SOCIAL FUTURES

ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022

Hurley Kyran and Bill



The year that the hat was

Contents.

3
۷
ć
7
8
10
1
12
14
16
20
24
28
32
34
36



We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land where we live and work and their continuing connection to land, water, sea and community. We pay respects to Australia's First Peoples, to their unique and diverse cultures, and to Elders past, present and future.

Inclusion is about the actions we take every day. We welcome, support, and celebrate diversity.



2021-22 Highlights

24,904



people supported on their journey to inclusion, wellbeing and independence

347



Staff delivered 28 programs and services

54,786



Occasions of service

1,308



Community engagement events



of surveyed participants felt satisfied



13,643



participants supported through our Disability Inclusion programs

2,980



8 Housing, Homelessness and Employment programs

1,827



children, young people and their families supported through **6** youth, child and family programs

6,273



participants supported throughMental Health and Wellbeing programs

2,495



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants supported across our footprint

1,823



participants at community and sector leadership workshops

12,589



persons engaged at community events

Message from the Chair and CEO





Our focus for 2022 is connection

- how we connect to each other and
to our communities.

How we connect to our purpose and values gives us strength – and keeps us on a clear path towards achieving social change. We've seen that focus reflected in both the highest highs and the challenging times of the past year.

Our second Reconciliation Action Plan was approved by Reconciliation Australia and was launched during Reconciliation Week. It will keep guiding our work towards genuine reconciliation with First Nations communities and the connections we foster along the way.

Of course, it is in times of adversity that the power of connection really shines through. Few incidents have tested the region's resolve in recent years quite like the February floods in Northern NSW. We lost four offices in the floods, and our teams, families and friends supported each other – working together to assist us in the community when it mattered most. We want to again thank our staff and our communities for their extraordinary support during this difficult time.

It's in times of adversity that the power of connection really shines through

We are lucky enough to have secured office space in Lismore that is well above the 2022 flood levels. This office will ensure that we are there to support communities in Northern NSW over the coming years of flood recovery. It is our hope that this will contribute to bringing many people back to Lismore. To reconnect with the community and help it thrive.

The past year has seen some great highlights in how we connect to mental health and greater wellbeing – both as a team and as a community partner.

Our vital services across NSW have done extraordinary work to support communities impacted by the pandemic and natural disasters. We signed up for the National Communications Charter – which helps guide the conversations we have around mental health and suicide prevention.

Meanwhile, one of our hard-working Local Area Coordinators was nominated by the Hunter Diversity & Inclusion Group for the 2021 Diversity and Inclusion Leadership Award.

To further amplify our message for change, we're also hitting the airwaves to advocate for affordable housing for regional Australia, as well as funding for mental health and action on climate change.

It's arguably been the toughest year to date supporting our communities with housing and homelessness challenges. Our team has continued to forge and develop partnerships and connections in order to find housing solutions.

Our youth and families' programs continue to deliver support with mental wellbeing, inclusive opportunities and social connections. Building positive relationships with stakeholders has enabled us to deliver programs, services and greater benefit to more remote communities.

Our purpose of positive social change sits at the heart of the Social Futures brand. To help us all feel better connected to that purpose and each other – this year also saw the launch of our new branding and visual identity. It's proudly on display throughout this annual report – and is a creative reflection of the progress we've made and continue to make.

As always, we want to thank our extraordinary staff, and our Board who tirelessly volunteer their time. Everyone has gone above and beyond to achieve positive social change across our communities.

Here's to another year of doing great things - and building greater connections.

Pat Grier, AM - Chair

Tony Davies - CEO





Who we are

Social Futures is dedicated to achieving positive social change.

We create inclusive communities and bridge the gap of social isolation.

We connect people to the support they need when they need it.

Our vision

Thriving people, strong communities

Our purpose

We work to achieve positive social change in our communities.

Our values

Integrity:

Do what is right: acting fairly, honestly, openly and consistently

Learning:

Get better at what we do: improving our knowledge and understanding

Inclusion:

Everyone matters: valuing diversity, connection and belonging for all

Our Strategic Objectives



1: Great customer experience



2: Reputation for excellence



3: Sustainable organisation

Celebrating our people

Our team comes from all walks of life, bringing individual and unique ideas to our purpose of delivering positive social change. We want to make sure each and every one of our people feel as welcome, supported and respected as they should.

Embracing and celebrating our diversity continues to be an integral part of how we do things. This year we introduced a new inclusion statement to help us demonstrate that commitment – and to remind ourselves that inclusion is in the actions we take every day.

And while we're proud of our diversity, we're just as proud of our unity. Take the support of our staff in Northern NSW for example. Many Lismore staff members needed to navigate the loss of homes, workplaces and other resources during the devastating floods in February and March 2022. It was a period that tested their resolve, but as colleagues stepped in to lend a hand, it also highlighted the support and solidarity of our people.

As we move forward, we continue to foster a culture where people can bring their best self to work every day. Initiatives like the recommencement of our school-based Trainee Program – which has started up again in 2022 – help us to help our people continue to shine.

Inclusion is about the actions we take every day. We welcome, support, and celebrate diversity

30.6.22

TOTAL STAFF

346

First Nations staff

8%

CALD staff

Culturally and linguistically diverse



LGBTIQSB staff

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and gender diverse, Intersex, Queer, Sistergirl, Brotherboy.



 People with disability (PWD) or Carer of PWD 16%

Focus on excellence

The excellence of our people is as much a focus as it's ever been – and we continue to place a real value on learning to maintain that standard.

Over the past year, we've implemented a range of new learning packages to help our staff build on their skills and their practice.

These include:

- Safe Workplace Training for our Leadership Team to support and sustain staff impacted by family and domestic violence
- Rainbow Learning package to raise awareness and know-how of LGBTIQSB-inclusive practice
- Child and Youth Safety
- Inclusive Language learning.

Reconciliation

We're committed to breaking cycles of inequality and injustice in the communities where we live and work. Strengthening the relationships and the respect we share with Australia's First Peoples is a crucial part of that – which is where our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (2021–2023) comes in.

In January 2022, we were delighted to have the Innovate RAP endorsed by Reconciliation Australia. In the time since, important work has been underway including forming the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Panel; participation in cultural events such as Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC; and ongoing cultural conversations, learning and collaborating with key organisations, Elders and communities.

We believe that reconciliation is everyone's business. So to help our staff better engage with the Innovate RAP, we designed the Social Futures RAP Course, known as Wujalla. It supports our goal of embedding our reconciliation commitments in the work we do here at Social Futures – and keeps inclusion and understanding as clearly in focus as it should be.

