



2023



Who are we

BCR Communities (formerly Bay & Basin Community Resources) is a community-led, not-for-profit organisation which has been serving the Shoalhaven and Illawarra for over 30 years. We believe in thriving communities living happy, healthy, meaningful and productive lives. Our team of dedicated staff and volunteers support our communities through our quality Aged Care and NDIS services, our Youth & Community services programs and projects and our Community Radio Station – Bay & Basin 92.7FM.

Our mission

We partner with our communities to provide person-centred services for all

Our vision

Communities living happy, healthy, productive and meaningful lives

Our values

Promote Inclusion: We proudly work with and foster the diversity of individual and community needs

Show empathy: We are partners in your journey

Act with Integrity: We are honest, fair, transparent and build trusting relationships

Encourage Wellness: We value the health of each person by offering innovative lifestyle choices

Our difference



We are for all ages and stages: From creative classes for kids through to social groups for seniors, we are supporting our communities through every life stage.



We are truly local: BCR Communities was created for locals by locals and nobody understands the communities of the Shoalhaven and Illawarra better than we do.



We are inclusive: We welcome and celebrate every person. The diversity of our organisation reflects the diversity of our communities.



We put people first: As a community-led, not-for-profit organisation, our mission is to partner with our communities to provide person-centred services for all.



We are responsive to the needs of our communities: For over 30 years, we have been building brighter, more connected and resourceful communities through our services and supports.



We listen to you: Understanding your values and what's important to you helps us to support you to live a happy and healthy life.

Our board



Joanne
McAlister
Chairperson



David
Reynolds
Board Director



Michele
Smith
Board Director



Ross
Clifton
Board Director



Sharon
O'Brien
Board Director



Chairperson Report



Joanne
McAlister

This financial year saw BBCR rebrand to become BCR (Building Connected Resourceful) Communities, to better align with the growth of our organisation and the extensive areas we service.

When I look back over the years since first joining the organisation, I'm amazed and impressed, not only by our achievements, but by our growth in diversity. Our Vision, for our communities to live happy, healthy, productive, and meaningful lives, is evident in everything our Organisation undertakes, a credit to every individual involved.

This year, many exciting and worthwhile community programs and projects have been delivered to our local youth and people with disability. Quality aged care services and life changing support, both at home and at our venues, have been delivered for our seniors.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the CEO, the Executive Team and their Staff, the Leadership Teams and their Staff, Managers, Administration Staff, Support Workers, Care Workers and Volunteers for your dedication, passion, and hard work this year. You are the lifeblood of our Organisation.

In February, I had the pleasure of attending our Wellness Garden Official Opening. It was a fabulous day, and the weather was superb. The Wellness Garden, situated behind our Wellness Centre, in Macleans Point Rd, is a sight to behold! The carefully planned layout and purposely selected native plants, ensures the space will delight the senses of all who use it. Many community organisations attended and provided information about local services and activities for our community members. It was a highlight on our events calendar this year!

In May, the much-needed refurbished Respite Cottage was reopened, after being closed for renovation. The renovations resulted in a more modern, functional, and open space, and was comfortably and tastefully furnished. Clients can relax and enjoy the facilities and social interaction with others. The outdoor space was also upgraded, although there is still work to be done here.

In the second half of the financial year, the Board commenced discussions about Director Recruitment. This is a very exciting time for the BCR Communities, and the Board and we hope to commence a recruitment process before the end of 2023.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Board Directors for their support and encouragement this year, and for their commitment to supporting the CEO and our Organisation.

The future looks bright for BCR Communities!

CEO Report



Heather
Marciano

BCR Communities has been on a journey of change, innovation and transformation over the past 12 months.

It has been an incredibly busy but rewarding period where many of our strategies were rolled out, and where new initiatives, projects and activities came to life.

This year we have been focussed on preparing and positioning BCR for the future. We have developed new business models, created new partnerships, and are working through the milestones for our university research project. We secured over \$700,000 for two key projects which will run through to 2024, and continued to review our structure, processes and people to build on our strengths and find continuous improvement opportunities.

We put structures in place to ensure that we are supporting our internal teams and also providing a friendly, professional and positive customer journey. A key initiative was the establishment of our customer service team who respond to phone, online and in-person enquiries, while providing administrative support to BCR team members across our organisation.

Another goal was to improve communication and the sharing of information between our office staff and workers in the field. We deployed Microsoft Office 365 and rolled out the TEAMS platform to create new ways to stay in touch, and TEAMS has now become our new online meeting space where we can connect, chat, and collaborate. We also commenced the build of our new intranet to provide all employees with easy access to documentation and information.

This report includes examples of how each of our teams have used their values-driven approach and willingness to innovate to create and enrich services and programs. With a focus on building connected and resourceful communities, their energy and drive throughout this period of significant change has been remarkable. It has resulted in new ideas, new projects, new design partners and stronger internal connections through new technology and our collaborative team approach.

Responding to increased service, compliance and reporting requirements while transitioning through significant internal change with the implementation of our innovation, growth and workforce strategies has been a challenge. Thank you to the Executive and Leadership Teams on being so open to new ideas and adventures, and for embracing and driving positive change across our organisation this year.

I would like to thank all of our wonderful employees and volunteers who throughout this period continued to deliver services to our clients, customers and community members with kindness and empathy. And finally, a big thank you to our amazing Board, our biggest supporters who continue to govern BCR with continued passion and commitment.



From BBCR to BCR Communities

Changing the name of an organisation is never an easy decision to make especially when it has been operating for over 30 years and is well-respected and loved by the communities it serves.

Bay & Basin Community Resources began when a group of concerned locals got together to try and find a solution for the very real lack of community resources in the Bay and Basin region. In these early stages, the name was a perfect fit – everyone involved lived in the Bay and Basin region and the main concern was sourcing resources for this one community.

