

SOCIAL FUTURES

ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023



The year that was

We live in an era of uncertainty. This year, our focus is resilient communities. For Social Futures to continue achieving positive social change, we need to empower communities to build resilience.

Social Futures' programs support several pillars of resilience.

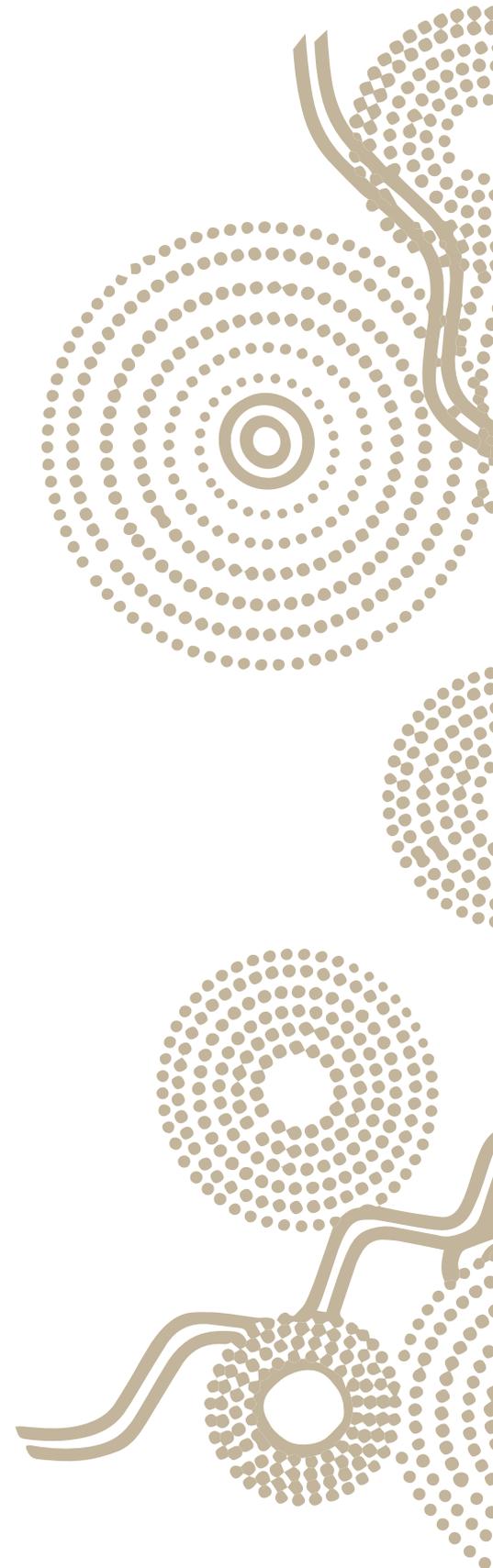
By connecting people to the support they need, when they need it, we are:

- building social connectedness and inclusion
- strengthening and improving public access to health and social services
- building sector capacity
- expanding communication and collaboration across the community
- engaging at-risk individuals and the programs that serve them
- achieving better outcomes for people in the communities we serve.



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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.

Message from the Chair and CEO

Over the past 12 months, we've seen some remarkable steps towards achieving stronger, fairer and more resilient communities.

We would like to thank everyone who has been part of this journey: the 27,000+ people that we worked for; our supportive communities; our amazing staff and dedicated Board.

Throughout the year, we focused attention on pressing social issues such as the current economic challenges and impact of extreme weather events. We started the year in recovery from floods, supporting affected communities in Northern and Western NSW, aiding staff and re-establishing in Lismore.

We advocated for more social and affordable housing as a central pillar to solving the nation's homelessness crisis.

We presented to the Senate Select Committee on Australia's Disaster Resilience, advocating for a framework to guide not-for-profits and community groups in working with, and supporting government and communities in the aftermath of extreme weather events.

We presented at national homelessness conferences in Canberra and Darwin. We shared the impact of weather events with the sector and policy makers and showcased our Tweed Homelessness Outreach service, explaining how this wrap-around service meets the health, social and mental health needs of people who have experienced long-term homelessness.

Through multiple programs, Social Futures is helping people to recover from trauma and thrive post-flood. Families with young children impacted by the 2022 floods are supported through our Strong Minds in the Early Years program, which delivers play-based therapy.

Our housing team launched the new Recovery Connect program. Support workers walk alongside individuals affected by the floods, assisting them to access services and disaster assistance packages. Despite losing four offices in the February 2023 floods, in October 2022 we celebrated the return of 120 Social Futures staff to Lismore's Central Business District with the opening of a new office. As one of the first major employers to return, this marked an important milestone in the recovery for the region.

“ We advocated for more social and affordable housing as a central pillar to solving the nation's homelessness crisis.”

Our mental health work expanded with the launch of Veterans Connect on the Central Coast, a service dedicated to connecting former Australian Defence Force members and their families with the health, wellbeing, and community services they need. Another exciting new program is the care finder service in central western New South Wales. This provides crucial support to senior community members struggling to find suitable care services.

Social Futures' ongoing work to empower people with disability to live life on their own terms and drive positive social change continues to be a core focus. Our team with lived experience is designing and delivering life-changing disability inclusion programs to workplaces and schools.

“ Our dedicated people on the ground are making a tangible difference in the lives of individuals, supporting resilient communities and thriving individuals.”

We celebrated the one-year anniversary of the Waves Inclusive Dance Parties, a popular Central Coast event where young people with and without disability can feel safe and welcome and be themselves.

We launched Milkiri, an Inclusion in Culture program for schools. It looks at how First Nations communities approach disability, how everyone has a place in community.

Our commitment to strengthening relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations is evident through our Reconciliation Action Plan. In 2023, we had our largest involvement yet in NAIDOC celebrations, participating in many events from Broken Hill to the Northern Rivers.

We take great pride in presenting this year's annual report, highlighting the impact our programs have in our community. Our dedicated people on the ground are making a tangible difference in the lives of individuals, supporting resilient communities and thriving individuals.



Pat Grier, AM - Chair



Tony Davies - CEO



Positive Social Change



2022–2023 Highlights



27,402

people supported on their journey to inclusion, wellbeing and independence



2,947

participants supported through 7 Housing, Homelessness and Employment programs



15,388

participants supported through our Disability Inclusion programs



2,740

children, young people and their families supported through 8 Children, Youth and Family programs



381

staff delivered 28 programs and services



2,969

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants supported across our footprint



5,868

participants supported through 8 Mental Health and Wellbeing programs



28,675

persons engaged at community events



2,555

community engagement events



459

participants at community and sector leadership workshops



715

culturally and linguistically diverse

481

LGBTIQSB+ participants



87,128

occasions of service

Our capabilities and services



Central Coast
Darkinjung

- Local Area Coordination for NDIS
- StandBy Support After Suicide
- Veterans Connect

Central West
Wiradjuri

- care finder service
- Clubhouse
- Local Area Coordination for NDIS
- StandBy Support After Suicide

Far West
Wilyakali

- Clubhouse
- Local Area Coordination for NDIS
- StandBy Support After Suicide

Gold Coast
Yugambah

- StandBy Support After Suicide
- Standing Strong

Hunter New England
Kamilaroi, Wonnarua, Biripi

- Care Connect
- StandBy Support After Suicide
- Out of Hospital Care (finished Nov 2022)

Mid North Coast
Gumbaynggirr, Dunghutti

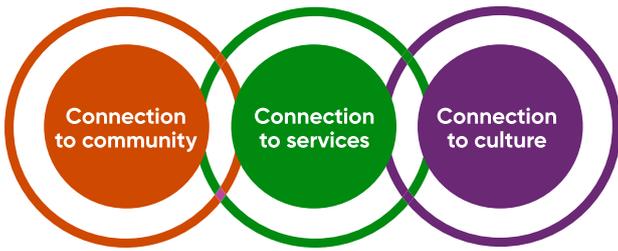
- Care Connect
- Family Connect in Schools
- Reconnect
- StandBy Support After Suicide
- Youth on Track

Northern Rivers
Bundjalung, Gumbaynggirr

- Choices (finished Dec 2022)
- Clubhouse Lismore – Ballina Outreach
- Clubhouse Lismore
- Commonwealth Home Support Program
- Connecting Home (Adult, Youth)
- Connecting Home – Youth Headleasing (finished May 2023)
- Connecting You (HYAP)
- Early Intervention Connect
- Elements Youth and Family Relationships Program
- Family Connect in Schools
- Getting it Together
- headspace Lismore
- headspace Tweed Heads
- Local Area Coordination for NDIS
- Mijung Jarjums Kids in Mind
- Reconnect
- Recovery Connect
- Resilient Kids
- StandBy Support After Suicide
- Strong Minds in the Early Years
- Tweed Assertive Outreach
- Youth on Track

This map is an attempt to represent the nation groups of the First Peoples of Australia within our office locations. We understand that some boundaries may be disputed or unclear, however we continue to learn.

