



Annual Report 2024-25



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Acknowledgement of Country

Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Women's Shelter acknowledges the Dharug and Guringai Peoples, the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters on which we live and work.

We pay our respect to Elders past and present, and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples for their enduring connection to Country, culture and community.

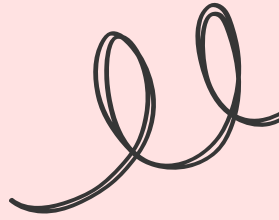
We honour the strength, wisdom and leadership of First Nations women and families, including those working to create safety, healing and justice in the face of gendered violence and homelessness.

We recognise that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and families continue to experience domestic and family violence and homelessness at disproportionately high rates. HKWS is committed to listening, learning and working in partnership with First Nations communities towards healing, equity and self-determination.

We acknowledge that sovereignty was never ceded.



Women and children experiencing domestic violence and homelessness are at the heart of all we do.



Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Women's Shelter was established in 2015 in response to an identified need in the Hornsby Ku-ring-gai area to provide a safe place for women experiencing domestic violence and homelessness. Every woman and child deserves shelter, safety, and opportunity.

HKWS is located on Darug and Guringai land.



Mission

To provide a safe place for women and children experiencing domestic abuse and homelessness. We treat everyone with dignity and respect, empowering them to create a better future.

Vision

A community that values all women and children, and supports those experiencing the trauma of domestic abuse and homelessness.

Values

Compassion, Integrity, Respect, Advocacy, Commitment.



Purpose

We listen to the voices of women in order to provide client centered support for women and children experiencing domestic abuse and homelessness through accommodation and tailored, holistic support services.

Our home is a place where women and children in need can access accommodation, safe, and secure, without judgement, or obligation.

We facilitate holistic services and provide practical assistance to empower women to rebuild their lives through opportunities for personal growth, and the development of life skills, for a future that is self-reliant.

We measure our client outcomes to ensure our services support positive change in the lives of women and children.

We commit to fostering a culture that is free from discrimination, where all women and children matter, regardless of age, sexuality, cultural and linguistic diversity, disability or mental illness.

We are a voice for women, advocates for the individual, and for a society in which every woman can live free from violence and fear and experience life to her full potential.

During FY2025 women and children reaching out to us received tailored, holistic, person-centred care, and kindness from the Shelter Manager and Caseworkers. Our trauma informed model of care, provided in a safe and secure space, empowers women and children, ensured positive outcomes and impacts for the women who sought support from HKWS.

Women were provided with safe and secure accommodation and empowered to reach their personal goals.



124

women were assisted by HKWS to start a new life free from the danger of domestic abuse and homelessness.

30

women and families were supported in our HKWS Outreach Program.

65%

of women supported by HKWS identified as coming from a culturally and linguistically diverse background.

66%

of women supported by HKWS, were exited into secure and long-term accommodation.

456

clients have been supported by HKWS programs since 2020.

15%

of women supported by HKWS self-identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

1584

short-term and emergency accommodation bed nights provided by HKWS.

56

nights was the average stay for a woman at HKWS.

65%

of women spoke English as a second language.

5435

bed nights provided by our transitional home, Beecroft House.

322

nights was the average stay for a woman at Beecroft House.

25%

of women presented to HKWS due to housing insecurity.

61%

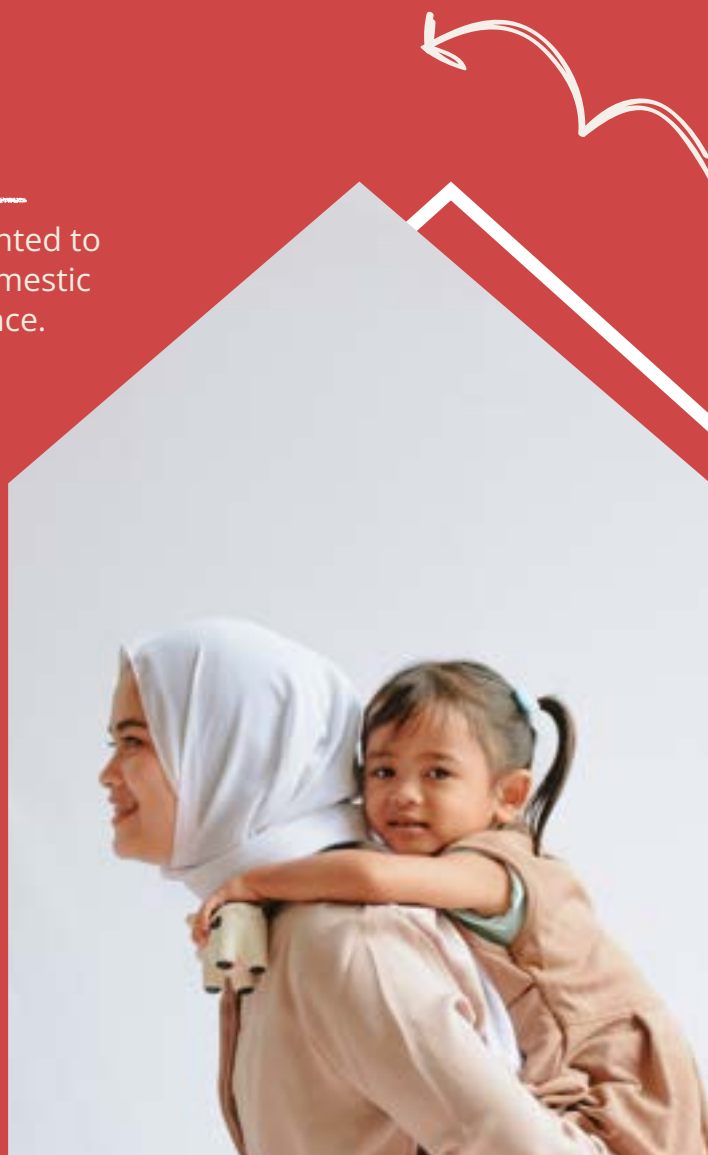
of women presented to HKWS due to domestic and family violence.

9%

of women supported by HKWS were over the age of 55.

18-85

was the age-range of women supported by HKWS.



Chair's Report

2025 has been a year of gratitude, growth and celebration as we mark our 10th Anniversary.

Women and children in crisis, fleeing domestic violence and facing homelessness are at the heart of our work. For a decade we have provided safety and opportunity, with dignity and respect, walking beside women and children as they heal and rebuild their lives. We recognise and celebrate their strength and resilience. We are grateful to the founders, the inaugural board and staff, who shared the vision and built the strong foundations from which we have grown.

I am delighted to present the Hornsby Kuring-gai Women's Shelter 2025 Annual Report. This report highlights the positive outcomes and impacts for women and children who have been empowered by experienced caseworkers, providing tailored support, with compassion and kindness.

HKWS offers security, a place to heal, many trauma informed services and activities for women in crisis, women over 55 and facing homelessness, and mothers and children in the community. So much more than a bed for the night. We measure our outcomes and know that our support is life changing. We provide the tools used by each woman to build an independent live free from fear and violence.



Our services have been at capacity for the past 12 months. We are working to expand our services through providing accommodation for mothers with their children, and the opening of a community wellbeing hub.

Our caring and engaged community makes this work possible.

Our vital work is only made possible through the donations of time, funds and expertise so generously shared with us from individuals, organisations and businesses. Our volunteer led community based organisation is grateful for the commitment of inspired individuals.

Achievements for 2025

I am pleased to report that all strategic priorities remain front and centre of our business plan, and our mission remains unchanged, to provide a safe place for women experiencing domestic abuse and homelessness. Our core values continue to guide us. Compassion, Integrity, Respect, Advocacy, Commitment.

Activities of note throughout the period include:

- November 2024 -16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence Community event.
- March 2025 - International Women's Day 10th Anniversary Lunch.
- May 2025 - Thank you morning tea for founders and long time supporters.
- June 2025 - Women's Wellbeing and Empowerment Day
- June 2025 - HKWS received the keys to the new Community Wellbeing Hub, in partnership with Westfield Hornsby.

I extend our gratitude to our community and business partners, and the generous people who have committed to support us financially, some of them anonymously and over a period of years.

Collaborative relationships and funding assist us deliver trauma informed casework and a range of services that include legal, health, financial wellbeing, employment, and life skills support.

Community and Sector Engagement

We are all advocates for women and children in a domestic violence crisis. We speak widely in our community and beyond, with schools, community groups, businesses, local leaders and politicians. We belong to a number of local advocacy groups.

Through advocacy we increase awareness and work to address the underlying drivers of gendered violence.

Philanthropic support is our major source of income. We're always grateful to individuals and organisations who fundraise for us. Our major fundraiser for 2025 was our International Women's Day Lunch. This sold out event led to many conversations and ongoing generosity from our community.

HKWS Team

HKWS professional team consisting of our Shelter Manager and Caseworkers are at the core of HKWS. Angelica and her team of skilled dedicated caseworkers have created a warm and welcoming culture for both staff and clients.

HKWS General Manager Emily Tweddell and **Administration Officer** Sophie Krygier are a professional dedicated team of 2 who ensure HKWS is doing what we say we are doing.

HKWS volunteer board members are dedicated and committed and it's a joy to share this journey with such compassionate experts. I am so grateful to each person for their generosity of spirit and kindness. We welcomed Clare O'Neil and Emilie Priday to the board in November 2024.