Today, while the Bay & Basin is still our heart and home, we support people in many communities from Helensburgh in the north of Wollongong right down to Ulladulla. We also provide so much more than just resources, including practical support, social connection, workshops, community projects, activities, and volunteering opportunities.

Over time there had been a progression from Bay & Basin Community Resources to BBCR, however it still had the same focus, where we wanted our name to be inclusive of every person we support and reflect the diverse range of services we provide across our regions.

We are proud that our organisation is well-respected and appreciated in the communities which we serve so it mattered to us that our name remained recognisable. It was also really important to bring the word 'Communities' into our name because we are a community focused and community led organisation and the word appears repeatedly throughout our Vision, Mission and Value statements. So we are now BCR Communities with the BCR representing – Building Connected Resourceful Communities.



Spend the day with friends!

Are you finding it harder to keep socially connected as you get older? Have some of your friends and family moved away, or are health problems making it more difficult to get out of the house?

BCR Communities Social Groups makes it very easy to meet new people, try fun new activities and regularly catch up with friends.

Our social groups are friendly and welcoming, and transport may be available to pick you up and drop you home if you need it.

BCR communities
Home Care Services

Come for a stay in paradise

Situated in beautiful Sanctuary Point on the South Coast of NSW, BCR Communities' Paradise Cottage is the perfect location for a short holiday.

Designed for people with a disability looking for adventure or just an opportunity to unwind, the cottage is close to the water, wildlife and local attractions of the Bay and Basin area.

BCR communities
Disability Services

The heart of Sanctuary Point

Everyone is welcome at the BCR Communities Space in the Sanctuary Point Youth & Community Centre. It's a gathering place for all ages where you will always find a friendly face.

All through the year, BCR Communities delivers flexible programs with the aim of strengthening and empowering our communities through projects that build cohesion, inclusion and wellbeing.

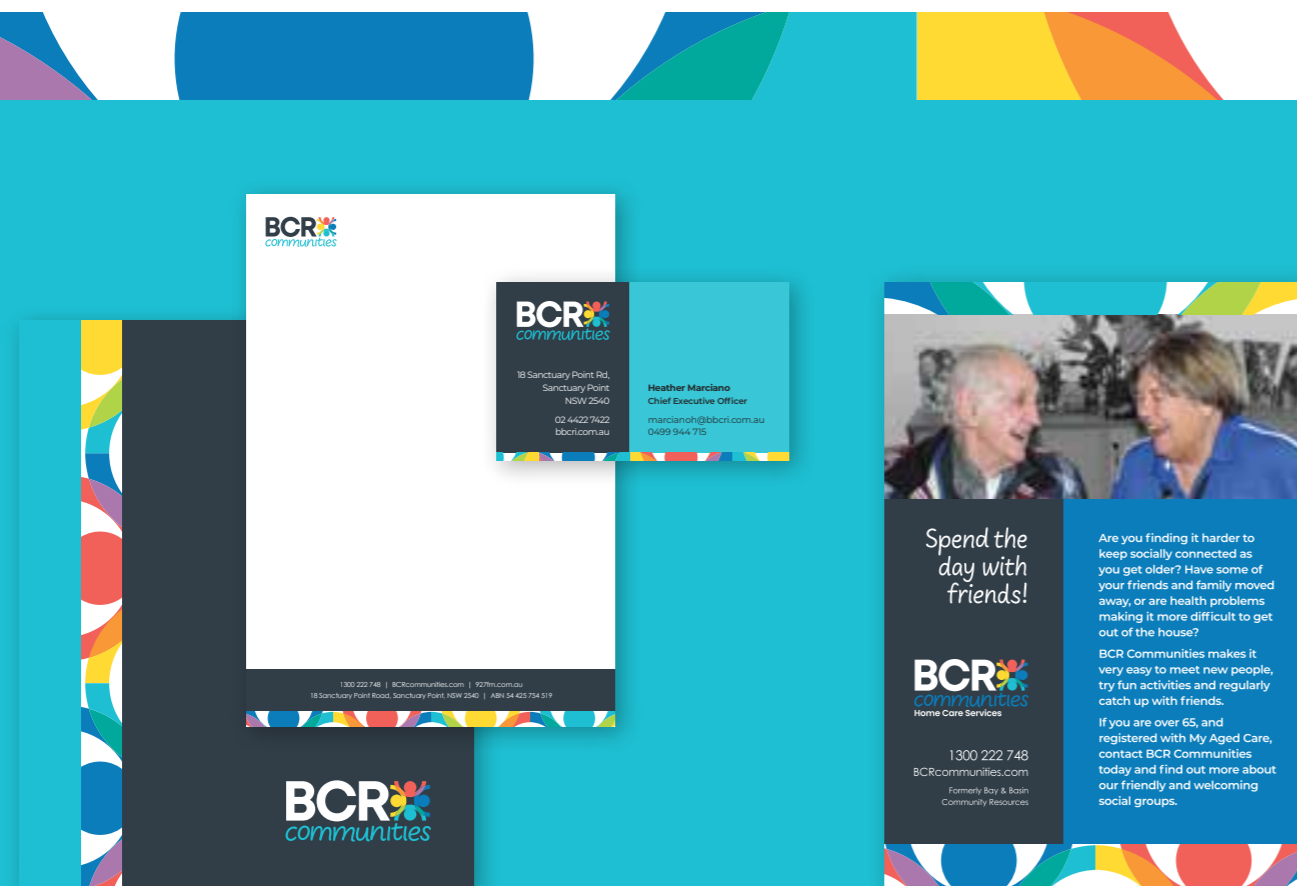
BCR communities
Community Services



A Complete Rebrand

The new name was an opportunity for a whole new look for the BCR brand. Experienced graphic designer, Jackie Stone from Jacstar Designs, was given the brief to design a logo and brand inspired by community and the individual, connection and diversity. Three different concepts were created and the BCR Board, leadership team, staff and volunteer representatives were given the opportunity to provide feedback and vote on their favourite design. The winning design incorporates individuals linked together to create a sense of community, connection and support, and represents the organisation and our roots in our communities. The same sized people represent equality, and the colours represent connection, diversity and the different services we provide. Jackie then created brand elements based around the logo which included graphic elements, fonts, imagery and a colour palette.

