



2023 ANNUAL REPORT



Government and Funding Bodies

Department of Health and Aged Care
Department of Communities and Justice
Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District
My Aged Care
National Indigenous Australians Agency
NSW Aboriginal Affairs
NSW Police – (Lake Illawarra Youth Engagement team)
Wollongong City Council

Business Partners

Dapto Leagues Club
Dapto Mall
Embers Robotics
Flagstaff
Gourmania
PRD Dapto
Unitech

School and Education Partners

Bulli High School
Dapto High School
Dapto Public School
Hayes Park Public School
Kanaooka High School
Koonawarra Public School
Goodstart Early Learning Dapto
Lakelands Public School
Mt Brown Public School
Narragunnawali Reconciliation in Education
St Johns Public School
Woonona High School

Community Partners

AT Culture
Australian Community Support Organisation (ACSO)
Bennelong Foundation
Bundaleer Committee
Community Industry Group
Coomaditchie United
Food Rescue and Relief Working Group
Hearspace/Grand Pacific Health
Illawarra Aboriginal Corporation
Illawarra Aboriginal Medical Service
Lake Illawarra PCYC
Meals on Wheels
Mission Australia
Neighbourhood Centre Forum
Neat A Feed
PACC Police Aboriginal Consultative Committee
Salvation Army
St Johns Dapto
SYC
Uniting
WDAT/CALD Community Drug Action Team Committee
Willowmina Art
Women Illawarra

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CareWays Community Vision, Statement of Purpose & Values

Our Vision

Connected, caring and supportive communities

Our Purpose

Progressive community services

Our Values

Accountability, Caring, Excellence, Flexibility, Integrity

Board of Directors

Year Ending 20 June 2023

	Years of Service	Meetings Attended (10 Possible)
Chairperson		
Rhonda Warner	24	10
Directors		
Romeo Cecchele	28	10
Frances Cardwell	27	10
Paul Harradence	7	9
Susan Kirby	3	9
Life Members		
Neville Johns		
Brian Tether		

The CareWays Team

We would like to acknowledge and thank all our CareWays teams including CareWays Aged Care, CareWays Community Hubs at Koonawarra, Horsley, Dapto and Thirroul Neighbourhood centres and our Corporate and Finance team.

During the year it is always wonderful to receive such great positive feedback and compliments for our teams and employees. Thank you.

“...a difference to our community.”

“My Care Worker is the best!”

“I will never forget your help!”

“...help with anything I need.”

“I can’t praise you enough.”

Chairperson's Report

It is my privilege and duty as Chairperson of the Board of CareWays Community Ltd (CareWays) to introduce and give an overview of the functions of the organisation during the past financial year. I am pleased to note that we are in a sound financial position and recommend that stakeholders and interested parties read the information included in this Annual Report.

Another year of change and challenges has been experienced by CareWays. I am pleased to report that, despite the disruptions caused by Covid-19, during this time the organisation has continued to provide excellent caring services to the most vulnerable and needy members of our community. Regular youth and early childhood activities, along with a variety of adult learning groups, have re-commenced and are enjoyed by all those who participate. These activities provide opportunities for community members of all ages to enjoy social interaction in a supportive and safe environment.

It has long been on the agenda of the Board to look for opportunities outside of government funding to help make the organisation more self-sustaining. The purchase of a residential property adjacent to the Ribbonwood Centre has been an important step in this direction.

As well as being a capital asset, it provides a safe and enclosed parking area for the CareWays fleet of vehicles. We liaised with a local organisation that assists people in need to find suitable housing at a reasonable cost to ensure that our business model was in line with our expressed mission statement.

I wish to particularly thank Russell for the outstanding way in which he has guided the organisation and supported the staff during these troubled times. On the request of the Board he stepped up to perform the CEO role whilst continuing to be our Financial and Business Manager. When it became apparent to him in early 2023 that he needed to step back from the CEO position, so that he could concentrate on his key financial guidance of the organisation, he approached the Board members for their feedback. The Board unanimously supported his decision and after a lengthy process a decision was made in late June, 2023, to employ Matthew Martin as our new CEO.