The first-ever Social Futures Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Community Advisory Panel meeting took place on June 30, 2022. It signalled the start of a new opportunity for community members and representatives to be part of decision-making processes relating to the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and customers. It also reflects our ongoing commitment to doing what's right by and for our communities' First Nations people.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan

RELATIONSHIPS

- Strengthen existing and develop new relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations
- Support staff to attend local Reconciliation
 Week events
- Host our own National Reconciliation Week events
- Compile a list of local Aboriginal and Torres
 Strait Islander communities, organisations and stakeholders to support partnerships in our work
- Invite local Elders to partner with Social Futures to include local Aboriginal languages in our programs.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Increase employment, and further career path opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- Advertise all vacancies in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media
- Buy services and products from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses
- Engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in program design and delivery
- Provide transport to ensure access to programs and services
- Employ local Aboriginal and Torres Strait
 Islander people to deliver cultural content in our programs, such as art, storytelling, murals, history and language
- Include local languages on promotional material, signage.

RESPECT

- Traditional Custodians invited to provide
 Welcome to Country at Social Futures events
- Acknowledgment of Country provided at internal meetings
- Social Futures offices are culturally safe and welcoming
- Ongoing cultural awareness training for all staff
- Staff learn about significant local land sites and stories
- Promote positive images, activities and outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- Social Futures staff are involved in NAIDOC events
- Invite local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders to assist with naming Social Futures programs and services in language
- Acknowledge country on email signatures and location pages on website.



Using our voice

The February 2022 flood was one of the biggest natural disasters to hit modern Australia and we immediately began advocating for the Northern Rivers community through media in the days following the disaster.

Our executives – led by CEO Tony Davies – conducted dozens of interviews with national media outlets, including The Project, ABC TV News Breakfast, The Sydney Morning Herald, The Guardian, The Daily Telegraph, Radio National and Nine Radio.

Knowing that a long-term funding commitment from government was required, we endeavoured to keep the message in the media and to advocate on behalf of affected communities.

In the months since the floods, we've been mentioned in hundreds of news stories, across radio, print, online and television.

The headlines are a testament to our determination to advocate for our community. The Sydney Morning Herald's story was headlined 'Housing crisis worsen as locals turn to cars, floors to sleep'.

'Northern NSW was already short of affordable housing supply, now they are desperate' was The Daily Telegraph's headline. 'Lack of housing options leaves flood-affected Northern Rivers residents in limbo' reported the ABC.

We are grateful for one of our coordinators who shared the very personal story of losing his home with SBS's Dateline. 'Homeless with a Mortgage' was the telling headline.

Our work advocating for this region will continue



CEO Tony Davies speaks to Michael Rowland, ABC Breakfast

The Project profiled a family forced to move out of their temporary accommodation during the Easter holidays. We acknowledged that it is difficult to balance permanent and temporary accommodation in a region popular with tourists, but pointed out "this is incredibly upsetting. These are people who have nowhere else to go".

Our CEO Tony Davies did multiple live crosses with the ABC TV News 24, on both the housing crisis and the mental health stresses stemming from the flood. And he did four interviews with Radio National, including speaking to breakfast host Patricia Karvelas, when he explained that there was still a high level of displacement across the region, as winter rolled in and temperatures plummeted.

After the NSW Independent Flood Inquiry was released, we again called for a huge investment in social housing. "Among the thousands of people displaced were renters now unable to secure permanent housing in the Northern Rivers," Mr Davies told the ABC. "Buybacks and land swaps simply won't address the massive housing crisis this region is facing."

Our work advocating for this region will continue as the Northern Rivers rebuilds.



Thank you for the support during the floods.

Our donors

UG Manufacturing Co Pty Ltd GIVIT, Push-Up Challenge Weijun Zhang The Big Lift Xavier Catholic College - Ballina

William L Wallace

Northern Rivers Suicide Prevention Group Kempsey Shire Council Coles Murwillumbah Mollie Strong Woolworths Sathya Sai College Ltd

Katrina Luckie

Semi Lutua

Our Volunteers

Benjamin Albertini Caitlin Albertini Sam Albertini Rvan Amato Simone Balzer Damien Becker Caitlin Bennett Nathan Busutel Michael Carter **Shay Churchill** Richard Clarke Will Conner Karina Connors James Cook Caitlin Davies **Lucy Davies** Reyna Deegan Mat Demarchi The Fijians **Grace Forster** Max Forster Lina Grisales Jana Hall Susan Harvey and family Sam Henderson David Jedrzejezyk Hayley Jorgensen

Lisa Machin Angus Mackellar **Duncan Mackellar** Jo Mackellar Anita Mansfield Steve Mansfield Brooke McKenzie **Richard Miles** Paul Mitchell Isoa Naituku lliesa Navude Harry Neale Ian O'Reilly Anna Quinlivan Frances Rilev Tim Robert Sally Robinson Hayley Rogers Pip Rose Joseph Rounds Jess Ryan Tatjana Santoso Cathy Serventy Amanda Shoebridge Kingsley Smith Yasmin Standfield

Hayden Kress Helen Lassen, Grace and Max Alex Lewers

Fiona Kable and Freddy

Jale Karoiducina

Kathy Klem

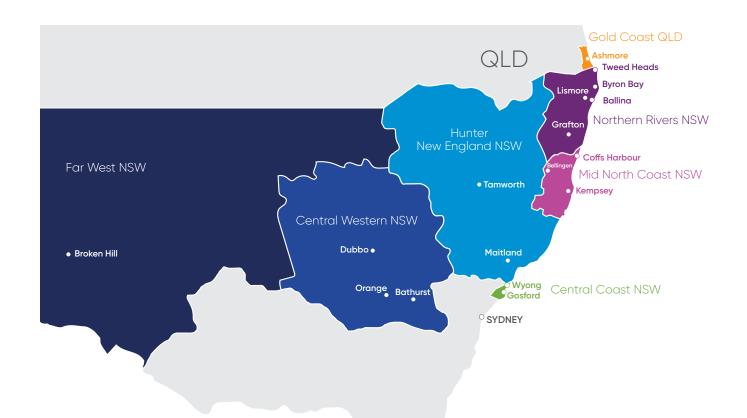
Elyse Young Sereena Zanuso

Acacia Tondorf

Christine Tondorf

And to those whose names we didn't capture!