What we do



Our reputation for excellence is underpinned by the quality of our people and the relationships they create with others.

Over 47 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 Social Futures to deliver a sustainable and person-centred model of support, working in a way that is safe, effective and accountable.

Our service capabilities include:



Disability Inclusion



Mental Health and Wellbeing



Housing, Homelessness and Employment



Children, Youth and Families



Seniors in Community



Sector Development



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



Great customer experience



Reputation for excellence



Sustainable organisation



Everyone matters

Our people are at the heart of Social Futures. We have more than 380 staff serving regional New South Wales and South-East Queensland.

Our team brings a collective passion to work every day. From all walks of life, they could be supporters of people with disability, program and social workers, mental health workers and psychologists, youth workers or counsellors.

On the frontline, our people are making a difference to tens of thousands of lives each year, supporting resilient communities and thriving people. And behind the scenes, our support teams ensure that the organisation thrives and meets all requirements.

“ I love seeing the impact the work is having in the community. It really makes a difference.”

Inclusion

We embrace and celebrate our diversity. Every individual feels welcome, included, respected and heard. This empowers our people to create positive social change, together.

Integrity

This year, we asked our people what attracted them to Social Futures and why they love working here. Our May 2023 employee survey revealed Social Futures has a world class Employee Net Promoter Score of +59.

We heard that “you matter at Social Futures. The organisation is the most compassionate, heart-centred place I have ever worked” and that staff “love seeing the impact the work is having in the community. It really makes a difference”.

“ You matter at Social Futures. The organisation is the most compassionate, heart-centred place I have ever worked.”

Learning

Our new HR Information System, ELMO, is providing a robust platform for all people-related processes and forms.

We’ve redesigned our Flexible Working Toolkit. Our surveys show that workplace flexibility at Social Futures has further improved, as compressed working fortnights and working from home consistency enhance our employee experience.

As we look ahead, Social Futures will continue to foster our culture of continuous improvement, getting better at what we do.

30.6.23

TOTAL STAFF

▶ Full-time staff

▶ First Nations staff

▶ CALD staff Culturally and linguistically diverse

▶ LGBTIQSB+ staff Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and gender diverse, Intersex, Queer, Sistergirl, Brotherboy

▶ People with disability or carers of people with disability

381

309

7%

5%

12%

16%

**Positive Social Change,
Together**

Organisational excellence

We continue to build a culture of excellence through our commitment to continuous improvement of service delivery.

Staff are supported to live our value of learning through opportunities to increase their knowledge in areas of child and youth safety, inclusive language, cultural humility, mental health and wellbeing, supporting staff impacted by family and domestic violence, and evidence-based practice.

Social Futures' leadership development program was developed to build stronger leaders. As a part of this program, Social Futures launched an internal mentoring program at the end of last year.

At the beginning of 2023, we launched a pilot project to trial the SafeSide Suicide Prevention Framework in our Mental Health and Wellbeing stream. The SafeSide framework is based on the latest suicide prevention research. It equips staff with a map of best practices and shared language to support the recovery of the young people and families we serve.



Social Futures CEO, Tony Davies and Ms Janelle Saffin, MP

Business, Integration and Strategy

Digital transformation continues to enhance our service delivery and employee experience. As does attracting – and retaining – the best people to create positive social change, together.

Over the year, we rolled out a new recruitment, human resources, learning management system, and performance system called ELMO. By streamlining our processes, we can devote more time to frontline service delivery.

After losing four of our Lismore offices in the February 2022 floods, we celebrated a significant milestone of coming together into one office. We ensured that the office would be fully accessible to individuals with disabilities, crafting warm and inviting spaces in consultation with First Nations people, an occupational therapist and our enthusiastic staff, who were eager to once again welcome the community in person. Adorned with proud Bundjalung room names, the office became fully operational on 4 October 2022.

Social Futures acknowledges the support of both the Australian and NSW governments under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements.



Advocating for change

Our purpose focuses on creating positive social change and involves using our voice to build awareness and advocate for change.

This year, our voice reached over 12.5 million people through digital and traditional media. We appeared before two federal senate inquiries, spoke at conferences, undertook countless media interviews and leveraged social media to highlight the increasing hardship people are experiencing, calling for change.

Australian people continue to struggle with cost-of-living and housing pressures. At the same time, our regions are still recovering from the pandemic and natural disasters – floods and fires.

In February, the Senate Community Affairs References Committee investigation into the extent of poverty in Australia held a public hearing in Lismore. Social Futures CEO Tony Davies had the opportunity to present, explaining that too many regional people live in poverty and without a whole of community response supported by government, these challenges will not go away.

In April, Mr Davies travelled to Darwin to speak at the National Housing and Homelessness Forum. He addressed how we deliver effective wrap-around support services while simultaneously working in an area battered by an extreme weather event.

During February's first anniversary of record flooding in the Northern Rivers, Social Futures advocated for regions impacted by extreme weather events. Our CEO did interviews with most major Australian media outlets, including Seven, Nine, the ABC and News Corporation.



Social Futures called for more investment in social and affordable housing, spending on early intervention services to support families struggling with parenting challenges and in-school-based programs so that disadvantaged students don't get left behind. We partnered with fellow not-for-profit organisations to champion these messages.

In June, the Senate Select Committee on Australia's Disaster Resilience, chaired by Senator Jacqui Lambie, visited Ballina. We drew on our Northern Rivers flood response to call for a framework outlining how disaster response agencies can work with not-for-profits like Social Futures.

Strengthening communities and sector leadership

Social Futures works with providers and communities to build resilience, capacity and to achieve better outcomes for people.

Aged care sector support

Social Futures continues to engage with Northern Rivers providers of community aged care home support, ahead of sector-wide changes. The Federal Government is moving to a new model for home care service delivery, Support at Home, stemming from recommendations from the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety. We will continue to support the right of senior Australians to exercise choice and control.

Funded by the Australian Government
Department of Health and Aged Care

Targeted earlier intervention

Supporting vulnerable children, young people, families and communities

We delivered Cultural Trauma Informed Care training workshops to 68 early intervention service workers across the Northern Rivers. Professor Derek Chong led workshops in Murwillumbah, Ballina, Grafton and Goonellabah.

Proudly funded by the NSW Government



Better Chances Forum

A sector collaboration supporting better chances for children, young people, their families and communities to lead safe, healthy and happy lives.

There are more than 400 Better Chances Forum members from over 120 community, government, and private-sector organisations.

Over 140 people took part in the Better Chances Engagement Practice Forum in March 2023, sharing and learning about approaches to engagement practice in programs and groups across Bundjalung, Yaegl and Gumbaynggirr Country in the Northern Rivers. These forums focus on early intervention and prevention to keep families together.

