to do more. In her 50s, she began studying, earning a diploma and then a bachelor's degree, determined to make a broader impact.

In January 2023, she joined Anglicare as a Senior Carer Support Coordinator. "I came from another organisation where I felt less supported. Anglicare felt different. Here, we care for the carers."

Now, Jennifer brings her lived experience to her professional role, bridging the gap between carers and the system. "I work with an incredible team and supportive leadership. I want to shift the conversation—to see carers as key members of the team around our young people. That's how we create safe, nurturing, and consistent placements."

For those standing at the edge of the decision, unsure if fostering is for them, Jennifer has simple but powerful advice: "Give it a go. You'll be surprised by how much love you'll receive—and how much you'll grow."

Healing Starts Here:

How The Junction Combines Care and Community



Pictured: Dr. Joo-Inn at the Junction Youth Health Service

At The Junction Youth Health Service, care goes far beyond the consulting room. For Dr. Joo-Inn, a dedicated mental health GP, it's the comprehensive wraparound support that makes all the difference. "It is incredibly effective to have counselling co-located with Youth Workers, Emergency Relief, and general medical care", she explains. "It means there are many access points for young people, who can feel comfortable addressing multiple needs within the same trusted service." Dr. Joo-Inn has been part of The Junction team for over two years, providing focused psychological strategies and general mental health care to young people navigating some of life's toughest challenges. Her journey to The Junction was shaped by a deep commitment to supporting those who face barriers to mainstream healthcare.

"I've always been interested in working with people who are marginalised," she explains. "Before this, I worked at Companion House supporting refugees and asylum seekers, and at Interchange General Practice, supporting people affected by homelessness and complex trauma."

Many of the young people who come to The Junction face significant challenges—homelessness, trauma, financial stress, and disconnection from family or education. This means there is a high need for mental health care and psychological support. But just as critical

is access to basic necessities like food, hygiene products, and clothing. These aren't just helpful—they're essential. That's where the Emergency Relief program plays a vital role. "It allows us to meet young people where they're at", explains Dr Joo-Inn. "They might come in for a meal or to do laundry, and from there, we can build trust and connect them with medical or mental health care."

Dr Joo-Inn is quick to highlight the role of the Youth Workers in this model. "They're incredible—so committed, experienced, and fun to work with. The groups they run, like the Art Group and Young Parents Group, create community and connection." The collaborative nature of the team is key to its strength. "It is great to work with our GPs and nurse, and join in regular clinical meetings where we are able to reflect on young people from all our different complementary perspectives," says Dr Joo-Inn. "It helps us provide truly holistic care."

"I am motivated by talking to inspiring young people, seeing change over time, and being part of such an excellent team", she said.

With their multidisciplinary approach, Dr. Joo-Inn and her colleagues help open doors to healing, connection, and hope—making The Junction more than a service, but a lifeline for many young people.

Essential Workers Locked Out of Housing: A Crisis in Our Own Backyard

In October, Anglicare Australia released their 2025 Rental Affordability Snapshot -Essential workers Report. Surveying more than 51,000 rental listings, the report assessed affordability against the wages of sixteen essential occupations—and the results were stark.

Workers that care for our children, teach in our schools, and respond to emergencies are increasingly unable to afford to live in the communities they serve. Across NSW and the ACT, essential workers—including nurses, early childhood educators, cleaners, and hospitality staff—are being priced out of the private rental market. In the ACT, not a single rental property was affordable for a full-time hospitality worker. Nationally, less than 2% of rentals were affordable for aged care workers, nurses or construction workers. Even in regional areas like the Capital Region, affordability remains critically low, with fewer than 5% of listings within reach for most essential workers. “These results show that the housing crisis is now hurting the people who hold our communities together. If they cannot afford to live where they work, then schools, hospitals, and aged care homes will struggle to keep running”, said Anglicare Australia Executive Director Kasy Chambers.



RENTAL AFFORDABILITY SNAPSHOT
ESSENTIAL WORKERS REPORT 2025



More than a housing issue, the situation is a potential community crisis. When essential workers can't afford to live near their jobs, the pressure on vital services—like schools, hospitals, aged care homes, and emergency services—grows, affecting everyone. The report also highlights that rental prices continue to outpace wage growth, and even recent wage increases in sectors like aged care have done little to improve affordability. “We need to build at least 25,000 new public and community homes each year”, said Ms. Chambers. “Rentals that essential workers can actually afford. And we need stronger protections for renters, so people are not left at the mercy of an unfair system”.

RAS figures show

The Rental Affordability Snapshot: Essential Workers Edition surveyed more than 51,000 rental listings and tested them against the wages of sixteen essential occupations it found that:

- 1,117 rentals (2.3%) were affordable for an ambulance officer
- 850 rentals (1.7%) were affordable for an aged care worker
- 754 rentals (1.5%) were affordable for a nurse
- 417 rentals (0.8%) were affordable for an early childhood educator.

“It is a national disgrace that the people we all rely on – nurses, teachers, care workers, cleaners – cannot afford a secure place to live”

- Anglicare Australia Executive Director
Kasy Chambers



Read the Rental
Affordability Snapshot
Scan the QR code.

Together

'Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.'

2 Corinthians 1:3-4 (NIV)



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