Our capabilities and services





- Central West Wiradjuri
- Far West Wiradjuri
- Gold Coast
 Bundjalung

Hunter

- New England
 Kamilaroi, Ngarabai,
 Anaiwan and
 Nganyaywana, Geawegal,
 Wonnaru, Awabakal, Worimi
- Mid North Coast

 Gumbainggirr, Dunghutti,
 Biripi, Nganyaywana

- Local Area Coordination for NDIS
- StandBy Support After Suicide
- Local Area Coordination for NDISStandBy Support After Suicide
- Local Area Coordination for NDIS
- · StandBy Support After Suicide
- · StandBy Support After Suicide
- · Standing Strong
- StandBy Support After Suicide
- Care Connect
- · Getting it Together
- Reconnect
- StandBy Support After Suicide
- · Youth on Track

• Choices

Northern Rivers

Bundjalung

- · Clubhouse Ballina
- Clubhouse Lismore
- Commonwealth Home Support Program
- Connecting Home (Adult, Complex, Youth/Youth Headleasing)
- · Connecting You (HYAP)
- Early Intervention Connect
- Elements Youth and Family Relationships Program
- Family Connect and Support
- Family Connect and Support in Schools
- Getting it Together
- headspace Lismore
- headspace Tweed Heads
- Local Area Coordination for NDIS
- Mijung Jarjums Kids in Mind
- Out of Hospital Care
- Reconnect
- Recovery Connect
- StandBy Support After Suicide
- Strong Minds in the Early Years
- Tweed Assertive Outreach
- · Youth on Track



We believe that the best outcomes are achieved together. Our work is built on the quality of our people and the relationships they create with others.

Over 46 years we have built a strong and extensive network of partnerships, referral pathways and collaborations with other service providers and sector organisations. These capabilities, together with our diverse skills base, allow us to deliver a sustainable and person-centred model of support, working in a way that is safe, effective and accountable.

Our capabilities include:



Disability Inclusion



Mental Health and Wellbeing



Housing, Homelessness and Employment



Children, Youth and Families



Sector Development



Strengthening communities and sector leadership

Social Impact Hub

Social Futures was appointed by Byron Shire Council to manage a social impact communitybased and for-purpose centre on the former Byron Hospital site.

We're seeing our vision of a for-purpose hub in Byron Bay really start to take shape – bringing to life new options for future community services and wellbeing.

We have put together a Community Advisory Group to offer practical advice, community insights and connection as the project continues. They include representatives from Arakwal Corporation, Byron Bay businesses, health, education, creative arts and property industries, and the multicultural community.

Alongside the Advisory Group and Byron Shire Council, we can make sure the needs of the community are heard and then met. The Council is currently completing a development application for redevelopment of the site.

McKenzie Lofts

The McKenzie Lofts affordable housing project to provide 12 additional tiny houses in Lismore was nearing completion when it was impacted by the floods. We're working hard to see if we can still provide more affordable housing through this project.



Early Intervention Connect

The Targeted Earlier Intervention program delivers flexible support to children, young people, families and communities experiencing or at risk of vulnerability.

We delivered Trauma Informed Care training workshops to early intervention service workers across the Northern Rivers. Those who took part rated their knowledge and competency at 7.9/10 at the end of the workshop, up from 5.3/10 at the beginning.

Better Chances Forum

This collaboration supports better chances for children, young people, their families and communities to lead safe, healthy and happy lives. The focus is on early intervention and prevention to keep families together. There are currently more than 250 forum members from over 75 community, government, and private-sector organisations.

Better Chances Forum consistently held monthly online connection meetings with Better Chances Forum members. This meant that every month, 100 attendees had a safe space to connect and build their practice.

The Forum also collaborated with Ngunya Jarjum Aboriginal Child and Family Network to design and deliver four engagement practice reflection workshops across the Northern Rivers. The workshops provided the chance for workers and managers to share stories, connect and feel less isolated in their experience.

Aged Care Sector Development

With sector reforms taking place in 2022-23, Social Futures engaged with over 20 aged community care stakeholders in Northern NSW to identify support needs, challenges and opportunities that will help inform those changes.

Social Futures had been delivering the Dementia Carer Education program for over ten years. Though program funding concluded on 30 June 2022 as part of reform adjustments, our work isn't done. We're still collaborating with community aged care services, assessment services and the broader health and community services sectors to build capacity as we transition to the new Support at Home Program in 2024.





DisabilityInclusion

Social Futures has been delivering Local Area Coordination (LAC) services as a Partner in the Community for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

Local Area Coordinators work with people with disability, their carers and their families in a number of ways:

- to help you understand and access the NDIS
- to link you to information, support and services in your local community
- to work with our communities to make them more inclusive and welcoming of people with disability

Our passion for creating positive social change includes supporting people to be able to live life in the way they want. With COVID-19 and floods affecting many of our service regions, our focus has been on not just maintaining connection with our staff, communities and participants, but improving it when it matters most. This included introducing a new role that's dedicated to building connections with our Aboriginal communities, as well as championing better understanding of the NDIS' benefits for people and communities. This led us to winning the NDIA's (National Disability Insurance Agency) inaugural Good to Great Participant Experience Award.

Early Childhood Transition part of LAC program

We continue to welcome new families to Social Futures through our Early Childhood Transition program – with 100 families each month making the transition from their early childhood partners to the Local Area Coordination program.

Out and About in Community

For people living with disability in the communities we support, the Out and About in Community booklet continues to be a great way for them to forge new connections. The booklet features local groups and clubs who have been consulted and supported to enhance their understanding of disability inclusion and accessibility.

Building Inclusive Workplaces

Inclusivity is a value we hold close to our hearts at Social Futures - with over 16% of our team identifying as a person with disability, or as a direct carer. Building Inclusive Workplaces is an initiative that we share with businesses and other organisations, to educate them on the benefits of employing people living with a disability.



Different on the Outside, Same on the Inside

This program expanded from Western NSW onto the Central Coast – giving more kids the chance to gain awareness and understanding around inclusion for people with disability. The program is fully booked in both areas until the end of the school year and like all of our school inclusion programs the sessions are led by our team members with disability.

Photovoice

'Disability Pride' was introduced as a way for people to connect - encouraging participants to explore feelings and ideas through photography. Every week for six weeks, participants came together to share what disability pride meant to them. It was a visual highlight and a wonderful platform for creativity and connection while showcasing the unique views and perspectives of people with disability.

Blind Cricket

Blind Cricket has arrived at Central Coast schools. We are rolling out this program to help school children develop more of an awareness of disability - and to spotlight just how the community can adapt and be inclusive to all of us. The initiative is designed to teach the students about modified disability sports and encourage inclusion in a fun, interactive way.