We are grateful for the support of volunteer patrons, Ambassador Nick McArdle, volunteer committee members, and all the volunteers who assist in many different ways throughout the year.

"Grateful for the commitment of inspired individuals"

The Future

HKWS is focussed on sustainable growth and well positioned to increase and diversify the services we offer women and children.

The Community Wellbeing Hub at Westfield Hornsby will open soon and expand our capacity to provide services responding to the needs of the growing number of women and children facing domestic violence and homelessness.

With community support we will soon be purchasing a property to provide additional accommodation and services for mothers and children in need.

It is a privilege to work with such talented, dynamic and compassionate people.

We are very grateful to everyone in our community for their kindness, dedication, financial support and advocacy. Together, we can inspire hope, and bring meaningful change to the lives of women and children escaping domestic abuse and homelessness.

Catherine Knox



General Manager's Report

The Heart of HKWS

The women and children who seek care at Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Women's Shelter are at the heart of all we do. They have been since 2015, when the doors of HKWS first opened. This year, as we honour 10 years of service, we reflect on the work that has been done and the work that lies ahead. Our mission is simple yet powerful: to empower women and children in crisis to create a better future.

Every woman who walks through our doors, and every family we support in outreach, is the reason we exist. They are the reason our staff, board, committee members, volunteers and community show up with compassion, energy and determination every day.

While we wish there was no need for shelters like ours, the reality is stark - and so we must be here. Domestic and family violence is still the leading cause of homelessness in Australia, and the scale of the issue remains confronting.

In 2024, 103 women and 16 children were murdered as a result of domestic and family violence. We exist to ensure that the women and children we support will not become another statistic.



Together, we create safe spaces for those escaping domestic abuse and homelessness, and provide a nexus for positive change. Our crisis service is prevention in recovery. Whether at our Shelter or in our outreach program, we hope that those in our care feel like they are safe and that they belong - women like Nadia*.

"For me, the shelter is much more than just a place - it is a safe haven, a space of hope, healing, and strength. It means safety when the world feels unsafe, support when someone feels alone, and the beginning of a new chapter for so many women. It's a place where dignity is restored, voices are heard, and courage is rebuilt. I am deeply grateful that such a space exists for women who need it most."

- Nadia*, HKWS Shelter Resident 2025

Our unwavering team

In FY25, 124 women were assisted by HKWS to start a new life free from the danger of domestic abuse and homelessness, and 1584 short-term and emergency accommodation bed nights were provided. Our HKWS outreach program doubled from the previous year, with 30 women and families supported.

Behind every woman's journey is our skilled and compassionate team of caseworkers, led by Shelter Manager Angelica Molina. Over the past two years, Angelica has cultivated a culture of collaboration, care and professional excellence.



*The Honourable Margaret Beazley AC KC,
Governor of New South Wales's visit to HKWS*

Our caseworkers walk alongside the women we support with respect, dignity and care. Our trauma-informed, client-centred approach recognises that each woman is the expert in her own life. Our team is not telling her what to do, or making decisions for her, rather they are helping her to set and pursue her personal goals, based on her unique experience. From securing safe housing, to finding employment, to navigating the justice system, our team is there for her. We hope she leaves HKWS stronger, more independent, and free from fear.

To Angelica, Munira, Leah, Sally, Joy, Samala and Sophie - thank you. Your empathy, strength, and tireless efforts inspire us all. I am deeply proud to stand alongside such remarkable women, who are values-led and committed to making our world a safer, fairer place. You all play an important role in achieving positive outcomes for the women and families we support.

My gratitude extends to our volunteers, who bring life, support and connection into the Shelter and community events, and to our hard-working volunteer board and committees, led by Chair Catherine Knox. Cathie's steadfast leadership and passion sets the tone for our organisation.

Together, our diverse team shares a common goal and embodies our values of compassion, integrity, respect, advocacy and commitment.

At HKWS, we are committed to quality and continuous system improvement, ensuring we deliver the best possible service. In 2023, we proudly achieved Australian Service Excellence Standards (ASES) accreditation, and our team is preparing for its re-accreditation in mid-2026.

Community in action

HKWS thrives because of community. With limited government funding, the generosity of community groups, donors, partners, advocates, foundations, businesses and individuals is nothing short of remarkable. You continue to place your trust in us, and we thank you. This work would not be possible without you.

Many local organisations such as Bendigo Community Bank and Rotary Clubs have continued to raise awareness and funds, keeping domestic abuse front and centre as a community issue. Our pro bono partners have expanded this year and provide essential behind-the-scenes expertise that strengthen our operations - notably KPMG, Clayton Utz and 2XE, thank you.

We are so grateful for the wisdom, solidarity and alliance of our sector partners - from Women's Community Shelters led by dynamo Annabelle Daniel, our sister Shelters within this network and our local Hornsby Ku-ring-gai DV Network - thank you for your support, sharing of knowledge, innovation and collaboration for greater impact.

Opening New Doors

For more than a decade, HKWS has walked alongside hundreds of women as they've rebuilt their lives from domestic abuse. Yet the need in our community is far greater than our current capacity.

As we honour our 10-year anniversary, we stand as a strong and established organisation - growing in reach, vision and capacity to meet this need. Despite a long and challenging search to find the right property, in the near future we hope to open a second shelter dedicated to supporting mothers with their children. Thank you all for supporting us in raising funds for this new shelter in our end of financial year campaign.

In addition to these plans, just before FY25 came to a close, we signed the lease to our new HKWS Hub space at Westfield Hornsby. This Hub space has been made possible thanks to a generous donor and our meaningful partnership with Scentre Group.



Bunnings Thornleigh supplying our herb and veggie garden.

Our HKWS Hub will be a safe, welcoming space of hope, healing and new beginnings. It is an outreach centre and a place of early intervention and prevention - helping women and children at every stage of their journey away from violence, towards safety and independence.

At the Hub, women, and mothers with their children, will find personalised support and case management in a trauma-informed safe space, healing programs - including therapeutic groups and counselling, guidance with legal, financial and employment challenges, free child-minding services, as well as connections to trusted and specialised allied health professionals.

Discreetly located within Westfield Hornsby, the Hub allows women to seek help safely, close to transport and community services. Despite our growth in services, HKWS receives no government funding for new initiatives like this. So again, we thank you, our community, for standing alongside us as we innovate to help more people.

Looking Ahead with Hope

On a personal note, towards the end of 2025 I will be embarking on parental leave to have my second child. I would like to thank this uniquely wonderful community and HKWS team for supporting me in my role as General Manager of this inspiring organisation.

This year is a launchpad for what lies ahead, and during my leave I will be watching on with optimism and confidence as HKWS continues to go from strength to strength. The heart of all we do, the women and children we support, will remain our top priority - always.

"Without the shelter, I believe I would have quietly disappeared from this world long ago. Only those who have truly lived through such darkness can comprehend what the shelter means. That is why every "thank you" spoken here carries the full weight of gratitude and reverence - an offering from the deepest part of my soul."

- Mei* HKWS Shelter Resident 2025

**Client names changed to protect privacy*

Emily Trueddell

"We exist to ensure that the women and children we support will not become another statistic."



Shelter Manager's Report

Extraordinary Resilience

This financial year, we have witnessed extraordinary resilience from the women who have come through our shelter, and we have had the privilege of walking alongside them as they arrive carrying different stories and challenges. For some, it is the fear of not knowing the language; for others, it is the heartbreak of leaving their children, family and friends behind. Many come with little more than the courage it took to leave everything they knew in search of safety. Each woman arrives at a different stage of her journey, some deeply afraid, others quietly hopeful, but all share the same extraordinary strength that drives them to believe they can begin again.

What we witness here is nothing short of inspiring. Step by step, women find the courage to rebuild their lives in ways both big and small. We see them learning English, finding safe housing, regaining custody of their children, gaining employment, and slowly beginning to believe in their own worth.

These milestones may seem simple from the outside, but they carry incredible meaning. They are acts of resilience, reminders that healing is possible, and proof of the remarkable potential that lies within each woman. Domestic and family violence combined with homelessness often looks very different for women and can easily be misunderstood or overlooked.



Without a safe place to live, women face impossible choices and are at greater risk of re-traumatisation, sometimes even feeling pressured to return to the devastating situations they fled. The need for safe, stable housing cannot be overstated; it is the foundation upon which recovery, independence, and dignity are rebuilt.

"Through reconnecting with that inner strength, true recovery and transformation become possible."

At our shelter, we recognise the depth of these challenges and the weight they place on women's lives. That is why we are committed to providing care that is not only practical but also deeply compassionate and trauma-informed.

Our aim is to create an environment where every woman feels safe, supported, and valued, where she can begin to remember the light within herself. It is through reconnecting with that inner strength that true recovery and transformation become possible.

Shelter Renovations

At our shelter, we are always striving to create an environment that promotes safety, dignity, and healing for every woman who walks through our doors. Over the past year, we have undertaken a number of important renovations to ensure that the care and support we provide are reflected in the spaces we offer.



Angelica Molina Shelter Manager, Annabelle Daniel OAM CEO of Women's Community Shelters, and Alice Brimicombe Business Development Manager at DMS and survivor of domestic violence.

One of the most meaningful improvements was transforming the only shared bedroom into two separate rooms. This change has had a profound impact on the sense of privacy and dignity for the women staying with us, offering them a personal space where they can rest, reflect, and begin to heal during an incredibly difficult time.

We also built a proper pantry to store the generous food donations from our community. This allows us to better organise and preserve supplies, ensuring that women have consistent access to nutritious meals and essential resources throughout their stay.