We held three Strengthening Days for First Nations Early Childhood and Family Support workers in the Northern Rivers, which were attended by 30 First Nations workers. This was a Better Chances Forum project supported by Social Futures, YWCA Communities for Children and NSW Department of Communities and Justice.

We offered a culturally-led healing and connection space where participants can work together to present our united voice about what we need as Aboriginal workers to support our jarjums* and families.

Participants shared the importance of building relationships with community, acknowledged recognition of intergenerational trauma, and carriage of intergenerational wisdom and healing through movement.

*children in Bundjalung language

Byron CoLab on Arakwal Country

Byron Shire Council will be renovating the old Byron Hospital site into a for-purpose community centre. In late June, Byron Shire Council approved the construction budget. Social Futures will manage the site on completion. We plan to:

- increase the availability of services that help the community
- establish a space for community to connect and collaborate
- connect people to their greatest potential and support them to thrive.

We are working to secure tenancies which will strengthen the social fabric of the Byron Shire.

Goonellabah

In May we purchased our own affordable housing stock in greater Lismore. We plan to enhance the social housing for existing and future tenants.

McKenzie Lofts Lismore

McKenzie Lofts was our first venture into developing affordable housing to directly respond to the housing crisis. Sadly, this almost-complete project was affected by the floods in 2022. We are looking at options for fulfilling the site intent.



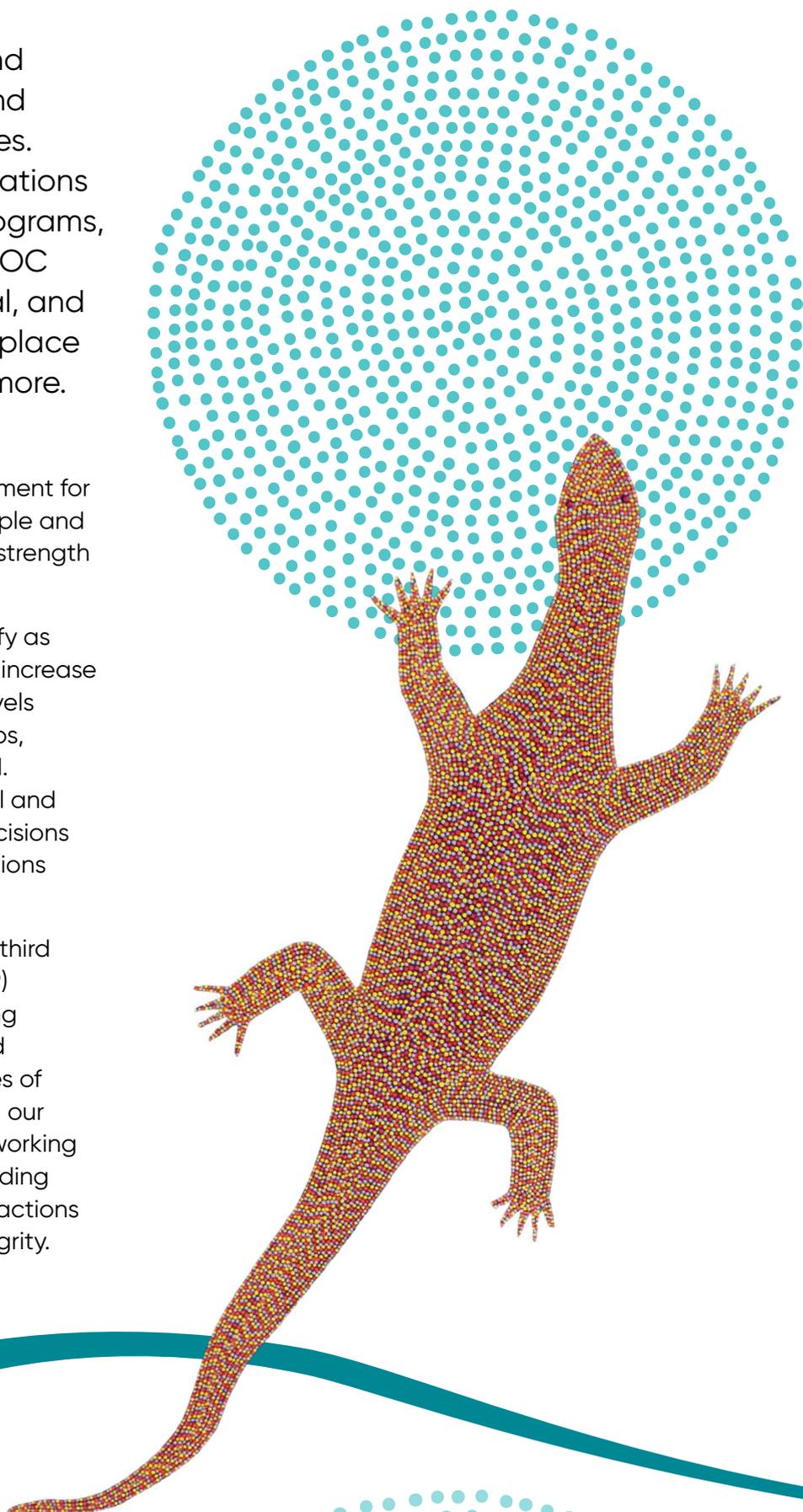
Reconciliation

Social Futures is committed to fostering strong relationships and reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. We actively engage with First Nations communities throughout our programs, and support initiatives like NAIDOC celebrations, the Kinship Festival, and the establishment of a keeping place for Bundjalung Language in Lismore.

These initiatives showcase our ongoing commitment to reconciliation, empowerment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and a respectful workplace that reflects the strength and diversity of our nation.

Around seven per cent of our staff identify as First Nations. We are actively working to increase First Nations representation across all levels of Social Futures including working groups, leadership, and the Social Futures Board. This is providing a platform for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices to shape decisions concerning the wellbeing of our First Nations employees and customers.

We are in the process of developing our third Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) with Reconciliation Australia, emphasising relationships, respect, opportunities, and governance. It is by listening to the voices of our First Nations staff, community voices, our Aboriginal Advisory Panel, and our RAP working group that we truly learn. And it is by holding ourselves accountable – to each of the actions laid out in our RAP – that we ensure integrity.



Our 2021–2023 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 and signage

Respect

- ▶ Traditional Custodians invited to provide Welcome to Country at Social Futures events
- ▶ Provide an Acknowledgment of Country at internal meetings
- ▶ Ensure Social Futures offices are culturally safe and welcoming
- ▶ Deliver ongoing cultural awareness training for all staff
- ▶ Staff learnings about significant local land sites and stories
- ▶ Promote positive images, activities and outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- ▶ Involve Social Futures staff 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



Seniors in Community



NEW PROGRAM

Connecting older people with aged care, health and community services

Social Futures began delivering care finder services across central western New South Wales in February this year. Care finders is a new national program. It is helping older people find and connect with local supports while living in their own home.

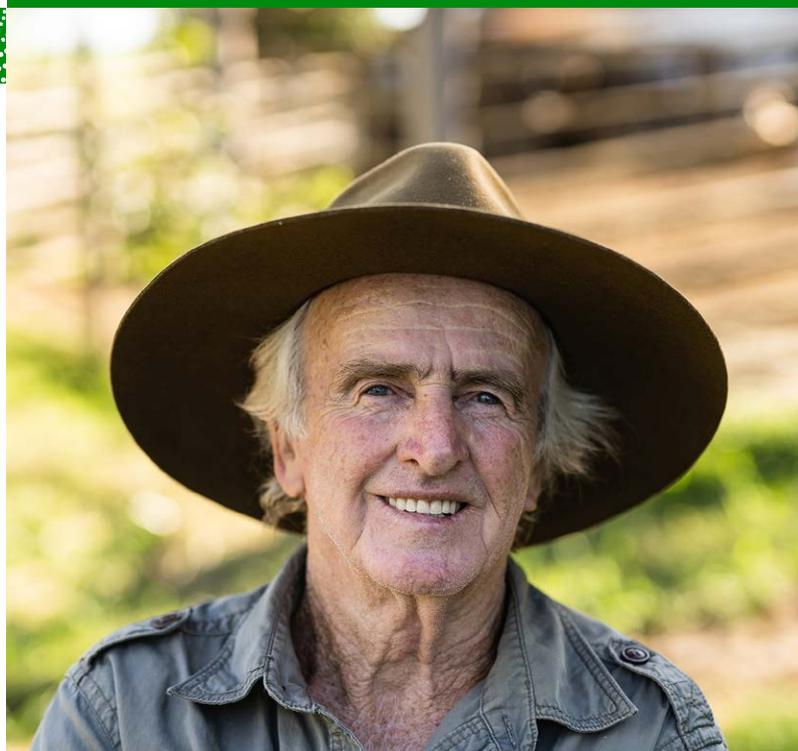
Some older people need extra support to find their way around the care system – especially people who do not have family, friends or helpers nearby. Other older people may also be dealing with cognitive decline and need more help.