During the latter part of the financial year CareWays underwent the Aged Care audit process. Despite providing excellent services to our clients, some key areas of record keeping, reporting and plan reviews required immediate improvements. Steps have already been put in place to rectify these issues and we are demonstrating the necessary

progress for full compliance by the end of 2023.

During the last financial year CareWays has continued to provide a diverse range of services to our community. The Dapto Neighbourhood Centre staff have been enthusiastic, innovative and proficient in developing and sustaining a wide variety of activities. These have included early childhood Play Group sessions, a variety of youth oriented activities, social support and creative leisure activities.

It is with a tinge of regret that we see the long-running breakfast programme come to an end, and our thanks go to the many volunteers and businesses who have supported it over the many years that it provided healthy food and social interaction for participants. It has been decided to try a new approach and in lieu of the free all ages breakfasts, food hampers and morning tea get-togethers are now being arranged with great success.

CareWays played a key role in supporting and organising several community events over the course of the year. The Reconciliation Walk and NAIDOC celebration were notable examples of these. The Neighbourhood Centre staff did a wonderful job in putting on these well-attended and highly successful functions that provided excellent opportunities to engage with our local Koori residents.

Caring, sharing, courtesy, kindness, compassion and tolerance are the hallmarks of a civilised and cohesive society. It is my belief that CareWays provides its services to the community with professional expertise in an ethical manner that exemplifies these positive values.

My thanks are extended to all of the hard-working staff and volunteers of our organisation who make this a reality. Particular thanks are given to our CEO and senior staff who supervise the everyday functions of the organisation, alert us to changes in government regulations and assist in navigating the sometimes difficult pathways through a maze of red tape. Thus, enabling CareWays to effectively achieve its goal of providing high quality services to the community.

The ultimate responsibility for setting strategic goals and overseeing their implementation rests with the Board of CareWays Community Ltd. Special thanks go to the volunteer members of the Board who donate their time and the collective treasury of their knowledge and experience to this endeavour.

Rhonda Warner
Chairperson

Chief Executive Officer's Report

As CEO of CareWays Community I am reminded every day that no matter what is happening in the world and Australia that if you are fortunate enough to live in and around our Community and Neighbourhood Centre's or receive our Aged Care Services you are never alone.

Looking back over the last year it is evident that CareWays does a lot more than just providing in home services, domestic assistance, personal care, social support, respite, transport, youth services, children and family support and outreach for our most vulnerable. CareWays and our committed and experienced teams provide genuine kindness and support that can transform the lives of our participants and the community.

It is with great pride that I present this year's Annual Report and reading through the pages I am reminded by the quote:



There are only four kinds of people in the world. Those who have been caregivers. Those who are currently caregivers. Those who will be caregivers, and those who need a caregiver.

This quote sums up CareWays, with our volunteers, community partners and funding bodies, we not only care for our community, but together we achieve life changing outcomes for our service users and their families, and we gain strength as a community knowing that we have that support and community connection.



I would especially like to thank our funding partners, Department of Health and Aged Care, NSW Family & Community Services, NSW Department of Education, Prime Ministers Department, Wollongong City Council, and Dapto Leagues.

Highlights include Wollongong City Council committing over \$500k to renovate the roof at our Koonawarra Community Centre that will ensure its use long term by the local community; the Hampers with Heart initiative with Dapto Leagues Club; the 10 year anniversary of the play group in partnership with Healthy Cities; Meals on Wheels celebrated 70 years of service this year and our clients value not just their meals but the welfare check.

Thank you also to our local schools and politicians. It is a pleasure working with you and drawing upon your expertise and advocacy.

And lastly thank you to our Board and teams for the wonderful work you do daily, transforming lives and providing care and assistance.

We value the support you provide and couldn't achieve the outcomes we do without your dedication to CareWays and the communities we support.