Sports Ability

School children have had a chance to try wheelchair sports, thanks to Sports Ability – an innovative school program that's giving kids an active insight into disability inclusion. The program is delivered by our staff with lived experience of disability and in the past two years, more than 5,000 students living in Northern NSW have gained an invaluable understanding of disability inclusion through the program.

Social Futures delivers LAC services as a Partner in the Community for the National Disability Insurance Scheme

Will's Story

Twenty-five years ago Will suffered extensive injuries in a car accident and spent six weeks in a coma. He broke his back, shattered his pelvis, and his right leg was amputated at the hip. Astoundingly he was out of hospital in three months.

Everyone was amazed at how quickly Will bounced back, but he had hidden injuries.

For the next 15 years Will lived in a 'mental storm'

– because he'd suffered a brain injury.

"My physical injuries were so severe everyone was focused on that, and no one paid much attention to my brain injury," he said.

Before Will knew something was wrong, he felt confused and overwhelmed all the time. As a way of adjusting to his new reality, Will decided to take on enormous physical challenges.



Will

My physical injuries were so severe everyone was focused on that, and no one paid much attention to my brain injury

He walked South America's Inca Trail, the Kokoda Trail and the Camino de Santiago in Spain – all on crutches! And he climbed mountains including Tibet's 8,150m Mt Cho Oyu.

The storm inside his head raged on, which led to a breakdown and self-harm attempts. Again he changed his life, moving to Albury in 2011 to begin a Diploma in Organic Agriculture. This included learning to drive a tractor – a challenge.

His course supervisors advised him to get his brain function checked. The results finally identified the impact of the brain injury on his life, but more importantly Will learnt that he could get help – and that's where the NDIS came in, funding a personal mentor.

"That has been absolutely life-changing, because I could call my mentor for help at any time if I was feeling stressed or anxious or not understanding things," he says. "My LAC from Social Futures, was awesome as well."

Will's plan also funds domestic assistance around his home, physiotherapy and assistive technology such as crutches.

For the past few years Will has worked part-time as a disability support worker, supporting others living with brain injuries in his local area which he describes as 'enormously satisfying'.

Will also finished his Diploma, did a Bachelor of Ecological Agriculture and is now thinking about doing a PhD.

Bill's

remarkable journey

From lockdown boredom to TikTok stardom

NDIS participant Bill was looking for something to do during last year's pandemic lockdown, so he teamed up with his brother-in-law Kyran and the two began making short videos that included dance moves and funny pranks. Believe it or not, those videos have now been seen by 50 million people around the world.

Bill and Kyran – today known as the Brother Boys – are a TikTok sensation.

Bill, aged 24, lives on the NSW-Victorian border and works part-time at a supermarket in Wentworth. His NDIS plan is delivered by the Social Futures Broken Hill office. He was born with Down Syndrome and lives with his mother Sue during the week and on weekends with his sister Lucy, her partner Kyran and their two daughters.

No one could have guessed their videos would become so popular. They are videos that showcase a friendship straddling disability, a state border and cultures. Kyran identifies as a First Nations Barkindji man.

"We're normalising the differences between us and not just us, but everybody," Kyran said.

"We're the opposite in every single way possible and that's why our relationship is so strong – it also promotes inclusiveness because regardless of how different we are, we can still be best buds and get along just fine and have a good time."

Their most popular video, featuring dancing, got over 24 million views, while another video about pranks got some 12 million views.

"We're positive people and I'm a funny guy," Bill said on his TikTok fame. "Fans love my dance moves and the videos make people feel happy and excited to see the Brother Boys."

It is wonderful to see a person with disability living their dream, and becoming a social media star.



Bill (back) and Kyran

As an NDIS Partner in the Community, Social Futures is passionate about supporting people with disability to live life the way they want and to pursue their goals, which in Bill's case included becoming a TikTok sensation.

Through the NDIS, Bill has support workers who take him to and from his part-time job at the supermarket, and they also take him on a weekly social outing.

Bill is often approached by TikTok fans for photos, and his support workers are getting very good at taking these.

An important message Bill and Kyran want to share is that making friends with someone from a different background can be enormously rewarding.



Mental Health and Wellbeing

headspace

Social Futures is the lead agency for headspace Tweed Heads and headspace Lismore, which also services Murwillumbah, Casino and Kyogle.

headspace is the National Youth Mental Health Foundation, supporting young people aged 12 to 25 going through a tough time with mental health, physical and sexual health, work, school, study and alcohol and other drug challenges.

It was a year like no other, but despite the challenges faced in 2021-2022 including the devastating loss of our centre in Lismore due to the floods, the teams have supported more than 1,200 young people in managing their mental health to live happier and healthier lives.

This year, the centres have implemented many initiatives to increase service accessibility for young people from all backgrounds. This has included the implementation of a bespoke intake and assessment model to ensure young people are supported in a timely manner. In a COVID-19-world, increasing social connectedness for young people has been a major priority. This has been addressed through active collaboration, extended group offerings, and through our Yarn Safe and Community Development programs, and is highlighted in the centres' high proportion of LGBTIQSB, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and young male communities accessing services.

headspace Lismore and headspace Tweed are funded by Healthy North Coast.

Out of Hospital Care

This program supports patients discharged from NSW public hospitals and prevents avoidable admissions by delivering short and medium-term packages of non-clinical care. Social Futures provides Out of Hospital Care services on behalf of Community Options Australia across Lower Hunter and Far West NSW.

In the first year of operation, the Out of Hospital Care team supported over 1,500 people with a needs assessment and ongoing case coordination in order to receive the care required to manage their daily living. This year, solid partnerships have been established with health and community networks to ensure quality care is provided to improve outcomes and achieve the needs and goals of participants.

Elements

This program provides a counselling service for children and young people aged 10 to 24 and their families through individual and group support sessions, to assist in building supportive and positive family relationships.

The floods saw the Elements team move quickly to roll out our disaster recovery response. Disaster art therapy groups have taken place at the Northern Rivers Community Healing Hub and the Southern Cross University Recovery Centre.

Funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services.

StandBy

StandBy is a leading suicide postvention program dedicated to assisting people and communities bereaved or impacted by suicide. The feedback from people accessing the service continues to be overwhelmingly positive. They feel seen and heard – and can get the care, connection and practical support they need when it matters most.

StandBy – an initiative funded by the Australian Government.



Mijung Jarjums Kids in Mind

This program aims to improve mental health outcomes for children and young people, and their families.

Early intervention support is provided to children and young people who are showing early signs of, or are at risk of developing mental illness, with the support of their families and carers.