The care finder coordinators listen, explain options, then begin setting up the best combination of health, aged care and other local services to meet needs. Even people who are not yet receiving aged care services are eligible.

These care coordinators have strong community connections and expert skills supporting senior community members. They have a specialist understanding of supports so can assist people with the federal My Aged Care program, the National Disability Insurance Scheme, and can locate other community services.

 **Servicing** Greater Dubbo, Narromine, Gilgandra, Warrumbungle and the Mid-Western regional local government areas

Funded by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care through the Western NSW Primary Health Network



care finder services is a new national program.

It's vital for older Australians to have choices that help them remain connected to others and the community.

28



Active group participants - with a disability

12

Active participants - with a disability

9

Active participants - Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander

7

Community engagement events

Disability Inclusion



Andie's Story

Andie Poetschka was 14 years old when her family moved from Sydney to the Central Coast. She wasn't impressed. Andie was a teenager forced to leave her friends behind, but her mother wouldn't let Andie feel sorry for herself. Instead, her mum encouraged her to get involved in community radio.

For 11 years Andie volunteered at a Central Coast community radio station, while finishing school then completing a Bachelor of Communications. Her time speaking on air influenced Andie's career choice, as today she works in disability advocacy. Andie helps people with intellectual disability to learn to speak up for themselves and make independent decisions.

Andie, now 26 years old, lives with cerebral palsy and her lived experience of disability enables her to better advocate for others.

Andie is also a Social Futures NDIS participant. The NDIS pays for her mobility aids, including a walking stick and electric scooter and covers the transport cost of going to and from work.

As well as being employed in disability advocacy, Andie has helped lead an initiative which benefits the NSW Central Coast community. She is on a Social Futures' LAC Community Reference Group which established the Waves inclusive dance parties. These regular dances attract crowds of around 200 on the Central Coast.

"When Social Futures asked if I wanted to help organise inclusive dance parties, my answer was a resounding and unreserved yes," said Andie.

"I knew that young people with disability on the Central Coast had few opportunities to socialise once they left school."

Andie – and the eight other young people (aged 18 to 25 years) on the Waves steering committee – started planning for the first dance for June 2022.



“ I feel my involvement with Waves has been the greatest achievement of my life.”

– Andie

Andie found herself working on everything from a logo design for the event, to decorating the venue, posting social media and doing a live interview with ABC Radio.

The dance was a success attracting around 60 people.

"We had an amazing time, the live band was great, everyone enjoyed it," she said.

"I got a review from one young woman saying this was the highlight of her life because she had never had the opportunity before to go to something like that and just have fun. It was really special to see – everyone with and without disabilities – just feeling like they were safe and included."

Andie said because a steering committee of young people with disability 'built it from the ground up', the dance parties are truly welcoming for people with disability.

The dances are now held every three months and the crowds have grown from 60 to 200. Waves has moved into the biggest function room at the leagues club.

Andie says she's learnt a great deal about event planning and promotion.

Disability Inclusion

Social Futures delivered ongoing support to 15,388 National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) participants in the past year.

We are a proud NDIS Partner in the Community. Our Local Area Coordination (LAC) services cover Northern NSW, NSW Central Coast, Western NSW and Far Western NSW. Social Futures is working with NDIS participants and other people with disability to:

- set and achieve life goals
- develop strengths and abilities so they can connect with key supports, make their own choices, and live the lives they choose.

Social Futures won the 2022 Enablement Award for Most Outstanding NDIS Community Support Team in October 2022. We continue to strive for ongoing excellence in customer service, putting people first to achieve the best outcomes.

An important part of being an NDIS Partner in the Community is making society a place where people with disability are always respected and valued. We liaise with communities, government and other not-for-profit organisations to do this.

Our LAC team developed a 12-month community capacity building plan to promote inclusiveness in schools and businesses. We develop programs around the lived experience and unique talents of our LAC team members to facilitate inclusion and improve accessibility.



Winner of the 2022 Enablement Award for Most Outstanding NDIS Community Support Team



No Limits!

Access and inclusion are good for business

Our No Limits! initiative promotes being accessible and inclusive in the workplace. No Limits! encourages awareness of barriers (physical and attitudinal) for customers and prospective workers. The Australian Human Rights Commission states that only 53 per cent of people with disabilities are employed, compared with 84 per cent of people without – and this rate has barely moved in 20 years. We want to change that.

This initiative also provides insight into what it is like to live with disability by presenting workshops on disability awareness, improving physical accessibility and providing information on available resources, support and wage subsidies. This prompts businesses to discuss how they can make their workplace more accessible and realise the benefits of employing staff with disability.

15,388
participants supported



1,504
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander participants supported

373
CALD participants supported

Inclusion in schools

We offer five educational programs for schools, where the facilitators share life achievements and their experience of disability.

Through engaging activities, our facilitators build the students' understanding of accessibility and the social model of disability while debunking misconceptions and promoting allyship and inclusion.

- **Milkiri** uses dance, music and cultural artefacts to share a First Nations' cultural perspective of disability. It delivers a positive message of finding strength in connection to culture when you are feeling different and alone.
- **Sports Ability** involves students using sports wheelchairs as a form of immersive learning.
- **Blind Cricket** uses experiential glasses to learn about vision impairment and blind sports. The facilitators highlight their positive experiences in disability sports, emphasising the community belonging they have gained through sport.
- **Different on the Outside, Same on the Inside** and **My Friend Franklin** teach students about the challenges people with both physical and invisible disabilities face. Activities and storytelling explain the impact of bullying and personal photographs show how the facilitators overcome everyday physical challenges.



Change Makers

This program supports disability-led projects, exemplified by the Central Coast Waves Inclusive Dances, now in its second year. Organised by a group of Central Coast young people with disability, the quarterly dances regularly attract crowds of around 200.



Photovoice disability pride

Photovoice is an online project that explores disability pride, creativity and connection and uses photography to capture the unique experiences of people with disability.



The Brother Boys celebrate a year of triumphs

Last year's annual report featured the amazing story of NDIS participant Bill Cooper, who began making TikTok videos with his brother-in-law, Kyran O'Donnell, during the pandemic.

The pair, who call themselves the Brother Boys, became TikTok sensations attracting more than 200 million views. Over the past year their star has continued to rise – they travelled to Canberra to meet the federal disability minister, reached the finals of the national TikTok awards, appeared on TV and were flown around Australia to host charity events and meet celebrities.

Bill is a stellar example of an NDIS participant living a big life – and the Brother Boys are still promoting disability inclusion through their videos.

Bill, aged 24, was born with Down Syndrome and his NDIS plan is supported by the Social Futures Broken Hill office. He works part-time at a Wentworth supermarket. Bill's support includes transport to his job, social outings and physiotherapy. He lives between his parents' place and his sister, Lucy, who has been partnered with Kyran for 12 years.



“ I loved meeting Bill Shorten and showing him our TikTok videos. It was lots of fun and the minister was a nice man.”