Another significant upgrade was the renovation of our ground floor lounge room and kitchenette, made possible through the generosity of Lateral Projects. This warm, welcoming space now provides a comfortable area where women can relax, connect with one another, and begin to rebuild a sense of normalcy and belonging.

Finally, thanks to the support of B-MAC Constructions, we now have a spacious new shed to store physical donations. Having this organised and accessible storage means we can more efficiently meet the needs of residents, ensuring that essentials are always available when they are needed most. Each of these changes, big and small, has enhanced the quality of care we provide. Every corner now reflects the compassion and hope that guide our work. These improvements remind the women who come to us that they are worthy of safety, comfort, and dignity, and that even after the darkest times, renewal and healing are possible.

A Brighter Future

These achievements are first and foremost a reflection of the courage and determination of the women themselves. At the same time, they are made possible through the dedication and tireless work of our passionate Caseworker team, who stand beside each woman, offering support, guidance, and every possible opportunity to help her move forward. Day after day, the team work tirelessly to ensure that women are met with understanding, dignity, and hope.

Our caseworkers go to extraordinary lengths to navigate barriers such as the housing crisis, limited resources for women on visas, language obstacles, long waiting times, and inconsistent responses from services.

Despite these challenges, their commitment never wavers, they continue to explore every possible avenue so that women leave our shelter better equipped to begin their new lives.

The journey is rarely easy, but the progress we witness every day reminds us why this work matters. The courage of the women who come through our doors, and the dedication of the team who stands beside them, are powerful testaments to resilience, healing, and the possibility of a brighter future.

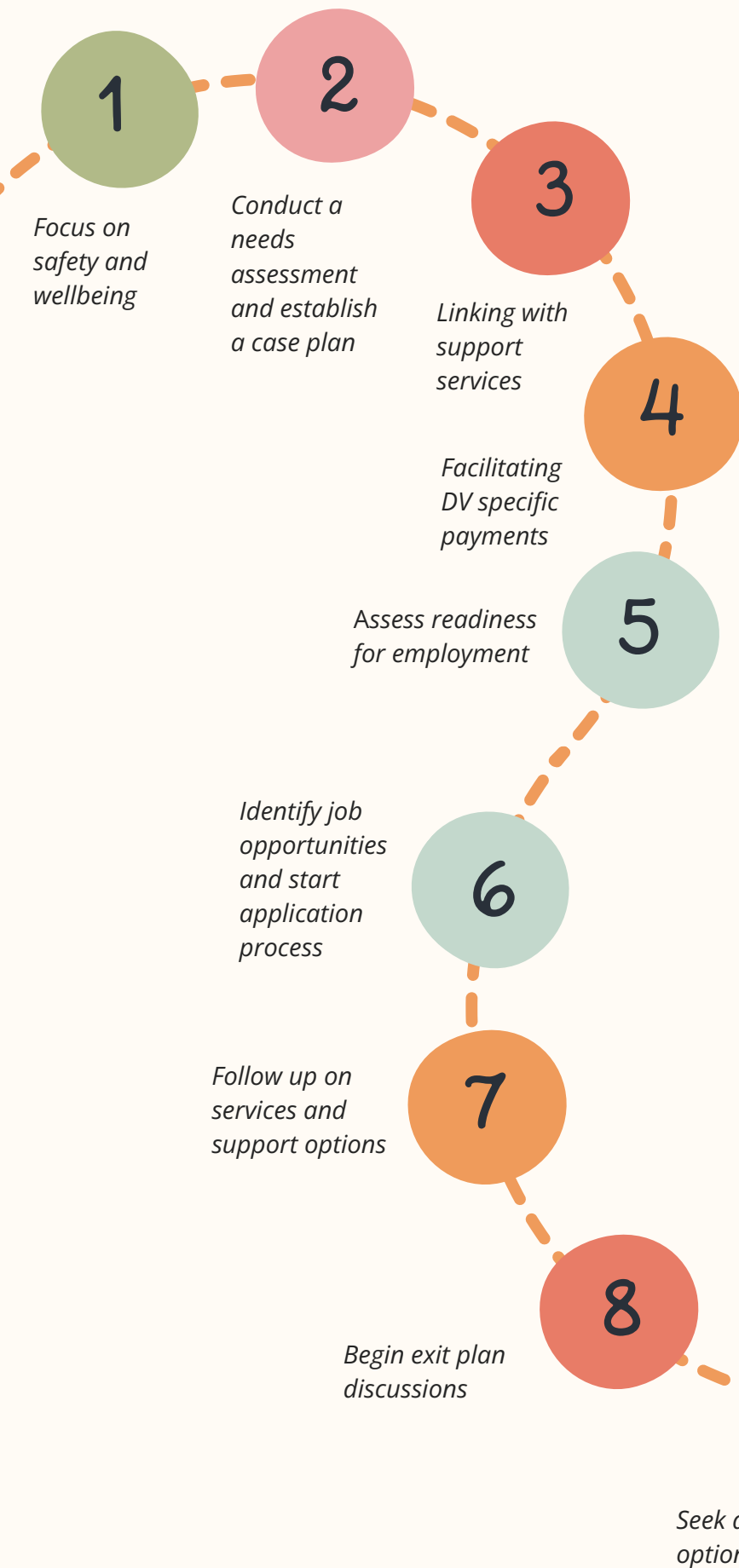
Angelica Molina

Quotes from Women in our Shelter

"To me, the shelter meant a second chance. It meant safety, dignity, and the opportunity to rebuild my life with hope."

"For those of us who had no one else to turn to in times of hardship, this shelter was a ray of hope. The case workers were a gentle and guiding presence, helping us take steps toward independence. They always showed great sensitivity to our mental and physical health, supporting our recovery with genuine care and empathy. "

A woman's journey



Beyond individual case management, our caseworkers at HKWS actively collaborate with external services and community organisations to ensure residents have access to comprehensive resources.

Whether coordinating legal aid, mental health services, financial support, or employment opportunities, they act as advocates, navigating complex systems to help each woman achieve the best possible outcomes.

Across 10 weeks, they forge strong partnerships to ensure no resident walks this journey alone.

Each woman is empowered to create a brighter future.



Story:

The Queen

Content Warning: Domestic Abuse

This woman came to HKWS extremely frightened. She was traumatised, exhausted, constantly teary and apologising for everything – even when there was nothing to apologise for. She had endured 28 years with an abuser, her husband. He took her money for gambling and drugs, and physically, psychologically and socially abused her. Once he beat her with a baseball bat, causing a brain injury. On another occasion he threatened her with a knife then strangled her. He demanded she choose between ending his life or hers. She survived. After enduring decades of abuse, she made the incredibly brave decision to leave.

He kept finding ways to contact her, breaching an AVO. Every message was a terrifying attempt to control her. She even kept some money in a joint account for him, hoping this token would keep him calm and buy time. When she arrived at HKWS, we showed deep respect and wrapped her in holistic support. We listened. Hearing her story was devastating, but coming to HKWS marked a new beginning.

Her progress at the Shelter didn't come without moments of doubt. Because she had endured his abuse for so long, she would say, "I might go back to him. I know he is going to be violent, but I know how to handle his violence." The consistency of his abuse at times felt more manageable than the unknowns of her future. In my heart, I knew if she went back, she would be another statistic - one of the women murdered every four days at the hands of a current or former partner.

At HKWS, we supported her to rebuild her self-esteem. We saw a smart, compassionate, resilient woman, even if she couldn't see it. She stayed longer than the usual ten weeks because we couldn't risk her going back. When ready, she accepted our support to report her abuser's AVO breach to Police. She was connected to counselling and to a local church community, where she began to make friends. With no family or friends in Australia, this was hugely important. Finally, we found stable, secure accommodation.

Days aren't without challenges, she has ongoing health issues and is navigating the unknown. However, the greatest victory is that she has not gone back to her abuser. In fact, this year, not one woman at HKWS has returned to an abuser. We are so proud of these women.

So yes, she is "The Queen". Not because life is suddenly perfect, but because every day she chooses to keep moving forward, no matter how heavy the weight feels. She faces whatever life throws her way and fights through it with courage. And she no longer lives in a Shelter - now, she has her own Castle.

Outcomes Star

The Outcomes Star™ is an evidence-based tool for both supporting and measuring change in the women who come to our Shelter.

At the beginning of a woman's stay at HKWS, she uses this tool to measure where she sits across a range of domains. At the end of her stay, she rates these areas again.