CareWays Strategic Plan is in full swing and we are excited to be strengthening and building our community partnerships to deliver excellence in service delivery and ensuring a strong sustainable future.

Matthew Maritn
Chief Executive Officer

Finance Report

Our Purpose - Progressive Community Services = Increased Quality Services

During the 2022-23 financial year there were no major changes to the main revenue generating activities of the organisation and aged care services still account for the largest portion of the total revenue.

CareWays remains in a strong financial position with a healthy balance sheet and equity balance.

During this financial year the organisation purchased a residential property next to the main office location in Dapto. This has allowed the organisation to use the rear of the property to garage the vehicles previously using a rented space and to rent the house at the front of the block out gaining an additional revenue stream for the business.

We have been advised that the aged care block funding known as the Commonwealth Home Support Program will now continue until the end of the 2024-25 financial year. This extra year will provide the stability needed to successfully transition to the new aged care Support at Home Program.

In the 2023-24 financial year the organisation will be required to make a considerable investment in software to be able to manage and comply with the requirements of the new program. This will include the purchase of a new client management system and a new accounting system.

Finance and Business Manager

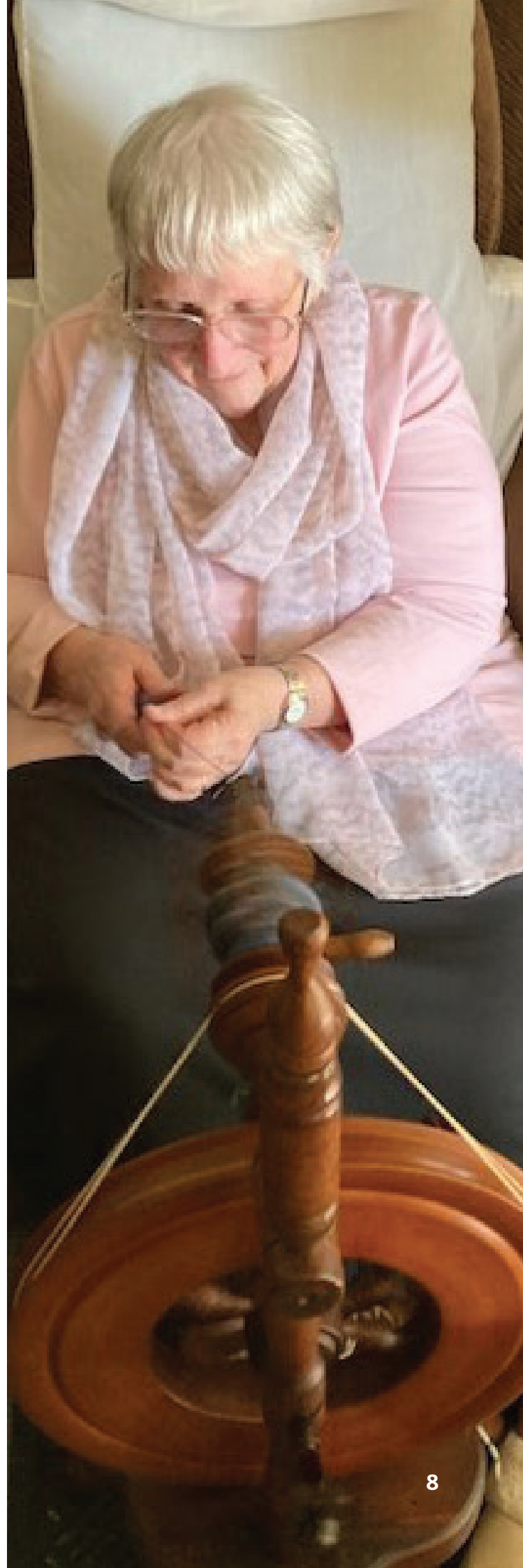
Aged Care Support at Home and in the Community

Empowering seniors to enjoy a better quality of life

CareWays Community has a proud history of providing aged care services through the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) and Home Care Packages (HCP) to help older Australians to live independently and safely in their own home.