With a new name, logo and brand design, we then built a new website BCRcommunities.com and recreated all our marketing and promotional materials including signage on buildings, car wraps, flyers, brochures, banners and staff uniforms. The new brand is now a clear reflection of our organisation and will serve us well into the future.



Official Opening of the BCR Wellness Garden

In February 2023, hundreds of locals came together for the official opening of the BCR Communities Wellness Garden and the Sanctuary Point Community Matters Fair.

With an abundance of native Australian plants, a shaded deck area, walking paths and landscaped garden beds, the new Wellness Garden in Sanctuary Point is a place for connection, relaxation and quiet contemplation.

The idea for the Wellness Garden, which adjoins the BCR Communities Wellness Centre, was born after the Bay and Basin community experienced the devastating 2019 bushfires followed by the lengthy COVID lockdown.

The space will be used by BCR Communities and by other local community groups for activities like meditation, yoga, tai-chi, gardening, outdoor group sessions or art classes. The aim is to improve physical and mental health, especially for isolated older community members.

The Wellness Garden adjoins what will become the new BCR Youth Community Space which will open up opportunities for us to develop intergenerational programs and activities to connect people of all ages and stages.



BCR Communities Presents on National Stage

ACCPA Driving Quality Care State Conference

BCR Communities CEO Heather Marciano and ExSitu Co-Founder/ Executive Director Rebecca Glover presented at the Aged and Community Care Providers Association (ACCPA) Driving Quality Care State Conference in May 2023. Their presentation - 'Innovative Solutions for Regional Home Care Providers' outlined the work that BCR and its innovation partner ExSitu have been working on as part of their Aged Care Research & Industry Innovation Australia (ARIIA) grant.

BCR and ExSitu provided insights into the success of the partnership and their progress on developing a Blueprint for regional aged care providers on values-based culture and values-driven care through engagement, empowerment and technology. The blueprint will be completed ready for distribution to regional providers by January 2024.

innovAGEING 2022 Awards

BCR Communities in partnership with ExSitu, were finalists in the 'Improving Consumer Choice' category for the innovAGEING National Awards held in November 2022.

These awards showcased organisations improving quality services to older Australians. It acknowledged the positive impact our new values-based care plans are having on our community members lives.

We were one of only four finalists for this category from a very competitive pool of 45 applicants nationally. Our submission acknowledged the work we are doing together rolling out the innovative ExSitu tool to our in-home clients. The tool captures the core values and lifestyle wishes of each person through an online card sorting process.

Individual values-based Advanced Care Plans are then generated, which includes important information about what really matters to the client, and how they want their care to proceed if their health deteriorates.



ELDAC National Showcase

Executive Manager of Aged Care Services, Lorraine Williams and BCR Communities Registered Nurse, Rebecca Anderson were invited to Canberra to present a summary of BCR Communities End of Life Directions in Aged Care (ELDAC) Linkages Program.

The two year program, funded by the Department of Health, was in response to an identified need to increase awareness and knowledge about palliative and end of life care.

Our aim was to improve client outcomes by developing processes and tools for all levels of staff to recognise and respond to deterioration. With ELDAC providing linkages with local palliative care services and primary health networks, we achieved the following:

- Upskilling our care staff
- PEPA (The Program of Experience in the Palliative Approach) placement with local community palliative care services for BCR Registered Nurses
- Introduced common clinical assessment tools with Specialist Palliative Care team to 'speak the same language'
- Added being a palliative care champion to the Care Coach role
- Developed a "Recognising and Responding to Deterioration pathway"
- Formalised the clinical referral process to link RNs with clients
- Commenced a partnership with ExSitu to provide values-based Advanced Care Planning

Grants: Aged Care, Youth & Community and Disability

ARIIA GRANT: \$160,000

BCR Communities along with our partners ExSitu, University of Wollongong (UOW) and Carers NSW secured an ARIIA grant of \$160,000.

The Aged Care Research and Industry Innovation Australia (ARIIA) grant was created to support the aged care sector by providing funding that can be used to build increased workforce capability and capacity. They are especially focused on funding projects that address areas like dementia care, mental health and wellbeing, and social isolation.

Our ARIIA research outcome is to generate a regional provider blueprint for developing a values-based culture and values-driven care plans through engagement, empowerment and technology.

We have already started rolling out values-based care plans which put the client firmly at the centre of their own decision-making and wellbeing. Using technology developed by ExSitu, our clients are provided with a simple tool that can be used to create their individualised hierarchy of values. Clients use online card sorting to identify their most important values and goals, with the information transferable into documents like support plans and Advance Care Directives.



NSW Government Grant: \$558,325

The BCR Community Services team were successful in their application for a \$558,325 grant from the NSW Government's 'Our Region, Our Voice' Regional Youth Investment Program.

The grant will be used to upgrade and expand our Macleans Point Road site in Sanctuary Point where our Wellness Centre and Wellness Garden is located.

The project in the space adjoining our Wellness centre will include a pop-up café where local young people can learn barista and hospitality skills, it will have inclusive amenities, and a meeting and training pod, and covered seating and yarning circle.

It will be a safe space for young people in the region to improve their health, wellbeing, connection, creativity, outreach and learning.

FRRR Funding Grant: \$30,000

Our new Work, Life & Training program for people with disability was given a significant boost thanks to a generous \$30,000 grant from the Foundation for Rural Regional Renewal (FRRR) in partnership with The Snow Foundation and the Bendigo Bank Community Enterprise Foundation. Overall, the FRRR awarded \$470,670 to community organisations across the South Coast.