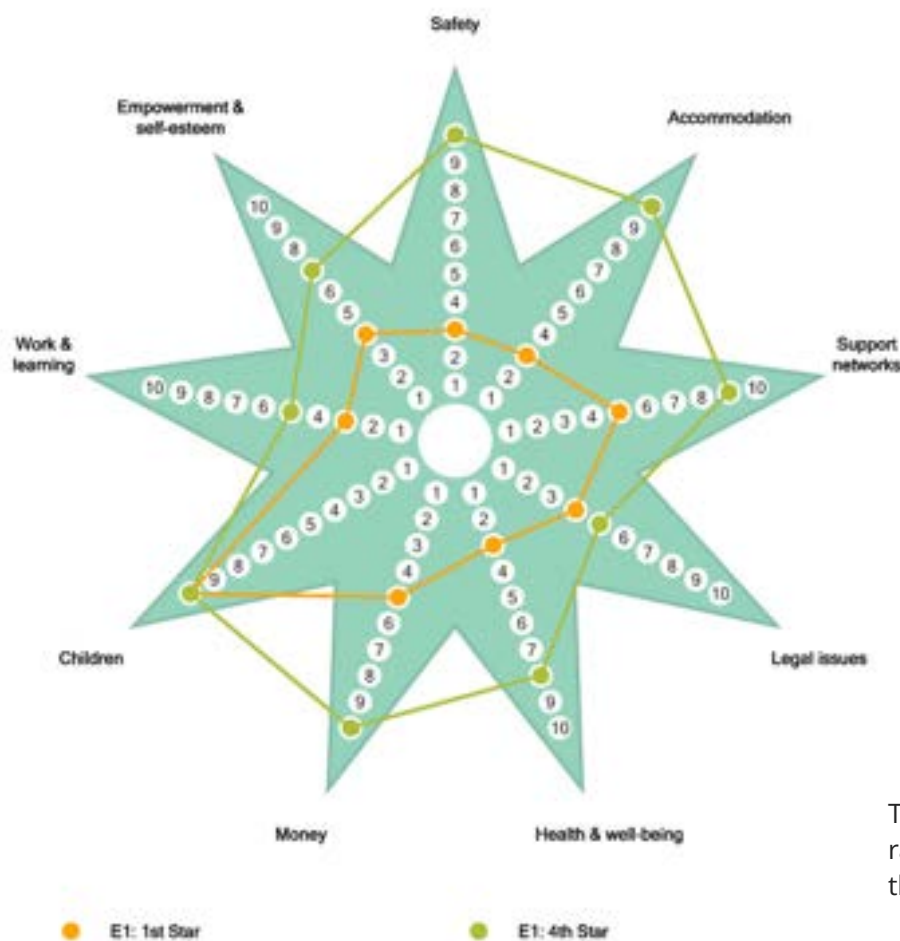
The 'distance travelled' between the beginning and end of her stay on this tool, is helpful in both assessing a woman's improvement and supporting her ongoing journey.

In FY25 we are pleased to report that HKWS clients travelled an average of 2.88 points (or 29%) across all domains on Outcomes Star.

A reminder that even small steps forward can mark life-changing progress.

The greatest improvement was seen in the domain of Safety at 4.63 (or 46% improvement) followed by the domain of Accommodation (37%), Support (35%) and Empowerment (33%).

HKWS ranked #1 in 'distance travelled' across the Women's Community Shelter network for FY25 – a recognition that honours both the resilience of our clients and the unwavering commitment of our team.



You just read
The Queen's story,
now here is her
Outcomes Star:

The orange line represents **The Queen's** rating at the beginning of her stay at HKWS, the green line at the end of her stay.

Testimonials

Notes from women in our care

For me, the shelter is much more than just a place—it is a safe haven, a space of hope, healing, and strength. It means safety when the world feels unsafe, support when someone feels alone, and the beginning of a new chapter for so many women. It's a place where dignity is restored, voices are heard, and courage is rebuilt. I am deeply grateful that such a space exists for women who need it most.

C.N

For me, the shelter was so much more than just a safe place—it was a space of healing, growth, and hope during one of the most difficult times in my life. When I first arrived, I was overwhelmed with pain and uncertainty. I didn't know what the next day would bring or how I would begin to rebuild. But the moment I walked through those doors, I felt a sense of safety that I hadn't felt in a long time.

The shelter gave me more than just a roof over my head—it gave me the time and space to breathe, to reflect, and to slowly find myself again. It reminded me that I wasn't alone, and that there were people who genuinely cared about my well-being and my future.

I'll always be especially grateful for Angelica and Munira. Their support, compassion, and encouragement made a lasting impact on me. They never judged me, and they always took the time to listen and remind me of my strength, even when I couldn't see it myself. Their kindness helped turn the shelter into a space that felt like home.

To me, the shelter meant a second chance. It meant safety, dignity, and the opportunity to rebuild my life with hope. Looking back, I'm so grateful for everything it gave me—it was a turning point I truly needed.

Thank you

C.T

The shelter means short but substantial time for accommodation that feels like home with amazing help when women are in need. thanks to the support from the shelter now I speak more English, have a job and I'm independent.

C.B

WITH THE SUPPORT OF LOVELY ANGELICA AND HER TEAM, I WAS GIVEN A SECOND CHANCE OF LIFE. I'VE LEARNED TO LOVE MYSELF ESPECIALLY LOOKING AFTER MY WELLBEING AND ALSO TO BELIEVE IN MYSELF NO MATTER WHAT CHALLENGES I'M FACING NOW.

IN LIFE, WE MAY ENCOUNTER MANY DEFEATS BUT WE MUST NOT BE DEFEATED. LET'S MOVE FORWARD NEVER TURN BACK. I'VE LEARNT THAT LIFE IS TOO SHORT, DO WHAT THAT MAKES YOU HAPPY. ALL THIS I NEVER DREAM THAT I WAS THIS HOPEFUL OF LIFE. SO I MUST TREASURE EVERY MOMENT OF LIFE.

I'M SO GRATEFUL TO HORNSBY SHELTER BECAUSE IT HAS PROVIDED ME WITH A SAFE PLACE AND PROTECT ME FROM DV WHEN I WAS IN SO MUCH FEAR AND TERRIFIED.

C.P

Testimonials

Notes from women in our care

For those of us who had no one else to turn to in times of hardship, this shelter was a ray of Hope. The case workers were a gentle and guiding presence, helping us take steps toward independence. They always showed great sensitivity to our mental and physical health, supporting our recovery with genuine care and empathy.

This shelter changed the course of my life and my daughter's, guiding us toward happiness. I am deeply grateful to the dedicated case workers who supported us—especially Angelica and Munira. Without their help, we would not have the happiness we have today. Through my time here, I also came to appreciate the beauty of Australia.

As an immigrant, I had no family in Australia and no one to rely on locally. At the time, I was suffering from the effects of domestic violence—my health had deteriorated, and I could no longer move my body as I once could.

I didn't know much about how things worked in Australia, and with limited English skills, I couldn't even ask for help. I felt completely hopeless. But everything changed when I came to this shelter.

The staff always looked after my physical condition with such kindness and care, supporting my healing process with patience and compassion. I am especially grateful to Angelica and Munira for their unwavering support.

Through this shelter, I also came to realize how wonderful Australia is. Here, people in vulnerable situations can receive support quickly and without racial discrimination. Compared to my home country, the support systems provided by both the local community and government are far more developed and accessible.

Someday, when I return to my home country, I hope to give back by using the blessings I received here to help others in need.

C.X

Testimonials

Notes from women in our care



Where the Heart Belongs, Where the Light Leads – The Sanctuary that gave me the strength to be reborn

Life is unpredictable, but there is always a way forward.

In my darkest hour, the shelter opened its doors to me. There, the simple rhythms of stable sleep and warm meals — once taken for granted — became the very medicine that began healing my wounded soul.

At that time, I was like a bird with broken wings, a frightened hedgehog, encasing a scarred heart within sharp defences.

I still remember so clearly: the moment Munira offered me a cup of warm water with kindness in her eyes, my tightly clenched defenses began to loosen. Under Angelica's patient guidance, I moved from fearful withdrawal to genuine smiles, from self-abandonment to feeling valued again. And once again, I came to believe: "I am worthy of love."

At the shelter, I was given not only the necessities of life but also profound emotional care that reawakened my sense of belonging. Every member of the staff worked tirelessly, sowing seeds of hope, building paths toward a new life.

With the support of psychologists, I experienced a true transformation — realising that I had the right to build friendships, to pursue passions, and to shape a life on my own terms. The heart silenced by suffering began once more to beat with vibrant energy. I cherished every hard-won opportunity, every training session, and every personal development plan.

They became the steps that helped me climb upward even when surrounded by darkness. From deep self-doubt to unwavering confidence, with the shelter's support and the therapists' guidance, I came to believe — no matter how far I fall, I have the strength to rise again and to chase my dreams with courage.

The shelter is far more than just a structure; it is a sanctuary alive with countless hopes and stories of rebirth.

For women like us — stranded in foreign lands, trapped in despair — it stands as a gateway from darkness into light.

I remember those days when marriage crushed my spirit. I remember curling up on a cold floor at 3 a.m., listening to the sound of my own broken breathing, tears unable to wash away the suffocating despair. I remember standing at the window, again and again, torn between life and death. Years of struggling — unable to live, unable to die — left me almost defeated.

Without the shelter, I believe I would have quietly disappeared from this world long ago. I understand, from the depths of my soul: only those who have truly lived through such darkness can comprehend what the shelter means. That is why every "thank you" spoken here carries the full weight of gratitude and reverence — an offering from the deepest part of the soul.



Committee Reports

Property and Grants

2025 has been a year of great progress for the Assets and Grants Committee, made possible by the incredible generosity of our grantmakers, donors, and volunteers. We are thrilled to report on a number of key achievements that have significantly enhanced the safety, comfort, and functionality of our shelter.

It is the intention of the board to split Grants into a separate committee, however while the search for a Chair is underway, this committee has retained ownership of this area. We have continued to be successful in a number of community grants, but hope to increase this with a greater level of focus.

Highlights for the year include the renovation of our previously unusable ensuite bathroom, the repair of hazardous moisture-damaged flooring, and the installation of a much-valued storage shed.