CareWays provides personal care, domestic assistance, transport, social outings and social support, respite and food services including Meals on Wheels. For many of our clients who live alone or whose families do not live locally, our Community Care team in the office and Care Workers are their immediate source of support for their physical and mental wellbeing.

During the past 12 months the Aged Care Team has increased our level of staff training and information to clients about the new Aged Care Standards and Aged Care Code of Conduct including the promotion of Aged Care Advocacy services.



CareWays and the Ribbonwood Centre has always been a major support hub for older members of our community. Our purpose remains to care for, support and connect our community. We do this by ensuring our aged care service users feel valued, heard and that they belong.

CareWays Community has been successful because we take the time to listen and share with service users and their families supports that they didn't know existed or are available to them and they wouldn't have accessed otherwise.

We are very proud that CareWays has a reputation of being person focused, with excellent Care Workers and our Community Care Team in the office going the extra mile to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our service users.

We will continue to work closely with participants and their families to make sure they access a variety of supports essential to improve their daily quality of life to stay in their own home.



"Thank you to CareWays for making a difference to our local community through your team's dedication and support, you have helped us connect to appropriate and holistic support."

I am truly blessed to work with such beautiful, caring and loving people.

To all the care workers at CareWays thanks very much, you are appreciated a lot.

Heartfelt thank you for your care and support.



Social Groups

CareWays Social Support Groups continue to provide valuable social activities to help support seniors maintain essential community connections. Social Groups can make you look and feel better and reduce the risk of social isolation.

CareWays many groups at the Ribbonwood Centre at Dapto are a highlight to the participants week. There are a broad range of social groups available through CareWays and best of all, they are fun and you develop new skills.

Social groups include:

- Painting
- Computer Classes for Seniors
- Patchwork and Quilting
- Creative Craft





Community Hubs

Connecting people
through community
Supporting our community's
children, youth and families

Children and Families

Playgroups

Children and their parent/ carer have enjoyed a wide range of activities and events at our Koonawarra and Horsley playgroups. Some of the highlights this year have been visiting the Green Connect Farm where we learnt all about working with nature to grow and distribute food in a truly sustainable way. We have also enjoyed working alongside our partner Goodstart Early Learning Dapto, to better support our community.

Youth

Youth Drop In

We have a regular group at Thirroul Youth Drop-In who have made a strong connection with each other and youth workers. We were visited by Embers Robotics for a hands on STEM session (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics), guessed what's in the box and had countless rounds of bingo, musical bingo and trivia. The group love being creative making plant pots from plastic bottles, catapults out of paddle pop sticks, stress balls and decorating cookies.

Rock and Water Program

Rock and Water is a program delivered to our local year 6 students at Lakelands Public and Hayes Park Public Schools. The program aims to help young people understand anti-bullying strategies, boundaries, emotional and behavioural regulation. A highlight of the program has been watching friendships grow between the two schools, confidence increasing and students returning to use other CareWays services.

Young Women's Programs

This program explores topics relevant to year 8 young women in Dapto including mental health, body image and healthy relationships. Using interactive activities, group discussions and games, the participants learn skills and knowledge to use now and in the future. A highlight of the program is the rewards excursion where the students buy an outfit from the op-shop and strut their stuff on the runway at Koonawarra Community Centre!

Our Young Women's Program at Thirroul is an insightful, educational, and fun program where students have learnt a variety of topics surrounding mental and sexual health, body image and identity, and alcohol and other drugs. We also enjoyed working alongside Women Illawarra to further support our women. One of the biggest highlights is our end of term reward excursion, where students enjoyed

going to Minnamurra River for a 2-hour Kayaking experience.