These grants are through the Investing in Rural Community Futures (IRCF) program, which aims to build and support the capacity of local not-for-profit organisations.

People & Culture

Staff Training Days for Learning and Connection

With home care work usually completed independently in people's homes, our staff training days held at the Shoalhaven Indoor Sports Centre in Bomaderry in March 2023, were a chance for our care staff to come together to learn new skills, ask questions and connect with each other. Our Aged Care leadership team, HR, WHS, IT and Quality team members went above and beyond to organise a day that was both informative and fun for our aged care team.

This kind of staff training is vital for us to continue to provide the highest possible standards of in-home care whilst at the same time ensuring all our employees are aware of what they need to do to perform work practices safely and maintain a safe and healthy working environment.

To help avoid injury, 'Wellness Exercise Kits' that included a resistance band and strength exercises were gifted to staff and BCR created manual handling videos in collaboration with Jervis Bay Physio.

An Inclusive and Supportive Culture

The 2020 Aged Care Workforce Census industry average turnover rate was 34%. For the 2020-21 and 2021-22 financial years, BCR was slightly lower than the industry average with 32% and 32.7% respectively, however this year saw a significant improvement with turnover dropping to 19.7%, a fantastic outcome and reflective of the initiatives that BCR has put into place to create a working environment that fosters team work, recognises achievements, and is supportive and inclusive. The Fair Work decision to increase minimum award wages for home care employees and nurses by 15% from 1 July 2023 was welcomed by BCR and helped to recognise the value of our aged care employees.

BCR initiatives included:

- A new Care Coach role
- Monthly care worker meetings
- R U OK Day? Events
- Thank you dinners
- Team building activities like the CEO Challenge and our Easter Bake-Off
- Office Christmas decorating competition
- A quarterly staff and volunteer newsletter called 'Buzz'.



98  **EMPLOYEES**

Our culture and purpose are important reasons why our employees stay with BCR. Almost 30% of employees have been with us for more than five years, over 10% for more than 10 years, and we have four employees with 15-20 years of service.

118,660

 **HOURS WORKED BY OUR EMPLOYEES**

81  **VOLUNTEERS**

Of our 81 volunteers, over 45% have been with us for more than five years, over 22% have been with us for more than 10 years, and we have five volunteers with between 15-20 years of service.

11,082

 **VOLUNTEERS HOURS WORKED**

Adding up to an equivalent replacement cost of \$516,643.00

Employee Value Proposition

Our staff survey and focus groups, asked our employees what they value most about working at BCR Communities. What became very clear was above all else our employees love our supportive culture, the meaningful work, and having flexible working options.



People First

- Empathy and understanding
- Family focussed
- Encourage wellness



Supportive Culture

- Relationship centred
- Friendship and fun
- Connection



Shared Values

- Collective sense of belonging
- Trust and respect
- Open, real and genuine



The Work

- Meaningful
- Variety and flexibility
- Working and living locally



Employee Benefits

- Opportunity to make a difference
- Learning and development
- Salary Packaging to save on tax



Leadership

- Accessible, attentive and authentic
- Value, respect and encourage ideas
- Provide a safe place



Our Valued Volunteers

At BCR Communities, we are incredibly fortunate to be supported by an exceptional team of volunteers including our Board. They embody kindness, selflessness, enthusiasm, and unwavering dedication, and have a genuine desire to help their community.

Our volunteers are essential for many of the programs and services we provide, including within our community radio station, the home maintenance program, centre-based respite, in home supports and social groups.

To celebrate and thank all our volunteers for the contribution they make to BCR Communities we held a special morning tea in December to mark International Volunteer Day and in the lead up to National Volunteer Week, we fired up the woodfired pizza oven for a volunteer get together at our Activities Hub.

Touching Lives through Volunteering

Ever since she participated in some woodworking sessions at a Men's Shed some years ago, 33-year-old NDIS participant, Jessica Simon was very keen to be creative with timber again.

At the BCR Communities Activities Hub in Sanctuary Point Jessica found all she needed to follow her dream. A workshop full of tools and materials and more importantly, 74-year-old retired Master Builder and BCR volunteer Wayne Grumley.

Under Wayne's gentle guidance, Jessica has learnt new skills, grown in confidence, and is very proud of what she has accomplished.

This simple project is the perfect example of just how much a difference our volunteers can make in the lives of others. Wayne wanted to volunteer his time and expertise to help his community, and Jessica needed support to achieve her NDIS goal.

Every one of our volunteers comes to us with a unique set of skills, talents and life experiences which can always be matched to an opportunity to make a difference in our communities.

Focus on Customer Service



This year we have had a strong focus on improving our customer service across BCR. As a result of this review, we established a Customer Service Office with dedicated Customer Service Officers who are responsible for fielding all incoming enquiries including phone calls, in person contact and requests online through our website. Our customer service team also provide internal customer support to BCR Operations team members, particularly aged care where the team provide a range of supports to our HCP Care Managers and CHSP team.

The Customer Service Team also capture key data including demand trends and customer feedback which helps to inform our service and growth strategies, and provide key project support including the distribution of our client surveys, client newsletters and preparation for the aged care and disability expos.

Prioritising WHS & Quality

Evaluating our aged care service against the Aged care and Quality standards has been an increased focus this year. By seeking better tools and ways of reporting, we ensure we maintain a high quality service for our clients.

Under the leadership of our newly appointed WHS & Quality Coordinator, we completed a quality standards self-assessment and through this process, discovered numerous areas where we exceeded the quality standards, and identified areas requiring improvement, which have been incorporated into our Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP).

We continued to promote a proactive reporting culture and streamlined reporting mechanisms through our 'Make A Report' form that is quick and easy to use ensuring we identify and register risks and opportunities for improvement in our CIP for action.