We are particularly grateful to Lateral Projects for their donation of time and materials to complete the floor repairs, to B-MAC Constructions for their invaluable contribution to the storage shed, and our handyman Jeremy Nambiar (Red Bird Property Maintenance) for his ongoing support with a variety of jobs around the house.

Other significant achievements for the year included the generous, free removal of a problematic camphor laurel tree by Whitson Tree Works. We also successfully used proceeds from the Ku-ring-gai Rotary Fun Run to fund the installation of a bi-directional electric vehicle charger for the Shelter's Nissan Leaf, a project executed by JET Charge. Additionally, the committee was able to complete work on splitting a twin bedroom into two separate rooms, providing greater privacy and capacity for our residents.

Working in collaboration with the HR and Sustainability Committee, we have been involved in the development of HKWS Sustainability Strategy, including Carbon Emissions Profiling by 2XE. The committee is working through its recommendations.

While we acknowledge the ongoing need for accommodation, especially for women with children, and private meeting space, the committee has been diligently working towards solutions. A major step forward was the approval of a CDC for a long-awaited granny flat project, for which we are working to commence construction before the end of this year. We also continue to work closely with WCS to manage the budgetary constraints affecting the NSW Government funded Core & Cluster Shelter project, which is currently forecast to exceed its budget.

In the meantime, the committee has spent countless hours inspecting additional properties, focusing the search on the Hornsby to Berowra area, with a view to purchasing a second shelter suitable for mothers and their children. We are also anticipating the HKWS Hub which will open later in 2025. The Committee is proudly supporting this space/innovative project to support more local women.

I really appreciate the enthusiastic efforts of the whole team. The contributions that they have made - whether it's the donation of their time, experience, or taking on new projects and helping to support our fantastic Shelter team - they have all made such a positive difference to the lives of many.

Still with much to be done to support our kind and caring Shelter team, it is with a sense of hope that we approach the next year.



Property and Assets Committee



Nick Blackwell

Chair, Property and Assets Committee



HR and Sustainability

In FY25, the HR & Sustainability Committee took a strategic approach to workforce development and operational excellence, laying important foundations for the future growth of the Shelter's operations. Our work has involved proactive workforce planning, the development of business cases to support new initiatives and the finalisation of key policies.

Shelter Leadership and Workforce

This year, we continued to benefit from a strong, dedicated team led with compassion, professionalism and a deep commitment to the women we support.

Emily Tweddell returned from parental leave in November 2023 and resumed her role as General Manager. Since her return, Emily has provided strategic direction and stability to the Shelter. Emily's leadership has ensured the Shelter is well-positioned for future growth and continued service excellence. We also extend our warmest congratulations to Emily, who is expecting her second child and will commence a new period of parental leave in September 2025.

Angelica Molina continues to lead the Shelter with empathy and clarity, having brought a renewed focus on team cohesion, safety and collaboration. Her supportive leadership style has been instrumental in fostering a positive, inclusive environment for both staff and clients.



During the financial year, we welcomed the following new team members:

- **Samala Mascord** in the new role of part-time Volunteer & Donations Coordinator (Supported by a Bendigo Community Enterprise Foundation grant).
- **Joy England** in the new role of casual Fundraising Manager.
- **Albertine Ayius, Leah Buczynski** and **Sally Llewelyn** in Caseworker roles.
- **Sophie Krygier** in a part-time Administration Officer role.

We also said goodbye to several valued staff members over the course of the year:

- Caseworkers, **Aminata (Mimi) Mansaray, Ana Nuku** and **Albertine Ayius**
- Administration Officer, **Nikita Jain**

As of the end of the financial year, the Shelter's workforce includes:

General Manager (P/T) - **Emily Tweddell**
Shelter Manager (F/T) - **Angelica Molina**
Caseworkers (F/T & P/T) - **Munira Kachwalla, Leah Buczynski** and **Sally Llewelyn**
Fundraising Manager (Casual) - **Joy England**
Administration Officer (P/T) - **Sophie Krygier**
Volunteer & Donations Coordinator (P/T) - **Samala Mascord**.

The Committee extends its deepest gratitude to our Shelter employees for their unwavering commitment and exceptional service over the past year.

Given the continued growth of the Shelter and the increasing demand for services, we have undertaken a comprehensive skills and workforce planning exercise. This assessment focused on both our existing Shelter operations, new Hub operations and the anticipated needs of the proposed second shelter for mothers and their children.

The goal of this planning process was to ensure we are strategically positioned with the right mix of skills, roles and staffing levels to support sustainable service delivery. It involved reviewing current workforce capabilities, identifying gaps, forecasting future staffing requirements and aligning our workforce structure with our operational and strategic objectives.

This planning will inform recruitment, training, and development strategies, and ensure that both the Hub and the new shelter are adequately resourced to provide high-quality, client-centered care.



HR and Sustainability Committee

Investing in Professional Growth

We remain committed to the ongoing development of our team, with staff members completing training in domestic violence and related areas, further enhancing their ability to support our clients effectively. This has included:

- Specialist Homelessness Services (DCJ) - a wide variety of training courses related to service delivery and leadership
- Black Dog Institute - Mental Health
- Women's Community Shelters - Outcomes Star, CIMS and New Child Safeguarding Framework
- Lifeline - DV Alert
- Women's Health NSW - It Left No Marks
- DVNWS, CCCWT, DCJ - A variety of new training courses on Coercive Control
- Welfare Rights Centre - Centrelink
- Refugee Advice & Casework Service - Temporary Visa Community of Practice
- Living Works - Suicide Prevention
- SBS - Diversity & Inclusion
- Institute of Community Directors Australia - Cyber Crime
- Social Impact Measurement Network Australia - Lessons from a Trauma-Informed Therapeutic Program
- Attendance at the DVNSW Conference and the NBWS Compact Conference for DFV Practitioners and Students

We are proud of the diversity of our workforce, with staff speaking a number of languages other than English including Gujarati, Hindi, Urdu, Spanish and French.

Compliance, Safety and Workplace Wellbeing

In FY25, the Committee undertook a broad and impactful program of work to strengthen the Shelter's operations, governance, and culture. Against a backdrop of growing organisational complexity and evolving legislative requirements, the Committee focused on ensuring our systems, policies and practices are future-ready, people-centred and aligned with our HKWS core values of compassion, integrity, respect, advocacy and commitment.

A key priority this year was the development and finalisation of several foundational HR policies, designed to uphold best practice, strengthen protections for staff and volunteers, and support a positive, inclusive workplace. These included:

- A revised Code of Conduct;
- A new Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy;
- A new Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment Prevention Policy;
- A Wellbeing and Birthday Leave Policy, offering staff three days of wellbeing leave plus one day of birthday leave each year to permanent staff;
- A new Parental Leave Policy, which provides eligible employees with 12 weeks of paid parental leave at a top-up rate - covering the gap between the employee's normal wage and the Government-funded Paid Parental Leave scheme. This ensures staff do not experience a loss of income during this important time.

We have also undertaken significant work on our volunteer onboarding procedures which will be rolled out imminently, to clearly set out roles and responsibilities, ensure volunteers are well-informed and appropriately inducted, and help them feel confident and equipped in their work, enhancing both their experience and their contribution to the Shelter.

We also took important steps to strengthen our financial and compliance processes. A payroll audit was initiated with the pro bono support of McGrathNicol, helping to ensure that our systems meet wage compliance obligations and reflect modern award requirements. As part of our continued commitment to accuracy and efficiency, we continue to outsource payroll processing.

Our retention and recognition program has been further developed this year with quarterly team building days and team birthday gifts.

Staff wellbeing remains a priority by reinforcing access to the Employee Assistance Program, conducting WHS safety checks, annual fire and electrical inspections, mapping out and addressing a range of psychosocial work hazards, promoting diversity and inclusion with the celebration of significant days and the adherence to the new Right to Disconnect Legislation.

Our upcoming on-site granny flat and new Hub space will provide additional confidential meeting spaces to ensure staff and client safety and privacy.

Sustainability

This year, the Committee formally expanded its mandate to incorporate environmental stewardship into the Shelter's strategic vision. In collaboration with our pro-bono sustainability consultant 2XE, we conducted our first comprehensive GHG emissions profiling (carbon footprint) for FY24. Building on these insights, we successfully finalised our inaugural Sustainability Strategy, structured around five key sustainability pillars - clients, environment, people, community and partnerships.

Our goal is to create lasting, positive impact for the Shelter and the broader community. Together, we're making changes that will empower those we serve and protect the world we live in.

As part of this journey, we have launched a number of impactful sustainability initiatives including:

- Vehicle-to-Grid (V2G) Charging: In 2025, we installed a V2G-capable charger—allowing us to use a donated electric vehicle's battery as an energy resource when needed, in line with emerging bi-directional charging technology [Solar Choiceessentialenergy.com.au](https://www.choiceessentialenergy.com.au).
- Solar and Storage: We installed a solar battery system in 2024 to improve energy resilience and reduce demand on the grid.
- These initiatives align with our broader Sustainability Strategy, reinforcing our long-term commitment to combining environmental care, community wellbeing and operational resilience.

Committee Operations and Recent Developments

The Committee continues to play a vital role in guiding strategic and operational decisions across the organisation. Besides myself, it currently comprises longstanding members Emily Tweddell (General Manager), Catherine Knox (Board Chair) and Octavia Bellekens. This year we were pleased to welcome two new members: Rebecca Loch, who brings valuable experience in sustainability, procurement and human rights; and Grace Eu, who brings a wealth of business operations experience through her work with her consultancy, Graceful Advisory.