Bill – after returning from the Australian Capital Territory

Bill and Kyran now have a staggering 1.1 million followers on TikTok. Their videos normalise living with disability and show the power of acceptance and inclusion. It is not surprising that the duo received an invitation from NDIS Minister Bill Shorten last year to visit Canberra and to join the minister in celebrating International Day of People with Disability.

Last December, the Brother Boys and Mr Shorten made a video in front of Parliament House. Bill and Kyran also had a round of media interviews and were featured on both Sky and ABC TV news.

After their Canberra visit, the Boys boarded a plane to Sydney for the Australian TikTok Festival, hosted by ABC celebrity Tony Armstrong and broadcast on the Ten Network. The duo were finalists in the TikTok for Good Category.

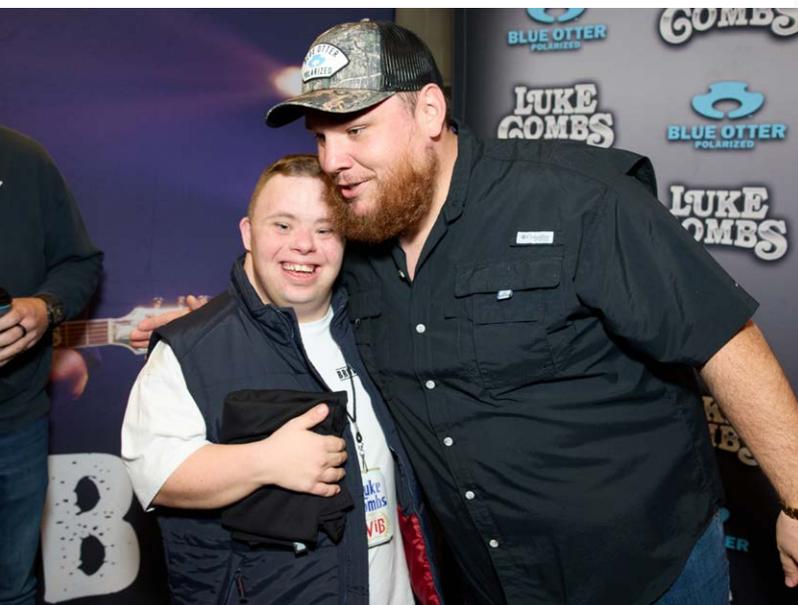
“I was so excited that we were nominated and I knew that we might win and we didn't,” said Bill. “That's okay though, because I'm so proud of us and we had lots of fun on the night.”

Other highlights from the past year include:

- winning an Australian Influencer Marketing Council Award for Best Family Creator
- travelling to Sydney to meet the Australian country music singer Luke Combs and to see his concert
- attending the Down Syndrome Australia Gala Ball.

Bill's final comment on his year of triumphs:

“Always believe in yourself and never give up. Chase your dreams and if someone tells you, ‘You can't do it’, then show them you can.”



Milkiri ant dance raises disability inclusion awareness in schools

Social Futures launched a new program in January looking at how First Nations communities approach disability.

The Milkiri Inclusion in Culture program was designed by local area coordinator Richard Clarke, a proud Ngemba man from Brewarrina in North Western NSW.

Richard says when he goes to schools, he explains four key perspectives of disability from his culture:

- ▶ Everybody is different.
- ▶ Everybody has a role to play.
- ▶ We take care of each other.
- ▶ Staying connected to mind, body, spirit and Country helps keep us strong.

Richard's grandfather used a wheelchair. This did not stop him from playing a vital role teaching Richard and others about culture, Country, stories and bush foods.

"That's the message I emphasise in schools – we may be different, but everyone is still valued, has a role and is needed by their community," Richard said.

The name Milkiri is a Ngemba word meaning 'ant dance' and it was given to Richard by his Uncle Roy to use when teaching about culture. Richard explores ideas around disability through dances, demonstration, songs, and storytelling. He also introduces students to Aboriginal tools and artifacts, including explaining the importance of the digeridoo.

"I engage students through culture, and after the Acknowledgement of Country, I ask them to think about where they come from, where they are connected to and who their mob is," he said.

Since creating Milkiri, Richard has visited more than 30 schools and met with more than 700 students. The children have given the program glowing reviews.



One student told 'Uncle Richard' that he now understood it was okay not be the same as everyone else.

“ I always leave schools with a sense of pride because the students have learnt something from me, and I also get to see the Aboriginal students step up and share their culture with their class peers.

“I witness them explaining, ‘This is how you do that’ and then I again feel so proud. I thank those students for sharing.”

Richard has the permission of the Bundjalung Elders to showcase Milkiri on Bundjalung country.

"I am grateful to have this opportunity to share my culture and demonstrate how it is so inclusive. I always pay my respects to my people (Ngemba) and to the Bundjalung people."

The idea for Milkiri came from a conversation Richard and a colleague had while connecting with community at *The Koori Mail* hub in Lismore, a month after the 2022 floods.

"I was explaining the many ways First Nations families and communities support each other, valuing difference through roles, responsibilities, and kinship," he said. "From that Milkiri was born."

Children, Youth and Families



Youth on Track

Helping young people to avoid long term contact with the justice system

Youth on Track supports young people to strengthen community and family connections and make better life choices.

The team is supported by local police. We work closely with the Salt Water Sistas, an Indigenous organisation supporting young women. This is a unique and innovative three-way alliance. The Salt Water Sistas help young women to feel confident in life, strong in culture and community, and inspired by the ocean.

Our aim is to:

- engage young people in a safe space
- reduce cautions and criminal charges
- empower and link young people to other organisations and services when needed
- support brighter futures and enable young people to envisage a bright and positive future for themselves.

Every young person who engaged with the program experienced a decrease in at-risk behaviors. No longer did participants see themselves as young offenders, but as individuals capable of achieving greatness – and with dreams, such as travelling overseas and finding meaningful work.

 **Servicing** Coffs Harbour and Grafton

Funded by the NSW Department of Communities and Justice



Getting it Together

An early intervention program supporting young people aged between 12 and 25 years of age

The program aims to build connections that last, empower young people, and enhance their resilience. Getting it Together had 56 young participants last year. A significant number (19.6%) identified as First Nations.

The team ran Yamba's Kick Flips and Tail Whips Skateboarding Competition in April 2023. The resounding success of the competition is a testament to Social Future's dedication to provide engaging and positive youth events. Sixty young participants from the Clarence Valley showcased their talents and passion for skating and scootering.

We dedicate ourselves to strengthening existing ties with Bundjalung organisations. By fostering these relationships, we enrich our own cultural understanding and empower the communities we serve.

 **Servicing** Tweed, Byron, Ballina, Lismore, Kyogle, Richmond and Clarence Local Government Areas

Funded by the NSW Department of Communities and Justice

NEW PROGRAM

Reconnect

Helping young people (12-18 years) to avoid homelessness and maintain family relationships

Each connection we make contributes to a stronger, more resilient community. We provide counselling, mediation and practical support for young people and their families.

The program supported 84 young people over the last financial year. Eight per cent identified as part of the LGBTIQSB+ community.

At Ballina Coast High School, Social Futures ran the Tuning into Teens parenting program.

In October 2022, we partnered with the NSW Police to co-host a memorable Blue Light Disco in Casino. The event brought joy to our 100-plus young attendees, enhanced community bonds and created a safe, positive space for young people.

 **Servicing** Tweed, Byron, Ballina, Lismore, Kyogle, Richmond and Clarence Local Government Areas

Funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services



Standing Strong

A Gold Coast-based program that supports women to find ongoing and meaningful work after exiting family violence

Standing Strong helps women reclaim their economic independence to support themselves and their children. Over the year, we provided tailored support to 62 women who have survived family violence. Fifty-five per cent of those women reported an improved feeling of safety while in the program.