The whole team has played a role in helping the recovery from the floods at The Healing Hub. They found an art therapy space to keep providing face-to-face services to the community, while collaborating with school staff to shift the focus to trauma-informed, post-disaster support.

We collaborated with Creative First Aid and the Creative Recovery Network to support creative recovery response events. We facilitated school groups for Tuntable Community School, preschool and a parent group following fires, the pandemic and recent landslides. That support has also extended to Blakebrooke and Goolmanger School Groups. We distributed 1,200 Creative Recovery Journals to 10 schools impacted by the floods in the Northern Rivers.

Funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services.

Mijung Jarjums = Happy Kids in Bundjalung Language

Care Connect

Care Connect offers aftercare support in the Kempsey, Bellingen, Nambucca Valley and Macksville areas to people who are at risk of or have previously attempted suicide. Being in the first year of program delivery, our focus has been on establishing connection and raising awareness of the program with key referral organisations. We've presented to over 50 regional hospitals, community organisations, schools, university, emergency services, Aboriginal Health Services and generalist mental health services. We also increased our geographical footprint to the Nambucca Valley and Macksville area to boost the service footprint and increase accessibility for vulnerable communities. The Care Connect service is funded by Healthy North Coast through the North Coast PHN program.

Choices

Choices is a friendly and safe space offering sexual and reproductive health services to people in Lismore and the surrounding Northern Rivers. The positive impact of this service is made possible by the tireless work of passionate staff – all of whom went above and beyond to keep the clinic going during the floods, and who continue to support each other and the community. Funded by Northern NSW Local Health District.

The positive impact of this service is made possible by the tireless work of passionate staff – all of whom went above and beyond to keep the clinic going during the floods



Jacob's Story

Jacob first came to headspace Tweed Heads as a teenager with multiple struggles – fast-forward five years and he is back at headspace – but this time he is there as an aspiring social worker to support other young people.

Jacob is studying to gain a social work degree at Griffith University and chose to do a work placement with headspace Tweed Heads mainly because headspace helped him find his way all those years ago.

"Before coming to headspace I was on a (Northern Rivers) farm with my parents and three older siblings, but I had some struggles with my mental health and with home and my gender identity," he said.

"In high school I was often bullied and cast out and I was also questioning my sexual identity ... and I hated my body."

Jacob says on top of all this he lost a friend to cancer in Year 12, but it was a bad breakup that finally led him to reach out to headspace when he was 17.

He met headspace's psychologist and GP who introduced him to a gender specialist.

"That allowed me to transition and be Jacob now and be the best and happiest I can be," he said.

"headspace helped me meet practitioners who supported me to work out what I was going through and make sense of it all and find community and also uncover trauma and issues that I hadn't resolved.

"It was a supportive space where I felt welcome and cared about and that was really helpful in my journey. The staff are like family - they are my favourite people and I'm meeting more staff on my placement here and they are all amazing."

Jacob was a member of the headspace Tweed youth advisory group, and he has a role with headspace national as an Australian Youth Advocate for Mental Health.



Jacob

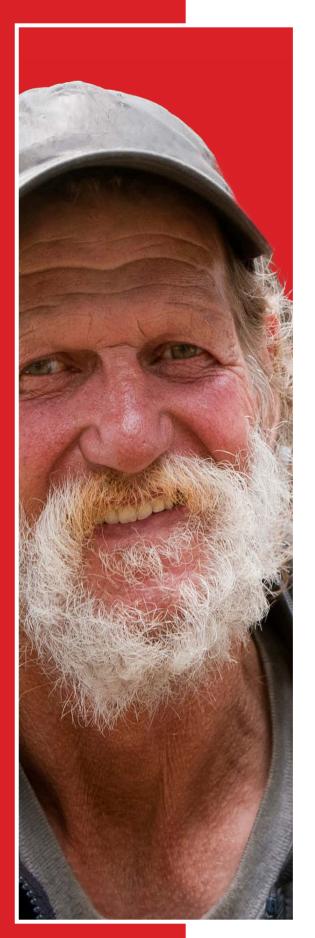
It was a supportive space where I felt welcome and cared about and that was really helpful in my journey

"It is great to have young people's voices at the centre of the service," he said of his roles.

Jacob said he had learned a lot at headspace, including accepting that sometimes it's okay not to feel okay, and also how to identify personal strengths and build on them.

He's excited about his career in social work, describing it as 'more holistic' than psychology.

"In my future I see myself doing a lot of advocacy and activism for community and I'm passionate about helping young people, especially young people from the LGBTIQSB community as well as in disability, that is another area I'm passionate about ... I make jokes that I'll end up being a politician."



Housing, Homelessness and Employment

Connecting Home

Connecting Home Adult

There are still many rough sleepers in the region – and this has only been exacerbated by the floods. During this challenging time, the Connecting Home team – especially in Lismore – have continued to support the community. With almost no temporary accommodation or social housing options, we've had to get creative in the ways we support the homeless population. This includes asking people to look outside the area and access Housing NSW packages such as Transition to Home that offers subsidised rent.

We continue to develop close working connections with NSW Health Homeless Health Outreach Team and St Vincent De Paul to help find housing solutions. In a great testament to these partnerships, we were able to house a well-known chronic entrenched rough sleeper in the Tweed Shire – stabilising his mental health and supporting his transition into permanent accommodation. We're now working on a plan to connect him with NDIS support and improve his overall well-being.

Our partnership with the End Street Sleeping Collaboration continues to go from strength to strength – with coordination groups successfully up and running in Byron Bay and Tweed Heads.

Proudly funded by the NSW Government.

Tweed Assertive Outreach

This year, the Tweed Assertive Outreach team created pilot community engagement programs for rough sleepers. The aim of these programs was to help participants develop skills that would help them sustain tenancies, while improving community connection and wellbeing.

Connecting Home Youth

Over the past year, the Connecting Home Youth program supported 937 young people into medium and long-term housing. In doing so, they've renewed family relationships, employment, educational qualifications and social skills. This included support for young people during the 2022 flood – thanks to successful partnerships between Social Futures and the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ), North Coast Community Housing, Service NSW, Momentum Collective, Link2Home and other external services.

Along with these accomplishments, Rent Choice Youth joined with DCJ to subsidise rent for up to two years – so that young people can train for or gain employment before taking over full rental responsibility.

Social Future's service delivery agreement for young people with The Family Centre in the Tweed and Ballina Local Government Areas provided courses and youth events to build on rental and house-sharing skills.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, LGBTIQSB people, and those living with disability all benefited from improved access, enabled by Connecting Home working closely with external services.