In addition, we have recruited a group of skilled volunteers to support two key initiatives: an impending roster review, aimed at assessing current rostering practices and ensuring alignment with the applicable modern award; and a branding review to support the refresh and consistency of our branding and digital assets.

“Together, we're making changes that empower those we serve and protect the world we live in.”

Jennifer Teh

Chair, HR and Sustainability Committee

Fundraising

This year, HKWS formed our first Fundraising Committee, creating a dedicated team to strengthen our income generation and increase our impact for women in crisis. While HKWS has always been supported by incredible generosity, having a dedicated fundraising focus has allowed us to set more ambitious goals, diversify our income streams and build the strong foundations needed to ensure no woman is left without safety and support.

Surpassing our EOFY goal

Our End of Financial Year Appeal was the most ambitious campaign in our history, and our community rose to the challenge. Thanks to the combined efforts of our supporters, we surpassed our \$250,000 target.

Every contribution, from small monthly gifts to large one-off donations, helped provide thousands of safe nights, warm meals and life-changing support for women and children escaping homelessness and violence. The campaign showed what is possible when people unite behind a cause they believe in.

A Community Effort

HKWS is deeply grateful to the individuals, families, schools, community groups, businesses and corporate partners who stood with us this year. Your support has taken many forms:

- Financial donations
- GEM contributions
- Fundraising events hosted by supporters
- Donations of goods, services and raffle prizes
- Sharing our campaigns with your network

We especially acknowledge our dedicated volunteers, whose time and energy underpin the success of our campaigns. Their behind-the-scenes work ensures our fundraising runs smoothly.

"It is a real privilege to contribute to HKWS, an incredible community-led organisation supporting women experiencing domestic violence and homelessness."

Growing Engagement

Our social media and digital presence are powerful tools for connecting with supporters, raising awareness and inspiring action. In the year ahead, we will focus on creating more meaningful, story-driven content, increasing opportunities for interaction, and ensuring our digital channels make it easy for people to support HKWS in whatever way they can. We will also strengthen relationships with community groups, businesses and media to amplify our message beyond our own channels.

By building an engaged and informed community, we can inspire more people to become regular donors, attend events and advocate for women's safety, ensuring our fundraising continues to grow and sustain our vital work.

Celebrating our 10 year anniversary

The HKWS 10 year anniversary is a milestone that will be at the heart of our fundraising and community engagement this year. We are both celebrating our history and acknowledging the people and community who have made this impact possible. This anniversary is a rare opportunity to bring our community together, strengthen our financial sustainability and inspire the next generation of supporters.

Expanding our approach

As our services continue to grow to meet increasing demand, we are committed to broadening the ways people can contribute to HKWS. Next year, we will place a strong focus on peer-to-peer giving, empowering our supporters to champion our cause within their own networks. By equipping individuals, families, and community groups with the tools to fundraise on our behalf, we can expand our reach well beyond our immediate supporter base.



*Emilie Priday with
Fundraising Manager Joy England*

We will also continue to diversify our income streams to ensure our financial sustainability. This includes exploring new corporate partnerships and strengthening workplace giving. By building multiple avenues of support, we can create a more resilient funding base that grows alongside our services.

Thank you

Our fundraising success this year is a testament to the compassion and commitment of our community. On behalf of the Board, thank you to our generous donors and supporters.

Emilie Priday

Chair, Fundraising Committee

Community Engagement

Our brilliant community again came out to support us in many different ways this year to support women and children escaping from domestic violence and homelessness.

We are incredibly grateful for the massive fundraising initiatives held by individuals, corporates, Rotary clubs, schools and churches as the shelter would not be able to continue its services without this outstanding generosity.

“Being part of an organisation whose work creates real, lasting change for women and the community is deeply rewarding. And to see how many people volunteer their personal time, energy and heart to keep the Shelter moving forward is something truly special”

Volunteers

The work of the shelter would not be possible without our volunteers who have helped in the shelter, at community events and on our committees. Particular thanks go to our long term volunteers, including Jo-Ann Moffatt and Dick and Dot Babb, as well as the ongoing contributions from many local businesses, including Bendigo Community Bank - Lindfield and Districts, Graceful Advisory, Berowra Quilters, Brady Marcs Advisory, Magpies Waitara, Hornsby RSL Club, and SOS Removals. Without the work of our volunteers, many of whom have busy day jobs and still find time to support us, we would not be able to do the work we do.



Jennifer Teh, Volunteer Board Member and Chair HR & Sustainability Committee

Berowra Mini Fete

Saturday 10 Aug 2024

Again we are so very grateful for the support from Berowra Christian School, APEX Berowra, Berowra Baptist Church, Bugs About, The Rural Fire Service and importantly, Ann Leslie who again organised the Berowra Community Mini Fete in support of the shelter. The event was a wonderful annual community event that raised much-needed funds to support the work of the shelter.



City2Surf

Sunday 11 Aug 2024

Team HKWS was bigger than ever for this year's City2Surf event, raising a massive \$7,950. Thanks to Nick McCardle for his encouragement and support and for the people who ran and walked for #teamHKWS.



Particular thanks to Graceful Advisory, whose dedication to raising funds while running the race was amazing.

Walk the Talk

Wednesday 28 Nov 2024

A part of 16 Days of Activism, this event saw members of the local community come together in solidarity and participate in important discussions, joining in taking the pledge and a minute's silence for those who have lost their lives to domestic violence this year — "We do not tolerate inequality and domestic and family violence." Special thanks to Hornsby PCYC, local schools and Hornsby Police.



Rotary Giving Tree

Saturday 30 Nov – 23 Dec 2024

The Ku-ring-gai Rotary Christmas Giving Tree at the Gordon Centre once again showcased the incredible generosity of our community, ensuring every woman and child connected to HKWS felt remembered and cared for at this festive time of year. Led by our Patron and Ku-ring-gai Councillor Cr Barbara Ward, and officially launched by Paul Fletcher MP, the event brought together local MPs, councillors, Rotary members and HKWS volunteers in a heartwarming show of support.



Wahroonga Village Fair

Sunday 1 Dec 2024

Massive appreciation to SOS Removals for sponsoring the stall for the shelter and for the organisation and passion of Jo Ann Moffatt in the lead-up to the event.



Volunteers from Pymble Ladies' College manned the stall, selling very popular Christmas cards, t-shirts, felt love hearts, books and other items, as well as wrapping presents.

Asquith Carols

Sunday 8 Dec 2024

Thanks to Asquith Church of Christ, Crosslife Church, Mt Colah Uniting Church and Sydney Manna Church who raised almost \$2,500 from their annual Christmas carols event for the shelter.



Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Ecumenical Choir

Wednesday 12 Dec 2024

With over 90 voices, this performance of Handel's Messiah at Our Lady of the Rosary Cathedral Church was incredible! Thank you to the musical director, Phillip Linquist, organist Heather Boyd and the amazingly talented singers for this incredible event and your ongoing support.



International Women's Day Lunch

Saturday 8 Mar 2025

A very special 10th Anniversary lunch of celebration and gratitude was held on International Women's Day at Pymble Golf Club, hosted by MC Nick McArdle.

We were inspired by Jess Hill, domestic violence writer and speaker, and Annabelle Daniel, CEO of Women's Community Shelters and Chair of DV NSW. We were also privileged to hear the personal stories of founding member Julie Griffin and former Chair and Hornsby Councillor Sallianne McClelland.



Pymble Ladies' College "Pedal Your Own Smoothie" Event

Thursday 27 Mar 2025

Junior School students pedalled their own stationary bikes to create smoothies while raising funds for HKWS.



Willoughby Symphony Choir "Voices of Women" Event

Saturday 29 Mar 2025

Thank you to the amazing musical talent of the choir who donated all proceeds from this special event to support the shelter.



*"What a wonderful
community event!
Huge thanks to
Willoughby Symphony
Choir for their
generous support"*



Morning Tea for Founders

Thursday 15 May 2025

The HKWS 10th Anniversary Morning Tea brought together the remarkable men and women whose vision and dedication built the foundation of our Shelter.

Hosted by long-time volunteer and supporter Jo Moffat, we honoured those who advocated, planned, and worked tirelessly to ensure women facing domestic violence and homelessness had somewhere safe to turn. And we celebrated how their legacy continues to grow with HKWS now reaching more women and children in crisis than ever before. Heartfelt thanks to Jo Moffat, our inspiring founders, and the Barker College student volunteers who helped make the day so special.

Turramurra Community Flea Market

Saturday 31 May 2025

Thank you to the Turramurra Uniting Church and St Andrews Uniting Church for their support by hosting the Community Flea Market which directly supported the shelter.



Heritage House Mother's Day Fundraiser and Art Auction

Friday 6 Jun 2025

Thank you to the wonderful team at Heritage House Wahroonga for their support through donations and creativity with their Mother's Day event.



Uncovering Confident, Connected, You Workshop

Sunday 29 Jun 2025

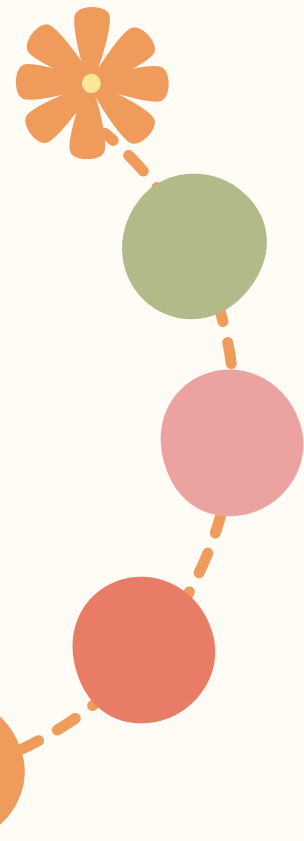
Special thanks to HealthKind who joined forces with HKWS to create a confidence-building workshop for women in our community that was held at East Lindfield Community Hall. Thanks to the Soroptomist International Hornsby for generously sponsoring the event and for their ongoing support of HKWS.