On exiting violent situations, many women have no option but to leave behind personal possessions, like computers and laptops, which are pivotal in accessing education and work opportunities. The Standing Strong team delivers technological resources to bridge the digital divide and open doors to new possibilities.

Funded by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's Office for Women

2,740

participants supported



31

Community Engagement Events

217

participants with disability

Family Connect and Support

Linking families, children and young people to the right community services and supports



Raising children can be difficult, but there is help available.

This program delivers information, advice and vital service connections to other services. By increasing our accessibility in remote areas, and rolling out services in familiar and comfortable environments, we ensure that every family, regardless of where they live, has access to the support they need.

The team is passionate about supporting the development of our sector. Social Future's contributions to community events and workshops creates increased collaboration, more shared insights, and real collective progress.

 **Servicing** Northern NSW

Funded by the NSW Department of Communities and Justice

Family Connect in Schools

The geographical footprint of the program grew, with Family Connect and Support arriving in Coffs Harbour and Port Macquarie schools. Service delivery increased to include all 45 schools within the Diocese of Lismore Catholic Schools. Families were provided with information, advice and connection to service support.

 **Servicing** Tweed, Byron, Ballina, Lismore, Kyogle, Richmond and Clarence Local Government Areas

Proudly funded by Catholic Schools, Lismore Diocese



Clubhouse

Delivering a safe and free after-school learning experience

Clubhouse gives young people access to new technologies and digital tools to create, explore ideas, develop new skills, and grow in confidence. Working with mentors, young people plan their own long-term projects and along the way learn more about themselves.

Social Futures has Clubhouse spaces in Lismore, Ballina and now Bathurst. Clubhouse Bathurst opened its doors mid-year and is funded by the Department of Regional NSW.

After being impacted by the 2022 floods and losing much of the equipment, Clubhouse Lismore collaborated with care services provider CASPA to re-start service delivery in a temporary space. Of the 136 young people who engaged with the Lismore program, 23 per cent identified as First Nations. Clubhouse Lismore is funded by the NSW Department of Communities and Justice.

Clubhouse Ballina supported 58 young people in the STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics) learning model, as they explored technologies such as video and sound editing, movie making, and animation creation along with a youth worker.

A satellite site at the Wardell Pod Village delivered science projects to young First Nations people displaced by the 2022 flooding events. These outreach programs were facilitated under Lismore Clubhouse funding, through the NSW Department of Communities and Justice.

Other NSW groups that we've had the privilege of working with over the past year are:

- Bunjum Aboriginal Corporation, with whom we developed a six-week STEAM program attended by 12 First Nations young people
- Rainbow Region Homeschool, who have engaged with the STEAM learning concepts and technology.



NEW PROGRAM

Strong Minds in the Early Years

Supporting Northern Rivers families with young children aged up to five years impacted by the 2022 floods

Social Futures has delivered services in the Northern Rivers for more than four decades and know the community and what it endured during the floods. We are aware that flood-related trauma can have a profound impact on children, disturbing their sense of safety and interrupting their emotional and cognitive development. The aim of this program is to promote resilience and wellbeing and increase children's innate protective skills.

We work directly with families, educators and children to help these young people recover, reduce the impacts of post-traumatic stress disorder and thrive post-flood. Over 200 children, 160 educators and 47 family members have been supported.

We conducted surveys to measure outcomes. There were 144 surveys completed with children, educators and family. Of that, 100 per cent of those who completed the survey felt listened to and understood, 100 per cent felt satisfied with the service they received, and 100 per cent felt that the service helped their family.

 **Servicing** flood-affected areas of the Northern Rivers

Funded by the NSW Department of Communities and Justice

Jack the puppet helps flood-impacted kids recover



Children trying to make sense of last year's floods have a new friend in Jack, the puppet, who is visiting preschools in the Northern Rivers to share his experiences and coping skills. Jack travels the Northern Rivers with Lisa Wilson, a qualified and registered play and creative art therapist.

They have visited 30 preschools and worked with more than 200 small children, many who are dealing with losses including homes, preschools, toys and other belongings.

Lisa and Jack are part of the Social Futures Strong Minds in the Early Years program, proudly funded by the NSW Department of Communities and Justice.

Lilly Pilly Community Preschool was impacted by the floods with damage to both the school and to the homes of staff and children in the local area. Nikki Farrell, from Lilly Pilly Community Preschool says,

“ I observed the children so engaged and happy with Lisa and Jack’s sessions. I was thrilled with the pictures the children drew, depicting their families; what made them happy and feel safe. These are such valuable experiences for the children to share in a safe place with familiar staff and friends.”

Lisa has been delivering play therapy for 15 years and developing ventriloquy skills. She says the children are usually so entranced by Jack they forget he is a puppet.

“I’ve long been interested in creative arts and using play to help children to heal,” explains Lisa.

“Jack [the puppet] is very much like children, children relate to him because he looks similar, he’s a similar size to them. He’s quite a large puppet and very cool. I’ve had children who are really distressed and upset and all they want to do is talk to Jack,” she said.

“Other times the children will ask me to cover Jack’s ears if they don’t want him to hear something private.

“We read a special book then Jack talks about his experience and the children will share theirs if they want to.

“Jack has been through everything you can imagine in terms of his life experiences. Jack went through the floods, and he talks about feeling mixed up.

“A parent told me her little girl was having a meltdown because there was rain, thunder and lightning one day.

“The little girl said, ‘I feel like Jack feels’ I feel all muddled up inside and confused.

“That was the breakthrough for the family. They were able to talk about feelings and since then the girl has been a lot calmer.

“Jack helps children to navigate those strong or big emotions because he has been through so many things himself.”

Housing, Homelessness and Employment



Housing is essential for wellbeing. A stable foundation is vital for individuals and families. Our programs support people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Connecting Home Adult

The team faced challenges – there is a national housing crisis, and the region is still recovering from the 2022 floods – yet we held tight to hope and continued to achieve.

Our workers case-manage highly complex people, advocate, provide post-tenancy support, drive community engagement, and provide brokerage. They also inform people of their options, link people to housing providers and connect them to other community services.

We organised Tweed Head's first Homelessness Hub by inviting other service providers to join the pilot. This central hub has improved inter-agency collaboration and fast-tracked client connection to services such as Medicare and Centrelink. The overall result is improved response times and centralised supports.

We set up a Lismore Inter-agency Homelessness Group, working with the Winsome Lismore Soup Kitchen. Representatives from multiple not-for-profit organisations attend and workshop practical ways to improve the lives of people facing homelessness. Additionally, our Assertive Outreach team made improvements in early intervention efforts, so people receive support sooner.

 **Servicing** Tweed, Byron, Ballina, Lismore, Kyogle, Richmond and Clarence local government areas

Proudly funded by the NSW Government



Connecting Home Youth

We continue to help young people aged 16 to 24, linking them to housing providers, Rent Choice Youth Subsidy, community supports and government programs. Secure housing helps youth complete school, renew family relationships, obtain qualifications and develop social skills.

As with the adult program, young people also experienced challenges related to the flood. Young people are further impacted by the lack of safe affordable accommodation in the area. We continue to advocate for suitable housing options tailored specifically for young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

We ran activities to highlight Youth Week and Youth Homelessness Week and contributed to NAIDOC celebrations. Staff undertook Dadirri training, an Indigenous Deep Listening Practice to improve ways of learning and working together.

 **Servicing** Tweed, Byron, Ballina, Lismore, Kyogle, Richmond and Clarence local government areas

Proudly funded by the NSW Government

2,947

participants supported

672

participants with disability

Connecting You – Homeless Youth Assistance Program

Offering a range of services to foster connections with family, friends, education, work, and the community

These services include enhancing family relationships through mediation, counselling, setting goals with young people and supporting connections with school, training, and community resources. We acknowledge the unique issues faced by children who are at risk of homelessness.

Connecting You also played a crucial role in supporting a young person and their family to settle into a new home after being affected by flooding, arranging brokerage assistance for clothing and furniture.