BCR also implemented a formal Incident Management System and processes to meet the ACQSC Serious Incident Response Scheme requirements rolled out to home care providers in December 2022.



Aged Care

We're so proud of our aged care team for their dedication to providing trustworthy, safe, and high-quality service to our clients, and for actively participating in webinars, training days, and conferences to stay informed on changes driven by the Aged Care Royal Commission.

Providing quality in-home services to our valued clients ensure they feel comfortable and supported in their own homes, and our valuable respite services are there to support their carers.

Our services include Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP), Home Care Packages (HCP), and Short-Term Restorative Care (STRC). Through these programs across the Illawarra and Shoalhaven, BCR care workers have provided 33,563 hours of direct care to support our aged care clients.

Over the past year, we've seen a welcome increase in the recruitment and retention of dedicated aged care workers at BCR. This is in part due to the successful implementation of formal traineeships in partnership with UOW College and the continued development of our domestic care workforce. Targeted focus and investment in the growth and development of our care workforce has been a key element of our strategic workforce plan, and has allowed us to decrease our use of agency staff while increasing hours of support across our in-home care services. Our CHSP and STRC services often provide a seamless transition to HCP when our clients care needs increase or funding has been re-assessed and approved.

This year, HCP increased by 15% to 160 clients supported by an experienced and dedicated clinical team and clinical governance structure. Our clinical team includes four Registered Nurses, a Social Worker, and a BCR Board Director with RN qualifications and experience.

We have improved our client intake processes for CHSP and HCP by responding to feedback and developing a questionnaire which is provided to clients prior to their first home visit so we can better understand their needs.

We have also introduced the BCR Communities App, where clients can communicate with one another and share information. Additionally, we provide quarterly client newsletters filled with news stories and important information.

Our clients' wellbeing and satisfaction are our top priorities. We are constantly striving to improve our services and ensure that our clients receive the best possible values-driven care.

Paradise Cottage Reopening

BCR Paradise Respite Cottage was officially reopened in May 2023 with a celebratory morning tea after a period of shut down for refurbishment.

Designed for people over 65 who have a carer, Paradise Cottage in Sanctuary Point is one of the only overnight respite cottages in the Shoalhaven. It provides carers, including those supporting loved ones with dementia, with much needed rest from a role that can be both rewarding and challenging. Having regular mental and physical breaks from a caring role helps to maintain good health for both the carer and the person they care for.



The Chance to Rest and Reset

Like many of the 2.65 million Australians who are caring for a loved one, 67-year-old Vicki Heidemann's progression to full-time carer of her mother Rosalie, was a gradual one.

Initially, 89-year-old Rosalie only needed occasional support, but as her dementia progressed she moved into the house to live with Vicki and now needs constant care.

A four day stay at BCR Communities' Paradise Respite Cottage gives Vicki the time to relax and recharge while Rosalie is able to get out of the house and socialise. Vicki has found that they both benefit from having a regular break from each other.

"Mum really enjoys her stays at Paradise Cottage because she has always been a people person, she loves to have a chat and has always had a lot of friends," Vicki said.

While Vicki said she initially felt guilty about using respite, she has since realised that taking care of herself makes her a better carer.

"I know Mum will be well looked after when she is at Paradise Cottage and the time apart gives me a chance to meet up with friends, spend time with my daughters and grandkids and get things done around the house," Vicki said.

"It's a chance to rest and reset."

Building Social Connection

A real focus this year for BCR Communities was building social connection, especially for older clients who continued to feel socially isolated after the COVID lockdowns.

A specialised BCR Social Connection Team was formed this year. They generate a monthly social calendar with activities that are fun, engaging and diverse, including trips to the theatre, galleries, restaurants, coastal walks, markets, movies and more. The calendar also includes centre-based social groups, dementia specific groups and health and well-being activities like meditation, chair yoga and health seminars.

The highlight of the social calendar has been the innovative intergenerational sessions between our older clients and local pre-schoolers and primary school children, made possible through a collaboration with the BCR Community Services Team.

As a result of the team's innovative new social supports and with the support of a dedicated team of volunteers, the hours of aged care support in group settings has more than doubled since last financial year. Firm friendships are forming and clients are reporting improvements in their overall happiness and well-being.

The BCR Communities Social App

There are many reasons people become more socially isolated as they age including health and mobility issues. The BCR Communities App developed in partnership with ExSitu, is an online meeting place where members can take part in discussions, share information, join interest groups and take a look at the Community Connects Calendar within the comfort of their own homes.



Lesley Gets Back into Life with BCR

When 75-year-old Lesley Heffernan (right) and her husband Michael retired to tranquil Sanctuary Point, they were excited to start the next chapter of their lives together.

The couple were enjoying their new life until Michael suddenly passed away in 2019 leaving Lesley feeling lost and very alone.

“We had been married for 48 years so losing Michael felt like I had lost my right arm, I didn’t know what to do without him and I felt really lonely.” Lesley said. When COVID restrictions eased, Lesley decided to meet new people and get the social connection she needed by joining the BCR Communities Social Groups.

“I couldn’t keep staying indoors doing nothing, I had to get out and try and live my life without him,” Lesley said.

“I now go on the Tuesday bus trips which I really enjoy. There is a lot of interaction with other people and it’s great to get out of the house and visit places that I haven’t been before or haven’t been to in a long time.”

Wellness Programs Grow

BCR Communities continues to partner with Jervis Bay Physiotherapy, Kyoga at Burrill Lake and Physiopal in Nowra to provide weekly fitness classes especially for our Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) clients. These include activities that not only improve physical fitness and strength, but also increase general well-being and improve balance and mobility. These groups have become so popular that we now also have classes for clients living in the Illawarra.