Local Schools standing with women in our community

Many local schools continue to support the work of HKWS, including Barker College, Pymble Ladies' College, Abbotsleigh, Knox Grammar School, Loreto Normanhurst, Trinity College. We are particularly grateful for the fundraising and awareness activities that are driving by the students and supported by teachers.

Special thanks to teachers and students for their volunteer efforts at the 16 Days of Activism event, the International Women's Day Lunch and the 10th Anniversary HKWS Founders Morning Tea. We commend them for their commitment for standing with women and children in crisis.



Finance, Audit, Risk, Compliance and Governance

The Finance, Audit, Risk, Compliance and Governance ("FAR") Committee is made up of the Shelter Secretary, Treasurer, volunteers, General Manager, and with a standing invitation to the Chair to be involved. The committee meets monthly and present back to the Board on progress against deliverables.

The FAR committee and finance function continues to be supported by management (General Manager and Administration officer) and KPMG. Management continue to oversee:

- Day to day bookkeeping and maintenance of the books and records
- Bank reconciliations
- Banking approvals
- Monitoring and recording of Management Committee, subcommittee and volunteer police and working with children checks, terms of reference, confidentiality agreements and code of ethics
- Insurance renewals

KPMG's Newcastle Enterprise unit, under the leadership of Stephanie Loadsman, continue to provide generous pro-bono assistance with:

- Tax accounting and lodgements;
- Monthly reconciliations;
- Employee super guarantee lodgements, wages declarations for work cover insurance and STP finalisations for FBT;
- Preparation of the annual financial statements in preparation for the year-end audit;



FAR Committee

- Preparation of annual info statement for ACNC; and
- Uploading of budgets into the accounting system

We have signed a new engagement letter with KPMG during the period to secure these ongoing services, and remain extremely grateful for KPMG's generosity and their time commitment.

We also continue to outsource our payroll function to an external payroll provider to provide additional segregation of duties, bolster controls and enhance this function.

Will Bland, one of our FAR committee members, has made some great improvements to the accounting system in the year including:

- Incorporating the fixed asset register (historically maintained by KPMG outside the system)
- New management reporting templates
- Adding identifier to cost accounts for grant acquittal purposes
- During the period the FAR committee completed the following activities

- Maintenance of the risk register and periodic, scheduled reviews of the register with both the FAR committee and the Board,
- Ongoing monitoring and update of the compliance register,
- Committee goal setting and monitoring,
- Budget setting,
- Review and preparation of management accounts,
- Review of the annual financial statements, liaison with KPMG and auditors,
- Involvement in the WCS treasurer's forums,
- Oversight of Shelter delegation policy and signatories register,
- Managing banking arrangements, access and payment approvals,

- Arranging for term deposits to earn interest on surplus funds,
- Review of insurance submissions,
- Review and update of committee charter,
- Involvement in risk management discussions regarding operational matters arising, and
- Periodic lodgements and returns to statutory bodies including the NSW Department of Trade and ACNC.
- Arranging bank guarantee for the Hub
- Arranging a pay audit.
- Determining revenue recognition approach for material donations.

I thank all the members of the FAR committee, our Shelter team and KPMG for their contributions this year.

Chania Rodruell

Treasurer and Chair, FAR Committee



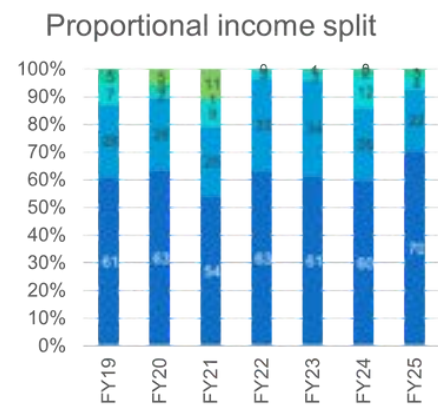
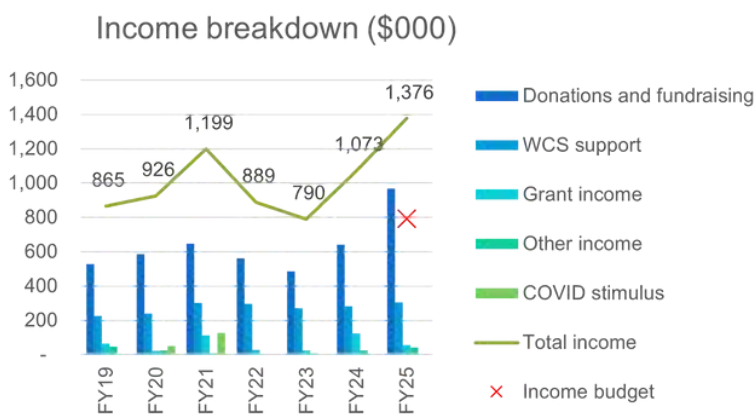
Treasurer's Report

Financial Summary

FY25 was an exceptional year for fundraising, both from the community and from a substantial donors. This places the shelter in a secure position to pursue the expanded services under progress, namely the wellbeing hub, and second shelter.

Income

Total income of \$1,376k in FY25 represented the shelter's highest income year on record. This was \$584k (74%) higher than our budgeted income for FY25.



This performance was largely driven by donations from two substantial and confidential donors, with \$444k of income recognised from these sources during the year.

Further income from these donors has been capitalised on the balance sheet, to be recognised over the coming financial year in line with the provision of the services this income will be funding.

Excluding such substantial donations and bequests, the shelter also had an extremely strong fundraising year, raising \$525k from the broader community. This compares with an average of \$470k over the past 7 years, and is \$127k (32%) higher than last year and budget expectations.

We remain extremely grateful for the ongoing support of the community and to the extraordinary generosity of various individuals, both in terms of financial and other forms of support.

I make note of the following extremely generous donations of \$10,000 or more:

- JLDJS Foundation
- Rotary Club of Ku-ring-gai
- Brady Marcs Buyers Advisory
- Dick and Pip Smith Foundation

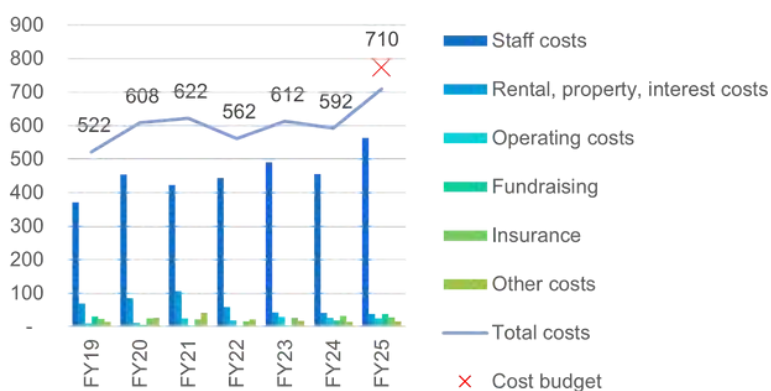
WCS funding of \$306k was \$31k more than budgeted, and represents the highest amount they have funded us over the past eight years. This is in part due to an increase in our outreach activities in the year that were able to attract WCS funding, but also due to \$19k of new WCS relocation brokerage payments. WCS income represented 22% of our total FY25 income, a lower percentage than previous years due to the higher proportion of income that donations and fundraising contributed in FY25.

Grant income of \$57k in FY25 was down on a record year in FY24, but more typical of grant income levels historically. Grants were received for the Department of Communities and Justice, and the Australian Chinese Charity Foundation.

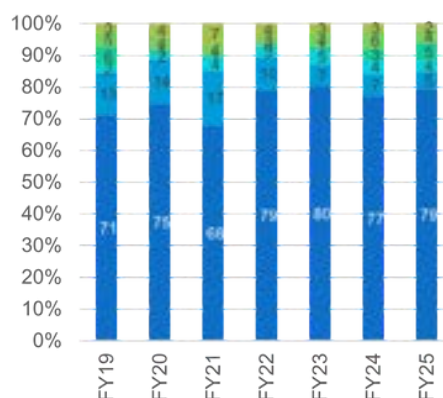
Costs

The shelter incurred \$710k of costs in FY25. While this was higher than historical levels, total costs were still 9% below the costs budgeted for the year. The increase on FY24 reflects that there were a number of staff vacancies in the prior year as compared to a fully staffed and operational shelter in FY25. At 79% of our total costs, staff costs remain our most significant expense but also the shelter's greatest asset. FY25 staff costs remained \$25k under budget.

Cost breakdown (\$000)



Proportional costs split



Other expenses are relatively immaterial in comparison. Property costs continue to be lower than the period to FY21 when we rented, prior to purchasing our own shelter.

A further \$105k was invested in property improvements and assets, and recognised on the balance sheet as higher asset values, rather than expenses in the profit and loss. This included \$32k for a replacement vehicle.