Locating Tweed, Byron, Ballina, Lismore, Kyogle, Richmond and Clarence local government areas

Proudly funded by the NSW Government



Recovery Connect

In October 2022, Social Futures launched Recovery Connect, a wrap-around support service for individuals and communities affected by the 2022 flooding. The goal is to link people with the full spectrum of essential services, including specialised counselling, financial aid, legal guidance, available grants, resilience training, disaster management, business and employment support, and mental health services.

Recovery Connect has supported more than 500 households. The program workers built strong relationships with other services to ensure the Northern Rivers community got much needed supports. This encompassed mental health, resilience training, disaster management, and psychosocial assistance. We helped participants to access \$131,462 in brokerage funds from charitable and philanthropic organisations to buy essential household items.

Recovery Connect supported community events for those affected by the 2022 disaster, including the Flood Anniversary, the Kinship Festival, Kingscliff Walk on Country, and Primex. Workers also contributed to initiatives run by Koori Kitchen and Resilience Lismore, such as food pantries and Christmas hampers.

Locating Lismore, Tweed, Byron and Clarence Valley local government areas

Proudly funded by the NSW Government

Kylie's story

The Ballina house that Kylie and her four children rented for many years was sold. Despite her best efforts, she couldn't find a new home for her family.

She still remembers the day they had to vacate.

"The day we had to move out, I literally had the truck sitting out the front. I thought, 'Where do I go? Should I park on the kerb?'"

"We could not get anything and I thought what is going on? We've got good references, a good history, enough money for the bond, but we couldn't get anything. I've never been in that situation. It is terrifying. I had nowhere to live.

"I got on the phone to Social Futures and I said, 'What do I do?'"

"They got me into a transition home. Without them I don't think I'd be here. They put a roof over my head. I was ready to ferry my children out [to stay with others friends and family]."

Kylie was in the transition house for 18 months. During that time, there were bushfires, the pandemic outbreak and then the floods, which hit the house.

Kylie lost many of her possessions, but kept her family safe – then the Social Futures Connecting Home team found her a permanent home, and the family are again settled.

"I'm working on getting the kids up to scratch," she laughs.

And Kylie is again pursuing things that make her happy like writing songs.

She says getting that phone call telling her she'd secured permanent accommodation in Ballina was like winning lotto. The family have an affordable rented house through North Coast Community Housing.

Kylie is also located close to her elderly mother, who she helps care for.

“ Social Futures supported us in every way they could emotionally while we were looking for accommodation. They are still here for us.”



Mental Health and Wellbeing



NEW PROGRAM

Veterans Connect

Improving mental health, wellbeing and resilience through connection to health, social and community services

Veterans Connect, based on the Central Coast, was launched in March 2023. It aims to overcome barriers to care, so returned service personnel are supported in civilian life.

The program can link veterans to everything from peer groups and clinical services through to financial and career advisors, gyms and other therapies. A care navigator works as the contact point, listening, outlining support options then working with the participant to formulate a support plan. The new team is building strong community relationships and working closely with local health and wellbeing groups.

Servicing Central Coast NSW

Supported by the Hunter New England and Central Coast Primary Health Network



headspace

Providing information, support and mental health services to young Australians, aged 12 to 25 years, and their families and friends

headspace Lismore continued to contribute to the post-flood recovery. We co-designed recovery workshops with schools that were delivered on-campus and supported young people directly impacted by the floods.

In Ballina, we designed and introduced an outreach service, modelled on headspace Lismore.

We implemented an Enhanced headspace Service and a Student Placement Program. Two youth advisory group members were accepted onto the headspace Youth National Reference Group.

In Tweed, our Community Engagement Team expanded from three staff to six, including a First Nations wellbeing trainee and two headspace youth project workers. This helps us to keep delivering outstanding community events such as our Youth Tent at the Kinship Festival – a celebration of First Nations culture.

Servicing Tweed, Murwillumbah, Lismore, Casino, Kyogle and Ballina local government areas

Funded by Healthy North Coast through the North Coast Primary Health Network program

StandBy

Dedicated to assisting people and communities impacted by suicide

Social Futures delivers StandBy to much of regional New South Wales and the Gold Coast in Queensland. Over the year, we ran individual and group sessions, and took StandBy to schools on request. Social Futures also visited police stations, to provide training and information to police officers. A Gold Coast highlight was the launch of a new youth information card with vital numbers for young people facing challenges, created with the support of the City of Gold Coast – and we delivered a World Suicide Prevention Day event.

📍 Servicing Gold Coast, Qld, North Coast NSW, Hunter New England NSW, Central Coast NSW and Western NSW

StandBy – an initiative funded by the Australian Government

Strong women healing camp

StandBy North Coast and Mudyala Aboriginal Corporation continued to build their strong relationship. We collaborated to facilitate a strong women healing camp for the Yaegl Aunties. We facilitated sessions on grief and loss. This provided a powerful opportunity for the women to express and communicate their experiences of loss – not only physical loss but of the loss of culture and language in their communities.



Care Connect

An aftercare support and treatment service for people who have attempted suicide or are at risk of suicide or self-harm

Program workers link participants to diverse supports like clinical specialists (psychologists and psychiatrists) and organisations delivering help such as housing support, relationship counselling, and drug and alcohol treatment. Extended support for people at risk is vital to suicide prevention.

Social Futures first began delivering the program in 2021 on the Mid North Coast. This year we started providing Care Connect to the Upper Hunter and Taree/Manning regions.

📍 Servicing Regional NSW

Care Connect in Bellingen, Kempsey Shire, Nambucca Valley, Port Macquarie and surrounding areas is delivered by Social Futures and funded by Healthy North Coast.

Upper Hunter Valley, Manning Valley Care Connect is delivered by Social Futures and funded by the Hunter New England Central Coast Primary Health Network.

Mijung Jarjums Kids in Mind

Promoting the wellbeing of children and young people up to 18 years of age

For seven years, the Mijung team has been delivering therapeutic services to small groups of school children but as demand grew in 2022, we now incorporate a whole-of-school approach – giving support to school groups, teachers and parents.

This year the service set up dedicated therapeutic playrooms. These are safe, reliable, and constant spaces for children and youth with emerging mental health needs. We continued our work with the Healing Hub, a network of Indigenous and non-Indigenous services and professionals providing trauma-informed, post-flood recovery practices based on First Nations healing systems. We reached almost 1000 young people through our community events and activities.

📍 Servicing Lismore, Richmond Valley and Kyogle local government areas

Funded by the Australian Government
Department of Social Services



Elements

Providing counselling services for young people (aged 10 to 24 years) and their parents through individual and group sessions

Most of our young participants were flood-impacted. In the past 12 months we continued delivering the Mini Fruits and Friends program, with headspace, for 12 to 15-year-olds who identify as LGBTIQSB+ and their friends. The monthly meetings are a safe and social event where young people can build connections and access peer support.

We also delivered a four-week program to school leavers diagnosed with autism, helping participants gain skills to enter the workforce, emotionally regulate, address social anxiety, build bullying resilience, learn friendship dexterities, and set boundaries. It was co-facilitated with Red Inc.

📍 Servicing Tweed, Byron, Ballina, Lismore, Richmond Valley, Kyogle, Clarence Valley and Coffs Harbour local government areas

Funded by the Australian Government
Department of Social Services

5,868



active and group participants supported

312

Community engagement events

304

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants supported

Victor's story

Victor described himself as 'broken' when he reached out to Care Connect, our mental health service for people at risk of suicide.

Victor says he wasn't in a good place, and then he was the victim of a violent assault.

"I had to go to court to testify and I was also suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder," he explains.

"I was feeling pretty paranoid so even though I'd reached out to Care Connect for help, I still couldn't open up.

"I eventually realised that my program worker was solid, so I started to open up and talk about the challenges I was dealing with."