Home Maintenance Program

Service delivery of the Home Maintenance Program was back to pre-COVID levels this financial year, and is now running at full capacity. A crew of staff, volunteers and NDIS participants go out two days a week to carry out essential home and garden maintenance for CHSP clients to ensure they can continue living safely at home. The responses from clients has been very positive about their garden transformation and the friendly service.



Community Visitors Scheme Finishes

For the last seven years, BCR has been providing individual in-home supports and Pirates Band entertainment through the Government’s Community Visitors Scheme (CVS).

BCR Communities would like to acknowledge the dedicated CVS volunteers who provided friendship and companionship to isolated older people living at home, and the Pirates Band volunteers for their years of providing joyful performances to clients in residential aged care.

These volunteers helped to reduce social isolation and loneliness for our aged care clients, and we are grateful for their contribution. We are fortunate to have been able to retain our in-home CVS volunteers through our CHSP social support program, and we are still enjoying the sounds of our Pirates Band volunteers who are not ready to hang up their instruments just yet.

A Special Friendship

Audrie and Tyler are great mates. Like any friends they really look forward to seeing each other - they have fun, play games and catch up on each other lives. The only thing unusual about their friendship is that Audrie is 94 and Tyler is 11.

While their paths would not normally have crossed, the two met as part of BCR Communities’ Intergenerational Sessions between seniors and kids from Year 2 to Year 6 at Sanctuary Point Public School.

It only took a couple of sessions for the special friendship to form, with Tyler always making a beeline for Audrie.

“I love hanging out with Audrie because she is kind and nice and a loving person so I really want to spend time with her,” Tyler said.



Audrie was just as delighted to see Tyler, calling him the grandson she never had, and saying, “he is a wonderful boy with a wonderful mind, I love the things he comes out with - he’s like an old soul in a young body.”

The two spent afternoons together chatting, laughing and playing snakes and ladders - very happy in each other’s company despite their 83 year age gap!

Activities Hub

The BCR Activities Hub in Sanctuary Point was again a vibrant centre of activity this year.

The Activities Hub reflects the diversity of our community, providing programs, events, workshops and delivering community projects by connecting and engaging people of all ages, and diverse backgrounds with activities including:

- Sanctuary Point Public School kids making a timber bench seat in their Carpentry Skills Workshop
- Local teens from the Curious and Creative Program creating their own podcasts
- Volunteers making a mud kitchen for Noah's Inclusion Services in Sanctuary Point
- Participants in the Women's DIY Workshop building their own toolboxes
- NDIS participants learning to grow food in the produce gardens

Thanks to another generous NSW ClubGRANTS from The Country Club St Georges Basin & Vincentia, refurbishments to the Activities Hub continued with the construction of a timber deck and external work area providing a more useable outdoor area for workshop activities.

NDIS Work Life and Training Program

This year saw the start of BCR's dedicated Work Life and Training Program for NDIS participants. Designed for young people who have left or are leaving high school, the program allows participants to stay local while learning the skills they need for work and life.

There are 12 NDIS participants currently being supported under the program. Weekly activities are based around the participant's individual goals and have included everything from menu planning, growing vegetables and cooking meals, to learning to use hand held tools, build furniture or play the guitar.

Former Vincentia High School student, 19-year-old Ollie Lawson, has been coming to the BCR Activities Hub since graduating last year and has been learning the skills he will need for paid employment including landscaping, gardening and basic carpentry skills.

"I really want to get a job so it is good to be able to come to the HUB and learn the skills I need," Ollie said.

"I like working with the BCR Home Maintenance Program because I am learning a lot and helping older people at the same time."



Bay & Basin Community Radio 92.7FM

It's been a big year for Bay & Basin Community Radio 92.7FM with the launch of its own website in October 2022 and the celebration of 20 years on air in November 2022.

The new website is a natural extension of our community radio station and shares the same aim of keeping locals in the Bay & Basin informed, connected and entertained.

As well as live streaming, the website features a weekly program guide, local and national news stories updated daily, a sponsorship directory, stories from around the station, a presenter's page and a Community Events Directory which enables local community organisations to submit details of upcoming events.

To make the new website truly local, each main page features stunning photography of the Bay & Basin region by talented photographer Russ Newman.

It's hard to believe that it has been 20 years since Bay and Basin Community Radio officially went to air on a temporary license after 12 months of test broadcasting on 87.6Mhz (Booderee narrowcast license). We gained our permanent license with the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) in 2006.

From humble beginnings with only four volunteers we now have over 35 registered volunteers providing over 25 locally produced programs each week. From youth radio with local schools to Indigenous programming and specialist content, the station has something for everyone.

On behalf of the station, thank you to our wonderful team of volunteers, our valued station sponsors and the CBAA – Community Broadcasting Association of Australia.

Radio Sponsors:

- Bendigo Bank
- Shoalhaven Counselling
- Club Jervis Bay
- Ison & Co
- Jervis Bay & Basin Locksmiths
- Your Mouth Matters
- Chemist Hub
- Country Club St Georges Basin & Vincentia
- Jervis Bay Brewing Co
- Modern Healthcare Professionals
- Vincentia Laundromat
- Dean Michael Solicitors
- Hancock Denture Clinic
- Carpet Court Nowra
- Huskisson Pictures
- Mountain to Sea Home Improvements
- Shoalhaven Solar
- Aidacare Healthcare Equipment

Jay's Radio Dream has Come True

When 45-year-old Jay Nielsen was a little boy, he dreamed of being on the radio. He would set up his cassette decks and record himself playing his favourite songs and pretending to be a radio announcer.

After being involved in a horrible road accident at the age of 15, the radio played an even bigger role in Jay's life. As he lay in his hospital bed for months, music soothed him and the radio was his constant companion.

The accident left Jay with a permanent disability and his dream of being on the radio was soon forgotten - until a chance meeting with BCR Communities Community Project Manager, Brad Slaughter at the start of this year.