Young Men's Programs

Our Young Men's Program has engaged with a variety of topics including mental health, drug and alcohol, body image, resume and job writing and sexual health. The highlight of our program is our current excursions to Zone bowling where the students get to enjoy a game of bowling and laser tag, or Kayaking with Lands Edge, followed by a lunch at the centre. Each topic focuses on an ongoing issue for boys in their early teen years, especially in the local community, and is carefully constructed to educate and inform around these topics.

Koonawarra Youth Connect

Koonawarra Youth Connect (KYC) has been working with kids in years 5 to year 11 to teach basic life skills each week and provide a safe hang out spot every Thursday. We have participated in activities such as cooking, STEM activities including paddle pop stick bridges, mini volcanoes for Dinosaur week and also Physical Education like Basketball. Participants enjoyed being able to not only participate in the chosen activity for the week but also partake in video games, loom band making and other craft activities while enjoying some afternoon snacks and even milkshakes on occasion.

CareWays Cultural Art Program

The Cultural Arts Program gives local students both Indigenous and Non-Indigenous an opportunity to learn about the core topics of the local Aboriginal Culture. These topics include but are not limited to Dreaming, Country, Totems, Elders, Language, History of Art on Dharawal Country, Men and Women's Business.

Students are provided the chance to hone their artistic skills under the watchful eye of CareWays Indigenous Artists. Thanks to this program, youth have the opportunity to meet with reputable community figures and are provided with additional pathways to services of relevance for continued learning.

This program has also provided opportunities that never existed prior. It has helped to increase the students' overall awareness of culture, provide additional learning opportunities to teaching staff who attend, leading to achieve better outcomes in the school setting.

School Holiday Activities

CareWays partnership with Healthy Cities Illawarra continued to foster great outcomes. In addition to the regular school holiday programs it was wonderful to join Dapto Leagues Club and Healthy Cities for the 10th Anniversary of the Active In-betweens program. It was a special afternoon celebrating a program that means so much to the kids (8-12 years), their families and the middle childhood team.

Community Events

NAIDOC Week

Congratulations to the CareWays Neighbourhood Team for organising such a fantastic NAIDOC community event. Over 1000 people attended, 46 community stalls and local schools participated.

We loved seeing so many community members taking part in activities, visiting stall holders, getting their face painted, watching our wonderful entertainers and coming together to celebrate a day 'For our Elders'.

This event grows more and more every year due to the support of our committee, stall holders, funding bodies and wonderful community! We hope to see you all next year for another deadly event!

Thanks again to our partners NSW Aboriginal Affairs, City of Wollongong, National Indigenous Australians Agency, Department of Communities & Justice and Goodstart Early Learning.

Reconciliation Walk

– Be A Voice for Generations!

Special mention to Dapto Rotary and Rotary Club of Shellharbour City and the Vinnies Wollongong Van for supporting our Reconciliation Walk!

We are so grateful for your support and thank you to everyone who attended our Reconciliation Walk! It was a great day and we are so happy to see the event grow in numbers every year!

Thank you also to Lake Illawarra Police District for helping to ensure everyone got back to the Centre safely.



Mural

The CareWays youth team did it again creating a community mural transforming an unsightly and often at times unsafe underpass to the Koonawarra shops into a wonderful colourful, vibrant space for everyone.

In collaboration with local schools and early learning centres, students and children were invited to help create and paint the massive artwork.

The mural theme was the Wodi Wodi people's connection to Dapto and the local community are delighted with the much improved safe space



CareWays is a crucial community organisation, that excels in fostering collaborative action that students and teachers respond positively to.

Through the Cultural Arts Program, CareWays has engaged the boys in a significant way. They have developed greater respect and connections.



Outreach

Supporting those in need

Hampers With Heart Food Hampers



One of the wonderful community initiatives this year included our partnership with Dapto Leagues Club to support the local community through the 'Hampers with Heart' initiative.

This initiative has seen Club members as well as the wider community come together to donate a variety of non-perishable food items, toiletries and pantry staples.

We were overwhelmed by the generosity of those in our community who have given so much and are extremely grateful to utilise what has been given to provide even more food assistance to those who need it.