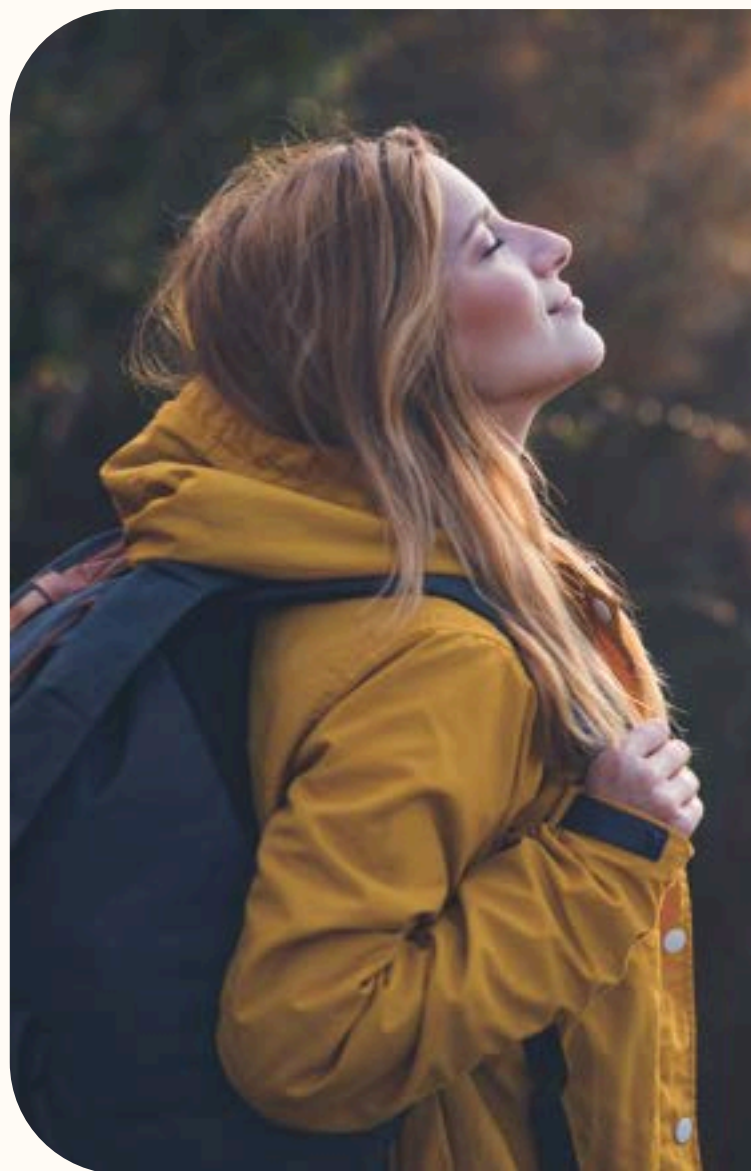
Other costs have remained fairly consistent with historical trends with the exception of fundraising expenses (increasing to \$20k in FY24 and \$37k in FY25), however the strength of our fundraising results over the past couple of years have illustrated the return on this investment.

Financial Position

The strong fundraising efforts over the past few years, generous material donations, and fiscal discipline around our cost base has seen the shelter's cash reserves bolstered, to position the shelter securely for the strategic expansions underway, namely the opening of the wellbeing hub, and setting up a second shelter.

We are mindful that operational costs will increase substantially to staff these two incremental services (which will not attract the WCS funding that subsidises the current shelter), in addition to the costs of the property acquisition.

Accordingly ongoing fundraising success will remain critical to safeguard the long term provision of these expanded services alongside our existing shelter.



A message from Women's Community Shelters CEO, *Annabelle Daniel OAM*



To the Hornsby Kur-ring-gai Women's Shelter community,

A heartfelt congratulations on your 10-year anniversary, and for a decade of extraordinary service to your community.

To every Director, frontline staff member, volunteer, donor, and supporter who has walked alongside HKWS clients on their journey to safety and independence—thank you. HKWS stands as a shining example of what's possible when a community unites to confront one of Australia's most urgent and complex issues: domestic and family violence (DFV).

And yet, despite this milestone, DFV remains a national crisis. Each night, more than 60,000 women are homeless, with DFV being the single leading cause. Cost-of-living pressures, along with housing affordability and supply crises, are only deepening this challenge. Every day, one in two women seeking crisis accommodation is turned away - most often because there simply aren't enough beds available.

This is the challenge that Women's Community Shelters (WCS) was created to address. Our mission is to empower local communities across Australia to prevent and respond to DFV and women's homelessness.

In the past year alone, our network of 11 crisis shelters and four large-scale safe havens for older women - across Greater Sydney and the North Coast - have supported 1,524 women and children on their path to safety and independence.

As the first crisis shelter in the WCS network, HKWS has been a trailblazer from the beginning. A decade ago, I could only imagine what a truly community-led solution might look like. HKWS has brought that vision to life.

10 years ago, Rosie Batty wasn't yet on the National radar. We were seeing newspapers reporting domestic violence as an 'inexplicable tragedy'. No-one really knew much about women's shelters and refuges, or what they did, let alone whether there might be one in their suburb.

Yet over the past 12 months alone, HKWS has supported 124 clients and provided 1,584 bed nights of safety. Under the strong leadership of Chair Catherine Knox and Shelter Lead Angelica Molina, the team delivers best-practice, holistic, case management support that addresses housing, mental and physical health, wellbeing, and education and employment - critical foundations for long-term independence. The team continuously seeks ways to expand its impact, thinking big and working collaboratively with local services and partners to reach more women in need. And as a result, HKWS has become a trusted, beloved and impactful pillar of the community.

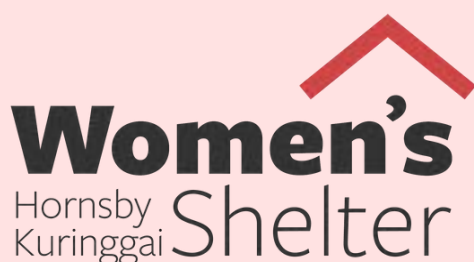
At WCS, we firmly believe that DFV and women's homelessness are solvable problems. Complex, yes, but not insurmountable. We need to keep showing up, where we are, with what we have, and doing what we can – as everyone involved with HKWS has demonstrated so powerfully over the last decade.

Thanks to the passion and impact of communities like Hornsby Ku ring-gai, we move closer every day to a future where all women have the safety, dignity, and support they deserve.

"HKWS is so much more than a shelter. It's a symbol of the hope, the resilience and the optimism of what can be achieved when a community says 'YES'."

Annabelle Daniel

Chief Executive Officer, Women's Community Shelters



Board Directors

Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Women's Shelter is proud to be a registered charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) (ABN: 49735037904). HKWS is governed by its Constitution, with the utmost commitment to transparency, accountability and governance.

Board Members and Chairs



Catherine Knox, Chair



Jacquie Murray - Deputy Chair, Company Secretary



Chania Rodwell - Treasurer, Chair Finance, Audit and Risk Committee



Jennifer Teh - Board Director, Chair HR and Operations Committee



Emilie Friday - Board Director, Chair Fundraising Committee



Nick Blackwell - Board Member, Chair Property and Grants Committee



Kate Giles - Board Director, Chair Community Engagement Committee



Clare O'Neil - Board Director, Governance and Strategy



Michaela Turnacova - Board Director, WCS Representative

Patrons



Barbara Ward - Patron



Jennifer Anderson - Patron



Carmel Aitken - Patron



Alison Stewart - Patron



Judith Hopwood - Patron



Ambassador

"Ten years of providing help for women in crisis, a task that gets more difficult and demanding as every week goes by"



Nick McArdle - Ambassador

We'd like to thank all of our supporters for their *unwavering support*



Thank you to our
supporters and
volunteers for making
our work possible.

Many people in our local community,
together with businesses, local
government and partners, contribute to
HKWS.

We can't do this work without your
support.

Women and children fleeing domestic
violence and facing homelessness
depend on our community to provide
safety, security and hope.



Acknowledgements

Sincere thanks to the following businesses, community organisations and schools who provided significant support this year:

Barker College
Bendigo Bank - Community Bank
Lindfield & Districts
Brady Marcs Buyers Advisory
Bunnings Thornleigh
Cheeky Foods
Clayton Utz
Graceful Advisory
Granny Flat Solutions
Hunter's Hill Quilters
Kiplings Garage Bar
Knox Grammar School
KPMG
Ku-ring-gai Rotary
Ku-ring-gai Plant Rescue
Law Ensure
Lifeline Harbour to Hawkesbury
Lions Club Hornsby
OzHarvest
Pymble Ladies' College
Robertson & Greenwood Chartered Accountants
Scentre Group
Soroptimist International Hornsby
SOS Removals
St Ives Rotary
Wahroonga Rotary
Westfield Hornsby
Women's Community Shelters
Zantzoo

We also thank the following individuals for their amazing support:

Ann Leslie
Anne Sheehan
Brady Yoshia
Des Sheehan
Dick Babb
Dot Babb
Grace Eu
Hannah Daghighi
Helen Clarke
Helen Jarvis
Jeremy Nambiar
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Julie Griffin
Julie Shaw
Mastaneh Daghighi
Mathew George
Sallianne McClelland
Sarah Rouhan
Sharon Franke
Shauna Britton
Vijay Roach

Our anonymous donors, whose quiet generosity leads to positive outcomes creating a lasting impact.





Learn more about
**Hornsby Ku-ring-gai
Women's Shelter**

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