Brad wears many hats at BCR, one of them being the manager of our radio station Bay & Basin Community Radio 92.7FM and another coordinating our NDIS Work, Life and Training Program.

When Brad met Jay at an NDIS event and learnt that he listened to 92.7FM every day, he made it his mission to support Jay to achieve his dream of being on air.

"Brad gave me a call one day and I thought 'oh no, I'm in trouble' because I've rung up too many times and they are sick of me calling in with requests," Jay said.

"But instead he said, 'why don't you come down here and be involved', and I said, 'yes definitely, I will do anything' and then he said 'why don't you be a radio host?'"

"I couldn't believe it - I said 'you beauty, yes, yes, yes.'"

With kindness, patience and skill, Brad has supported Jay to produce his own radio show – Double Shots with Jay – which airs every Thursday afternoon. Jay's confidence continues to grow and he still can't quite believe he has achieved his dream.

"This is the first time that I have presented on air and it is so much fun. Brad is hilarious and is so knowledgeable - he knows everything," Jay said.



Community Services

404

Life skills, education or learning programs were delivered including parent education, cooking classes, developing resilience and improving mental and physical well-being.



Participants in these programs:

2,155

126

Young people were supported through our focused Tween or Youth Projects.



Students supported through our transition and wellbeing programs delivered within schools.

400

36



People supported per month with emergency food packages through our Food Pantry Program.

112

people per month assisted with crisis support, including emergency food, mental health, family & domestic violence, homelessness, legal and family breakdown issues.



Workshops held at the Sanctuary Point Youth & Community Centre this year:

- Aboriginal pole art & pocket park - welcome to place project
- Intergenerational afternoon teas and activities
- Clothes swap events and work readiness style sessions
- Information sessions – scams awareness, wills and planning ahead
- Women and Tweens wellbeing workshops and activities
- Cooking programs, hampers and food drives
- Transition support for starting kindergarten and moving from primary to high school
- BMX bike workshops and bike maintenance
- Boomerang Bags and Kindergarten library bag working bee

Students Thrive with Curious & Creative

After the great success of the Curious & Creative pilot program last year which was supported with funding from the Office of Regional Youth, the program ran again in 2023 with students from Vincentia High School.

Curious & Creative is a school re-engagement and pathways program developed and co-ordinated by BCR Communities and delivered in partnership with Firefly Uniting and Vincentia High School.

As the result of an identified need in the community, the program was created specifically for students in year 7 to 10 who were finding it challenging to get back into school life after the COVID lockdowns, and who were experiencing anxiety and depression. Feeling overwhelmed in the school environment has a huge impact both on the young people and their parents.

To address these issues, students involved in Curious & Creative attended various BCR Communities sites three days a week to engage in fun and challenging activities designed to build confidence, spark creativity and create peer friendship and connection.

This year, activities have included photography, ceramics, sewing, and woodwork skills, working together to build a bench seat that will be installed at the BCR Communities future youth specific PODS site in Sanctuary Point, and students created their own youth-orientated podcasts.



Big Turn Out for the Sanctuary Point Community Matters Fairs

When you are experiencing domestic violence, struggling with mental health issues, or dealing with financial hardship it can be difficult reaching out for help.

But what if rather than having to make an appointment to see someone, you could wander through stalls in a safe environment full of community organisations who could provide you with support? It was this vision that inspired the BCR Community Services Team to start the Sanctuary Point Community Matters Fair.

The team held two Fairs over the last 12 months bringing together over 20 different community organisations within the Sanctuary Point Youth and Community Centre and the BCR Communities Wellness Centre and Garden.

As well as the information stalls there was live entertainment, face-painting, craft activities, games and a petting zoo for the kids. The Sanctuary Point police cooked a mountain of sausages and hundreds of locals connected over coffee and gelato.

Kim Newnham, a domestic and family violence case worker for YWCA Australia said the fair was a fantastic initiative and holding one before the end of the year was so important as “Christmas can be a stressful time” for families.

“The first contact with us is often the hardest, but these kind of events make that first contact easy.”

The Community Matters Fairs bring community members and their network of local community service providers together within a safe and welcoming environment. They have become an ongoing event within our community calendar.



Outreach services

We are proud to be able to offer the below outreach services from our Youth & Community Centre:

- Headspace
- Vincentia High School
- Sanctuary Point Public School
- Uniting
- Firefly
- Catholic Care
- YWCA
- NSW Corrective Services
- Youth Justice
- Ostara
- Shoalcoast Community Legal Centre
- Nana Muru (Lives Lived Well)
- MBH Training
- Youth Insearch
- National College of Vocational Education
- Kiama Community College
- Clifton Park Community Garden



Happy Anniversary

This year we celebrated 26 employees and 37 volunteers who have five or more years of service with BCR Communities. Joining the ranks of those with five years of service or more were employees Marie Bell, Meg Smith, Fiona Bellis and Margaret Semkiw and volunteers Milton Owen, Alessandro Timpano and Zena Jones.



Celebrating 10 Year Anniversary:

Skye Holman | Social Worker

Peter Hurtak | Care Worker (pictured)

Christopher Kovalik | Volunteer

Olivera Avramoska | Care Worker

Celebrating 15 Year Anniversary:

Michele Smith | Volunteer Board Director

Celebrating 20 Year Anniversary:

Brad Slaughter | Community Project Manager

John Summers | Volunteer

Vanessa Harries | HR Coordinator

Ross Clifton | Volunteer Board Director

Financial Report

We continued our growth trajectory and increased our revenue from last year by approximately 20% to \$8.1 million. This is through our various funded programs, including our Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP), Home Care Program (HCP), Short-term Restorative Care (STRC) and numerous Community Services Grants. HCP funding increasing by 24% over the year.