We have received a total of 537 items, 425 food items and 112 toiletry items. We have made this into 31 food hampers for our community and another 30 hampers with toiletry items.

Hampers are handed out at the CareWays Coffee and a Catchup program and at our Community and Neighbourhood Centre's.

Coffee and Catchup

Coffee and a Catchup at both our Dapto and Koonawarra Centres have provided a welcoming space for weekly social connection with tea, coffee, and light snacks provided.

Food hampers are also available for those who are in need.

The food hampers also act as a great way of helping those in need with a first point of contact to get help, information and referrals to other services that can support them.



Awards and Recognition

CareWays wins Community Industry Award

CareWays was honoured to be a part of the Community Industry Group – Community Industry Awards.

It was a very special night to share with so many wonderful local community organisations and individuals that work to enrich the lives of others and make our communities a better place.

Even more special for CareWays was seeing Brendan our Aboriginal Community Program Officer win the Above and Beyond Award.

Brendan lives and breathes his work and he engages young and old alike to build community engagement and create positive social impacts far beyond his position description.

Brendan runs the Aboriginal Community Programs out of the Koonawarra Community Centre and leads the NAIDOC celebration at Koonawarra Community Centre, as well as organising the Reconciliation Walk and working with schools and the community to foster cultural understanding and community cohesion. His dedication and support has helped CareWays connect families to appropriate and holistic support as we break down and overcome the often-complex traumas and difficulties individuals and community members face.

Congratulations Brendan, the CareWays team and all the nominees and finalists. So well deserved.





“

The Aged Care team are fantastic and always there to support the clients and Care Workers.

My Care Worker is truly lovely, with a great smile because she means it.



10 Years of Service Dinner

At CareWays we work with so many special, committed people. It was wonderful to come together to celebrate 6 employees that achieved 10 Years of Service in 2023. Congratulations to:

- Russell F
- Damian S
- Lisa Luis
- Rose Trunzo
- Lauren G
- Natasha Clarke-Jeffries

Your commitment to CareWays is valued and appreciated by so many in our community. You have created a legacy that you should feel very proud of.

Care Worker

Appreciation Awards

Each month at our Aged Care team meetings, appreciation Awards are given to CareWorkers who have received compliments for providing extra special support and care. The awards are very much valued and are in addition to CareWays celebrating and acknowledging all our Care Workers during Aged Care Employee Day.

Your commitment to CareWays is valued and appreciated by so many in our community. You have created a legacy that you should feel very proud of.

CareWays Volunteers

We say thank you for your dedication to our community

We celebrate our volunteers and the immeasurable contribution they make to our community. CareWays is very fortunate to have many wonderful volunteers helping out with our programs and services.

They are a great example to all of us the many positives that come from connecting with your community.

Meals on Wheels – 70 years in Australia!

The 30th August marked 70 years in Australia for Meals on Wheels! To celebrate we held a volunteer BBQ in combination with RU OK Day. Our Meals on Wheels volunteers received badges to commemorate the achievement and their dedication to the community.

Volunteer and RU OK Day BBQ

The BBQ was a great way to celebrate the wonderful work all our volunteers do.

Our Volunteers have contributed a total of **3,073 hours** in the last 12 months, across services and events such as Meals on Wheels, Social Groups Tutoring, Breakfast and Coffee and Catchup, NAIDOC Week and Reconciliation Walk.

If you would like to volunteer please contact CareWays Community on **1300 307 902**.





CAREWAYS COMMUNITY LTD.
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
TUESDAY 22nd November 2022

Meeting opened at 7.10pm –Chairperson Rhonda Warner presided.

PRESENT: Frances Cardwell, Rhonda Warner, Paul Harradence, Russell Fitzgibbons, Romeo Cecchele, Wally Anglesea, Susan Kirby

APOLOGIES: Rosemary Scully, Diana Cecchele

The President acknowledged the Traditional Custodians of the Land

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – The Minutes of the 2021 Annual General Meeting were accepted on a Motion from Paul Harradence Seconded by Wally Anglesea

BUSINESS ARISING – Nil

REPORTS – The President spoke to her report and thanked Board Members, Senior Manager's Team and Staff for their sterling work over the past year. The President extended special thanks to the CEO and Staff for their handling of the COVID circumstances.