Standing Strong

A program that provides tailored coaching, mentoring and one-on-one case management support for women affected by the impact of Domestic Family Violence to enter the workforce.

65 women have enrolled in the Standing Strong program since it began last year. More than 40% are now working, with a further 10% having completed vocational training and other courses.

We continue to collaborate with Employment Services and have delivered them a Safe Hands workshop. The program is supported by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's Office for Women.



Tamika Smith - Entrepreneur, Founder -My Bella Casa and General Manager Linda at our Standing Strong launch.

Connecting You

(HYAP - Homeless Youth Assistance Program)

This program supported 39 complex young people in 2021/2022, through referrals from the local DCJ Community Service Centre offices.

These referrals allowed Social Futures to help with reconnecting, increasing parenting skills and supporting reengagement with education. We're also able to help these young people gain useful laptop skills or take part in equine therapy or psychologist appointments.

Connecting You, proudly funded by the NSW Government, supports community events with headspace, Family Connect and Support and Connecting Home Youth, and often co-facilitates with Secondary School events.

Social Futures collaborations with CASPA's Foster Carer Program has also led to housing options for young people.

Opportunity Pathways

Opportunity Pathways was an employment program that supported people to access education, training and work opportunities with a view to reaching their employment and housing goals. We achieved significant employment outcomes for some of the region's most marginalised people. This program finished in April 2022, due to the funding not being extended.

These referrals allowed Social Futures to help with reconnecting, increasing parenting skills and supporting reengagement with education



William's Story

William, aged in his mid-60s, lived in Lismore for more than 20 years but as a long-time renter was finding it harder and harder to secure permanent accommodation – especially after the pandemic hit and an influx of people, escaping lockeddown cities, moved to the Northern Rivers.

In January, William, who was living in a small unit with his companion dog, Shelby, was given a Notice of Termination. He outstayed this because he couldn't find anywhere else to live. He's on a pension, meaning he couldn't afford most rentals, and he has a pet.

The Social Futures Connecting Home team succeeded in finding William and Shelby a new home, and the two moved in in February, but there was trouble on the horizon. Lismore was hit by unprecedented flooding.

"I was only there for a week and had just got the place looking like I wanted it to look and then the flood came and wiped me out," said William.

When the flood water in the unit reached his knees, William and Shelby headed into the attic.

"But I looked and the water was right behind me," he said.

Everything William owned was submerged, still he held Shelby, a rescue dog, above the floodwater.

"All of a sudden an SES Rescue boat turned up ... we climbed straight out of the window and into the boat. I turned back to look at the place we'd came from and it wasn't there anymore."

William and Shelby stayed in emergency accommodation for a few weeks then he got lucky. Another not-for-profit organisation secured a small unit for him and Shelby to live in permanently. The Social Futures Connecting Home team were again able to offer a helping hand.

Through the Tenancy Setup Agreement, the team secured funds for William to buy furniture for this new home.

William is excited to have the chance to start a new life in Ballina with his friend Shelby, who he describes as 'the best dog he's ever owned'. The two have joined a local walking group.



William and Shelby



Children, Youth and Families

Youth on Track

An early intervention service for 10-17-year olds, which helps youth to identify issues, work on solutions, reduce risky behaviour and make positive life choices. The program supported 91 young people during 2021-22, 26.4% of whom were First Nations Australian.

The Youth on Track Coffs Cannons and Woopi Warriors - in partnership with local police, Youth Police Liaison officers, Youth Action Meeting and other key stakeholders provides young people in the region with weekly fitness activities.

The program focuses on mental wellbeing, inclusive opportunities and social connections, with the aim of reducing cautions and charges. Rewards days for young people, facilitated through the police, have also been a success. Funded by the NSW Department of Communities and Justice.

Getting It Together

An early intervention program to assist vulnerable young people aged between between 12 and 25 years of age with a dependence on alcohol and/or other drugs. The program supported 84 young people over 2021-22, 13.1% of whom were First Nations Australian.

Similarly to Reconnect, the program continues to deliver therapeutic services to young people following the floods, through telehealth and phone options and in temporary premises at Southern Cross University.

Proudly funded by the NSW Government.

Reconnect

Assists young people who may be at risk of becoming homeless due to the breakdown of family relationships. Reconnect supported 121 young people in 2021-2022, 13.2% of whom were First Nations Australian.

The program continues to deliver therapeutic services to young people following the floods, through telehealth and phone options and in temporary premises at Southern Cross University. We're building a client list while maintaining ongoing consortium partnerships with headspace Lismore and Tweed.

On 30 June, we held an interactive creative workshop with Clubhouse Lismore as part of Rekindling the Spirit youth day. The day involved badge-making, colouring in and interactive iPad activities to inspire and engage local young people.

The initial Healing Hearts event took place in collaboration with NSW Police, Aboriginal Youth Officers, local Indigenous community members and Lismore City Council. The event aimed to tackle negative behaviours by youth in the Goonellabah region.

We're continuing to build strong relationships with the Bunjum Aboriginal Corporation and are looking to connect and collaborate further in the future. Funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services.

Family, Connect and Support

Family Connect and Support (FCS) helps children, young people and families in NSW with parenting challenges, financial stress, substance use, family breakdown, housing issues and mental health. Schools often refer families to the service. We work in partnership with Pathfinders to deliver the service on the Mid North Coast.

The program supported 1,221 families during 2021–22, 28.9% of whom were First Nations Australians. Program workers had a daily presence across the region's evacuation and recovery centres during the floods, while still maintaining the day-to-day delivery of services. FCS' Aboriginal Engagement Officer has developed a Working With Mob plan, to support the referral of Indigenous families into the FCS program. The informal partnership we've developed with Arising Indigenous Community Development Aid has also grown stronger – as shown through the referrals through to FCS and the positive outcomes these referrals have provided for families.

We're also seeing data that shows other remote communities with a high population of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people – such as Coraki and Tabulum – are engaging with our outreach services. It's a reflection of the connections and trust our FCS workers are building – and the consistency with which we are working in those communities. Proudly funded by the NSW Government.



(L to R) Kevin Wilson, Aboriginal Liaison Officer, Constable Jo Brooker, Coffs Harbour Police, Jason Sciacca, Mr Gurmesh SINGH, MP, Binx Jade, The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones, MLC, Constable Tegan Baker, Coffs Harbour Police.