Our net profit returned to a pre-COVID level of \$545,000 which equates to a margin of 6.6%. As a Not-for-Profit organisation this income remains within the organisation and will continue to be used to provide quality services to our clients and the community.

Wage and Administration costs increased in line with our revenue increase. The Care Sector continues to experience considerable increases in the compliance and reporting requirements set by the Government. Insurance costs are also increasing at a faster rate than CPI, and like other not for profit organisations, BCR tries to absorb as much as possible these increasing costs, however it is becoming more difficult each year.

Achievements

BCR Communities continues to invest in our people and assets, and have been very successful in sourcing new funding opportunities.

We invested in our fleet, purchasing a new bus this year. Hopefully you have seen it on the roads or had the chance to use it. You can't miss it as we had it wrapped in our bold new colours and logo featuring our new branding.

A considerable amount was also invested in a refurbishment of our Respite Cottage, on Sanctuary Point Road and installation of the adjoining fully accessible amenities.

It was exciting to have been successful with our grant application through the Regional Youth Investment Program (NSW Government) which will enable us to provide a unique youth space for the younger people in the community. The 'PODS Project' worth over \$558,000 will involve the installation of temporary structures (PODS) at our site on Macleans Point Road, Sanctuary Point.

This year we also commenced our new 'Work Life Training' program which caters for people under the NDIS scheme. We have seen a lot of happy faces on the tools and learning new skills, and are hoping that many more new faces join us in the coming year.

We were also fortunate with another great opportunity, which is helping us to develop an organisation-wide values based approach to understanding our client's goals and wishes, which came to fruition when we won an Aged Care & Industry Innovation Australia (ARIIA) grant through Flinders University for \$160,000. We have partnered with Ex-Situ, University of Wollongong and Carers NSW to research ways to measure and record our client's values, streamline our on boarding processes, and create a new communications platform for all clients, carers and staff.

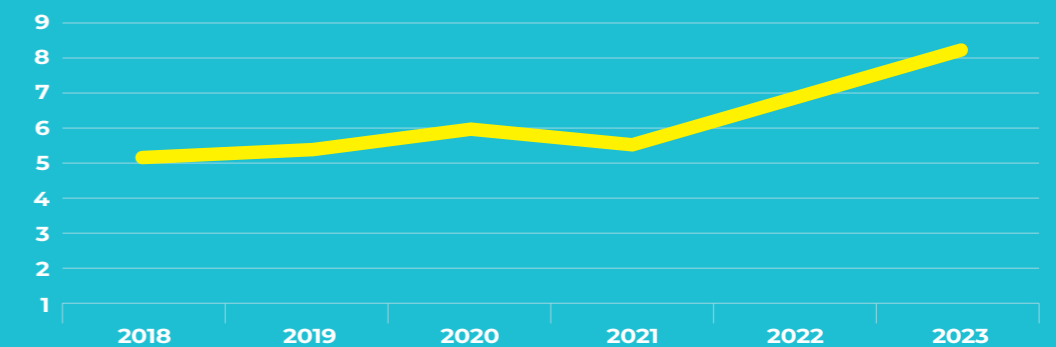
Once again Good360 has been generous to BCR and donated \$20,500 worth of goods to us for distribution to needy families within our communities.

Next year

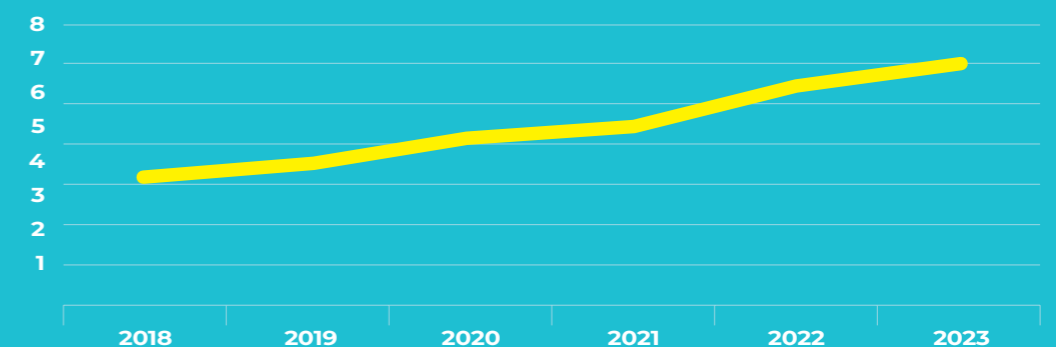
While we still have the challenge of finding new qualified, skilled and caring staff within a limited pool of talent and the current highly competitive environment, we hope to continue to expand our quality services across the region.

We will be reviewing our primary client management system to ensure that our current and emerging needs are being met, as we commence the initial preparation for the transition of Aged Care Home Care Funding to the new 'Support at Home Program'.

Revenue (millions)



Net Assets (millions)



Thank you

BCR Communities would like to thank:

ExSitu	Community Broadcasting Foundation
Good 360	Club Jervis Bay
ELDAC	Jervis Bay Physiotherapy
ARIIA	PhysioPal
iWag	Kyoga
ACCPA	BeauBuild
Carers NSW	Stewart Brown
Jacstar Design	Bendigo Bank
The Country Club St Georges Basin & Vincentia	Partner IT
Club Grants	Commonwealth Bank
FRRR	Settlement Services International
Vincentia High	MBH Training
Sanctuary Point Public School	PWC Business Advisory Services
TAFE NSW	HESTA
UOW and UOW College	Coastal Waters
Shoalhaven City Council	NSW Government, Regional NSW
Shoalhaven Business Chamber	NSW Government, Dept of Communities and Justice
Illawarra Business Chamber	Australian Government, Dept of Health and Aged Care
Community Industry Group	Workforce Australia
Shoalhaven Disability Forum	
CBA	



Contact Us

Our friendly team would be pleased to assist you with any questions you have.

You can contact us:

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