Victor was in his late forties and had a university degree, but he was working as a labourer and living in a boarding house. He was also in a romantic relationship that he describes as depleting more than rewarding.

He was regularly binge drinking.

His program worker asked if he wanted to reduce his alcohol consumption. Victor did. His Care Connect worker put him in contact with a drug and alcohol treatment centre.

"I realised the booze was taking me down a dead-end. I felt so much better when I stopped drinking."

As Victor's health improved, his confidence grew. He chose to end his romantic relationship.

He had also been estranged from his siblings but with more resilience reached out to his family and re-established a positive relationship.

“ I chose what was healthy for me in life, and I was grateful for the support of my worker, who listened and never judged.”

"I'm so glad I made the decision to call Care Connect."

After four months of meeting his program worker, Victor decided he wanted a career change. He wanted to work in the community service sector, supporting others facing life challenges.

"Again, my program worker was there for me. She even helped me prepare a CV. I was the preferred candidate. Having a meaningful job has made a huge difference to my life.

"I'm now in a great space. My Care Connect worker was fantastic, she was beside me as I looked at every aspect of my life and made changes that have made me happier. My mental health is now strong, and I'm excited about the future."



Financial snapshot

As highlighted elsewhere, this year Social Futures opened our new service hub in Lismore, replacing our previous Lismore sites rendered unusable due to flooding. The new hub has ensured our ongoing ability to deliver services vital to our communities. We also completed the implementation of the human resources platform which has reaped benefits from consistent and efficient approaches to our processes including delivery of training, recruitment and ongoing care and management of our staff.

The total comprehensive income for the year of \$7.34m has seen our reported equity position increase to \$14.61m, however this has been heavily influenced by the receipt of an Anchor Business Support Grant from the federal and state governments of \$899k, a further \$1.09m from headspace National via Healthy North Coast and several other contributions totalling \$605k, all of which we greatly appreciate and acknowledge as central to Social Futures' and the community's path to recovery in delivering the Lismore service hub.

Service delivery funds received in advance of services provided during the year totalled \$3.82m. This takes the total value of services yet to be provided to \$5.06m. This appears as restricted cash in our financial statements and is included in the reported net equity figure.

Adjusting for these items the result from operations for the 2022-2023 year delivered a \$1.43m surplus. Adjusting the equity position for the amounts held in restricted cash results in an adjusted position of \$9.55m.

We continued to explore options for our McKenzie Street residential property impacted by flooding.

We extended our residential property holding by acquiring 1 Phillip Street, Goonellabah. This will enable us to continue our planned expansion of the housing solutions we are able to provide as a Community Housing Provider.



\$50,133,003

Total revenue

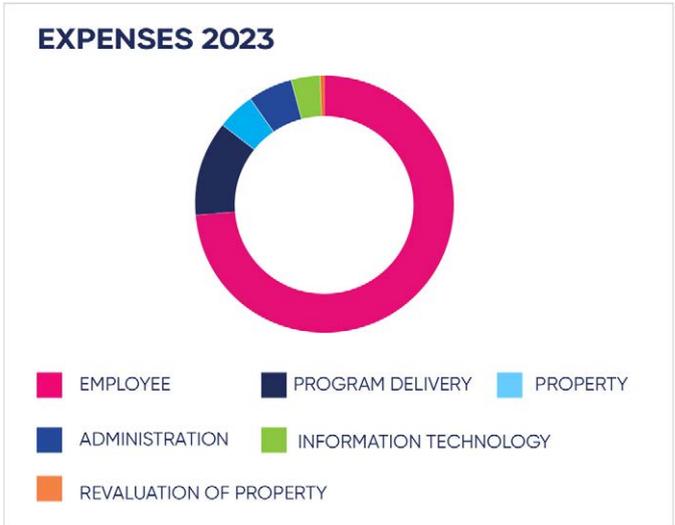
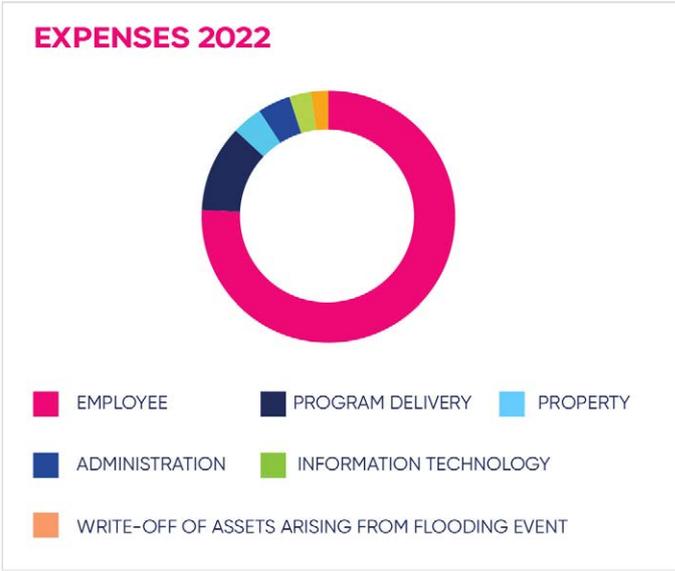
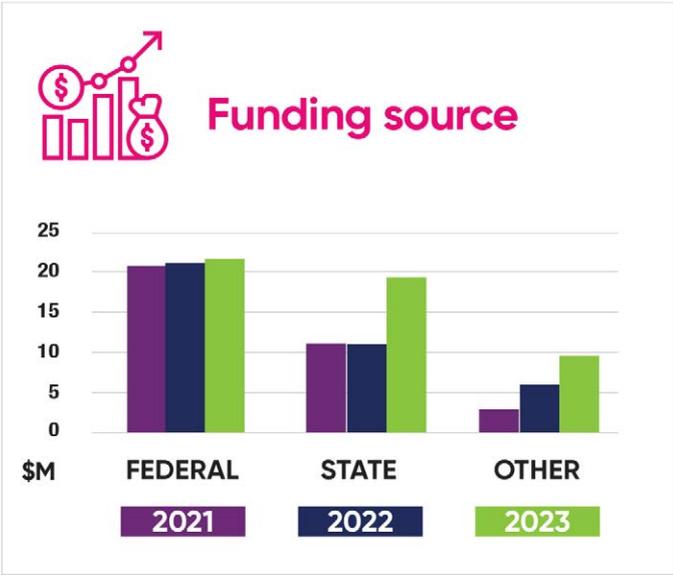
\$7,242,876

Surplus

\$14,616,827

Net equity

Financial snapshot



Our Board

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



Pat Grier
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.



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.



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.



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.



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 to maximise economic participation outcomes from projects on their traditional lands.



Joe Hedger

Joe is a partner in a major consulting firm and leads the group focused on working with clients and First Nations communities to solve complex problems. He is a proud Bundjalung and Yorta Yorta man and is highly respected for bringing the latest trends in strategy, technology and innovation to empower clients and First Nations communities to be future-fit in an increasingly complex, disrupted and competitive market. Joe also leads the growing work on First Nations climate and sustainability and is a recognised thought leader in this space. What excites Joe every day is being able to re-imagine and reshape a nation that centres First Nations' wisdom, creating a clever and enduring legacy of making the world of our clients, our people and our communities better.



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.



Our Executive Team

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



Tony Davies
Chief Executive Officer

Tony has over 20 years of 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
Business, Integration and Strategy

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 (finished Apr 2023)

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.



Positive Social Change

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

socialfutures.org.au

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Join us on



Ashmore | Ballina | Bathurst | Broken Hill | Byron Bay | Coffs Harbour

Dubbo | Gosford | Grafton | Kempsey | Lismore | Maitland | Orange

Tamworth | Taree | Tweed Heads | Wyong

**ANNUAL
REPORT**

2022-2023

The text "ANNUAL REPORT" and "2022-2023" is displayed in a bold, pink, sans-serif font. To the right of the text is a large, stylized pink bracket that opens to the right.