Family Connect and Support in Schools (FCiS)

Social Futures' Family Connect in Schools began a pilot collaboration with Lismore Catholic Diocese in 2019, to support students and vulnerable families in accessing our services through Catholic Schools. The pilot was so successful that FCiS workers now sit in 15 Catholic schools, from Murwillumbah to Laurieton.

We're proud of the impact we've had working with families through this platform – and of the positive outcomes it's given so many people. In the past year, we've supported 145 families referring them to 156 support services.

Our team continue to support parents in the region by delivering parenting programs in schools, including Cool Kids Anxiety, Tuning In To Kids, No Scaredy Cats, Love Bites, Brave and Seasons for Growth. Students can access these programs through their school counsellors – and the feedback from parents is that the programs are helping them understand and connect with their children.

The Clubhouse

The Clubhouse

Clubhouse Ballina

A creative hub for young people aged 12-18. Young people can expect to feel welcome and safe while exploring the wide and varied range of engaging activities we have on offer, allowing them to connect and socialise with other young people of similar interests.

Clubhouse Ballina has applied a framework of 'digital storytelling' to the creative workstations it has set up – from podcasting, stop motion animation and badge-making to music and music production, hands-on art making and greenscreen production. The Clubhouse continues to be a culturally-safe space for all young people, with the number of young people attending drop-in afternoons more than doubling over the last six months.

Staff have been collaborating with a local First Nations owned and operated business to develop a program which gives young people access to Clubhouse Ballina so they can create and share their stories digitally.

Other organisations that we've collaborated with over the past year are Distance Education, who support young people who have been or are at risk of disengagement from education, Rekindling the Spirit and Bunjum Aboriginal Corporation.

Clubhouse Lismore

At Clubhouse Lismore, young people are mentored to develop their passions through projects that inspire self-expression and technological know-how.

While Lismore recovers from the floods, temporary activities were delivered through a program called 'Creative First Aid' – which is being rolled out in partnership with the Lismore City Council and the Lismore Art Gallery. Each week, as many as 50 people of all ages are painting 3D printed hearts, making badges, printing artwork from our iPad using Apple pencils to create badges and more. These workshops are keeping the community connected to the principles of STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) learning and digital storytelling, even during a challenging time.

Luke's Story

Luke is the first to admit he was going in the wrong direction prior to joining Youth on Track (YOT).

"I wasn't going down a good track. I'd had a couple of run-ins with the police, and I was fighting and a lot of other things," he explains.

"My relationship with my family was okay, but I never went very well at school. The teachers were alright, but I didn't get along with most of the other kids. My favourite subject was sport and science, but I found most of school pretty boring.

"After my run-ins with the police I was introduced to a case worker and he got me into the (YOT) program, since then it's been a big part of my life."

Luke says at first he was hesitant about joining the program but after a couple of visits he started to enjoy himself.

His YOT worker introduced him to the gym and working out.

"We started with one session a week and then went to two. We did weights, boxing and a lot of cardio work ... while working out we talked about other stuff."

Luke says that YOT has taught him about self-respect and respecting others.

"The main thing I like about the program is that it teaches you to treat others how you'd like to be treated and other things like mental health and mental fitness.

"I wasn't very fit, now I'm in much better shape."

Luke says getting fit improved his confidence and outlook and helped him resist peer pressure and to stay out of trouble.

"I realise how far I've come," Luke says. "What I'd like to tell others is don't let other people drag you down. If your mates tell you to do something bad, don't listen to them.



Luke exercising

It's about the choices I make, and they are hard choices. It took me a while to commit to that

"Since I started the program, I stopped hanging with people who were dragging me down and telling me to do this and that. I now tell them, 'You can go do that by yourself.'

"It's about the choices I make, and they are hard choices. It took me a while to commit to that. I said I would commit and then I did a couple of things I shouldn't have, but then I realised I needed to stop – that wasn't the life I want to live."

It's been more than two years since Luke joined the program and he is still going strong.

He volunteers to support other young people just joining YOT, is learning martial arts and also completing a ready-for-work program.

He aspires to continue helping other young people reach their goals.

Financial snapshot

Social Futures continued to invest in core processes in 2021-2022 to support our work.

We implemented the Sage accounting platform to streamline financial processes and commenced implementation of the Elmo human resource platform to integrate our people and culture work.

Significant events during the year included our continued response to the COVID-19 pandemic and major flooding across Northern NSW. We continued to ensure safe service delivery during periods of lockdown and did not have significant impacts on our business.

Record levels of flooding in Northern NSW affected four of our offices in Lismore and our 'McKenzie Lofts' affordable housing development. We have located to a new office space in Lismore that is above future probable maximum flood heights and have consolidated all Lismore based sites into a single location. We have received a partial insurance payout for the McKenzie Lofts development and are working with the developer to mitigate potential future losses. The financial result for 2021-2022 includes a write-down in the value of this project.

Our accounting result for the year was a \$483,140 surplus increasing our net equity position to \$7.27 million and a current ratio of 1.86.

The total balance of grant income received in 2021 and 2022 for which services have yet to be delivered has increased to \$1.83 million.

Adjusting for income for undelivered services, would see the result for the year of a \$98,467 surplus and equity of \$5.44 million. This would see a current ratio of 1.55 which confirms that the organisation is comfortably able to meet all commitments.



Our funders have continued to support us in our delivery of a range of programs and have worked with us in managing circumstances through COVID-19 and floods.

\$38,585,773

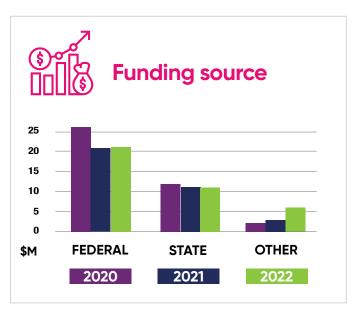
Total Revenue

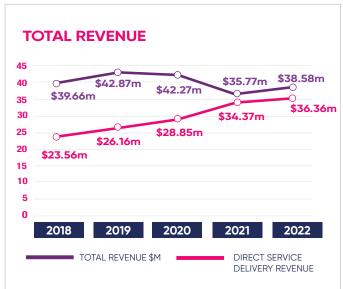
\$483,140

Surplus

\$7,273,628

Net Equity

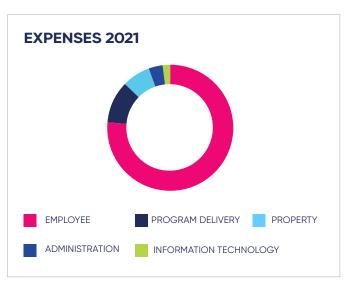
















The Board is responsible for Social Futures' strategic direction, including oversight of program and service performance, and contractual and financial management.