The CEO reported on the 2021/2022 year, citing difficulties with Care Staff, but reporting that overall the Organisation is in a good place. The CEO thanked the Board, Staff and Volunteers for their support. The Reports were accepted on a Motion from Susan Kirby Seconded Romeo Cecchele **UNANIMOUS**

ADOPTION OF AUDITED FINANCIAL REPORT Appreciation was extended, by the CEO to the Corporate Services Team. Moved Paul Harradence Seconded Romeo Cecchele that the Audited Financial Report be adopted **UNANIMOUS**

REAPPOINTMENT OF AUDITOR, KELLY & PARTNERS (WOLLONGONG) CHARTERED

ACCOUNTANTS Moved Rhonda Warner Seconded Romeo Cecchele that Kelly & Partners be retained as Auditors **UNANIMOUS**

The Company Secretary took the Chair, as the current Chairperson stood down.

The Company Secretary thanked the two Members of the 2021/2022, Board, (Rhonda Warner and Paul Harradence), and reported that both had renominated

The Company Secretary called for a Vote for the Election of Rhonda Warner as , and Chair person, to the Board of CareWays Ltd.

This Vote was carried **UNANIMOUSLY**

The Company Secretary called for a Vote for the Election of Paul Harradence to the Board of CareWays.

This Vote was carried **UNANIMOUSLY**

Rhonda Warner resumed the Chair

Additional updates – The CEO Reported that CHSP funding has been extended to 30th June 2024.

The Neighbourhood Centre Team working from Koonawarra is working well and the current Team Leader had now returned from Maternity leave, part time.

PRESENTATION for 25 years Service – The Chairperson made a Presentation to Frances Cardwell to mark 25 years of Service to CareWays, and thanked her for her contribution to the Organisation. Frances thanked the Chairperson and Board for the recognition of his services.

GENERAL Q&A SESSION – The question was asked if the CEO was confident in the Organisation's ability to meet the requirements of the new Aged Care arrangements to be introduced in the 2022/2023 Financial Year. The CEO replied that the Organisation was well placed to meet the requirements.

MEETING CLOSED 8.15PM



.....RHONDA WARNER - Chairperson

Annual General Meeting Agenda 2023

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Acknowledgement of traditional custodians of the land
3. Adopt minutes of last AGM
4. Matters arising from the minutes
5. Chairperson's and CEO's yearly summary
6. Q&A and adoption of CEO Report & Directors Report
7. Q&A and adoption of Audited Financial Report
8. Reappointment of Auditor Kelly+Partners (Wollongong) Chartered Accountants
9. Thank you to 1/3 of the directors that nominated for re-election after retiring their current positions
10. Chairperson vote for election of Directors by Members
11. Additional updates
12. General Q&A session
13. Thank you and Meeting Close

CareWays Head Office
93-109 Princes Highway
PO Box 274
Dapto NSW 2530
Ph: 02 4262 1918
help@careways.org.au

Koonawarra Community Centre
36 Fowlers Road
Koonawarra NSW 2530
Ph: 02 4261 8426

Horsley Community Centre
82 Bong Bong Road
Horsley NSW 2530
Ph: 02 4260 8245

Thirroul Community Centre
352-360 Lawrence Hargrave Drive
Thirroul NSW 2515
Ph: 02 4267 2500



careways.org.au



facebook.com/careways



[@carewayscommunity](https://www.instagram.com/carewayscommunity)

CareWays Community

Caring, Supporting, Connecting

CareWays Community is an essential supporter of our local community for over 30 years.

Our dedicated and experienced employees and volunteers believe in the power of community not for profit organisations and charities to empower all community members from children, youth, parents, families to seniors.