Pat Grier, AM Chair

Pat Grier has extensive experience in the health care sector as well as sales, marketing and general management. In 20 years as CEO of Ramsay Health Care he grew the organisation to become Australia's largest private hospital operator with more than 100 hospitals internationally, 30,000 staff and a turnover of \$3 billion. He received the Member of the Order of Australia in 2010. Pat has previously served on a number of boards, including ten years as Chairman of the Private Hospitals Association.



Keith Sloan

Keith brings more than 40 years' experience in research, consulting and teaching in finance and economics. He was an Associate Professor in the Business School at Southern Cross University where he worked for over two decades. Keith is committed to working to redress inequalities in Australia and build stronger regional communities. He is currently on the Board of the Australian School of Accounting and President of the Singapore Institute of Purchasing and Materials Management.



Kirstie McClean
Deputy Chair

Kirstie has more than 20 years' experience in marketing and strategy including strategic marketing, branding, marketing communications, digital and consumer behaviour. She has worked with organisations including Fairfax Media, DDB Australia, Omnicom London, McDonald's Australia, Mercedes-Benz UK and Royal Mail UK, as well as not-for-profits and local, state and federal governments. Kirstie is an experienced non-executive director, and has a Master of Commerce from University of NSW, and a Bachelor of Economics from University of Sydney.



Margarita Escartin

Margarita brings her experience in engagement and community enrichment with Indigenous and remote communities to our Board. Her deep understanding of the issues they face includes the importance of education, access to services, and sustainable employment as pathways to positive social impact. With a background in law, Margarita has worked in a government funded legal service; established a successful Indigenous law practice in a national firm; and founded a consulting practice in Australia and internationally. Her pro bono work for Indigenous communities has assisted them maximise economic participation outcomes from projects on their traditional lands.



Orit Ben-Harush

Orit brings extensive experience in research of digital media at Queensland University of Technology, where she completed her PhD, and other universities overseas. She has explored the social impact of communication technologies including the internet, mobile phones and social media. Orit has previous experience in marketing. Most recently she has been working as a data analyst at North Coast Primary Health Network. Orit is an active member in her community where she supports local initiatives for children and youth.



Penny Cox

Penny Cox has built a diverse career in sales and business management in the service and IT industries. She is Head of Sales and Account Management at Inlogik, a global leader in expense management solutions. She has provided business support to numerous governments, corporate clients and over 100 not-for-profit organisations. She brings valuable lived experience as a carer for people with mental illness and disability. She is an advocate for social justice and believes everyone deserves a fair chance in life.



Trish Oxford

Trish is a proud Ngemba woman from Bourke NSW, and vision-driven executive leader with expertise in corporate governance, policy development, strategic business planning, diverse stakeholder engagement and Indigenous affairs across the public and private sectors. Trish brings a deep commitment to the values and principles of social justice and inclusion and a passion for the wellbeing and advancement of Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander peoples. She has served on several boards from large not-for-profits to local sporting clubs.



Chris Leach

Chris has 39 years' experience in the disability sector at federal and state levels. He is a former Deputy Secretary for Disability in NSW. He has worked in senior roles in aged care, community care, corporate services, child protection and housing. Chris managed the transfer of NSW disability services to the NDIS and contributed to the development of the landmark Disability Services Act. He was awarded the Public Service Medal in the 2015 Australia Day Honours.



Leanne Coventry

Leanne has been in the financial services industry since 2002. She has built strong relationships with a variety of Aboriginal companies, people and communities across Eastern Australia. Leanne is passionate about financial education and having trusted and connected relationships. She has used her professional experience to provide practical support and opportunity to regional, remote and urban Australia through her current role as Manager of Indigenous Business at Westpac. An expert in transactional banking solutions for all industry but in particular the Not-for-Profit sector, she was awarded one of the bank's Bicentennial Service Honours in 2017.



Our Executive Team

The Executive Team provides operational management and implements Social Futures' strategic goals.



Tony Davies
Chief Executive Officer

Tony has over twenty years' experience in leadership roles in government, non-government and private enterprise. As a qualified lawyer he has strong advocacy skills. He is a Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and has served on a number of boards including Australian Council of Social Services (ACOSS), Yfoundations and as President of the NSW Council of Social Services (NCOSS). He has served in a number of government advisory roles including NSW Social Innovation Council and the Ministerial Advisory Group on vulnerable children, youth and families.



Michael Carter
Chief Financial Officer - Executive Manager Support Services

With qualifications in accounting, marketing and management, Michael is an experienced Chief Financial Officer with a background in investment management, health, higher education and social services. He is respected for his ability to deliver in highly regulated environments and contribute to the realisation of strategic goals. Michael currently sits on the Northern NSW Local Health District Board, holds graduate membership of the AICD and is continuing studies in Governance.



David Thomson
Chief Operating Officer - Service Delivery

David brings more than 35 years' leadership experience supporting people across a full range of sectors in human services, education, and business. He has extensive multi-site management, business development, and start-up business expertise. He has worked in the for-purpose space across the world, from people living in the South American Andes to Australia's Gold Coast. With a strong desire to enable positive social change, he thrives on providing the best possible customer experience and is privileged to work alongside individuals and our diverse communities helping achieve best outcomes for all.



Jana Hall
Chief Performance Officer - Organisational Excellence

Jana has a background of over 15 years of positions in non-profit management, leading organisations through growth and change, setting up award-winning new and innovative models of care and pilot projects in aged care. Her qualifications and technical skills include a Masters in Business Administration, lead accreditations with White Ribbon Workplace, Australian Service Excellence Standards, National Standards for Mental Health Services, ISO 9001 Quality Management Systems, reporting and analysis.



Katrina Luckie
Chief Strategy Officer (finished Sept 2022)

Katrina is an experienced regional and community development professional with technical skills spanning project management, governance, business development, statistical analysis, research design, advocacy, sustainability and capacity-building. She is Chair of Summerland Credit Union and has held previous leadership roles with Regional Development Australia – Northern Rivers and Northern Rivers Regional Development Board.



Positive Social Change

socialfutures.org.au 1800 719 625 PO Box 5419 East Lismore NSW 2480 contact@socialfutures.org.au

Join us on 😝 🔘 😉 🛅









Ashmore | Ballina | Bathurst | Broken Hill | Byron Bay | Coffs Harbour | Dubbo | Gosford Grafton | Kempsey | Lismore | Maitland | Orange | Tamworth | Tweed Heads | Wyong

