Shining the Light



Inner West
Neighbour Aid
Annual Report **2025 / 2026**

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Frances, Patsy, Johann, Pat, Sharon
Strong Together at the Drummoyne Sailing Club

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia, in particular the Wangal people of the Eora nation, whose land we walk on with respect as we live, learn and work, while recognising their continued connection to land, waters and culture.

We pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

Always was, always will be Aboriginal Land.

We embrace and value diversity and inclusion by recognising the unique choices of all individuals.



Shining the Light

Inner West Neighbour Aid supports seniors stay mentally and physically active and thrive socially through exercise programs, therapeutic workshops, outings and new experiences, online grocery shopping and intergenerational connections. We also support seniors who want to stay living in their homes safely and independently through assistance with pets, garden and lawn maintenance.



Lisa, Shining the Light Exhibition at the McGlade Gallery

At Inner West Neighbour Aid, we believe every person has a story worth hearing. Shining the Light is about creating the space for seniors to share their stories, experiences, knowledge and wisdom ~ to be seen, to be heard and to have their voices respected and valued. It is about recognising lives well lived, celebrating the contribution of older people and creating opportunities for their stories to take centre stage.

We see ageing not as a time of stepping back, but as a time of continued connection, contribution, discovery and possibility. Through our programs, volunteers and partnerships, we support seniors to live independently, build friendships and thrive.

This year, we have seen the many ways our people shine. It is in the confidence of someone trying something new, the friendship that grows over a shared activity, the wisdom passed between generations, the volunteer who takes the time to listen, and the special moments when someone feels they truly belong.

Shining the Light is a reminder that everyone deserves a stage on which they can shine. At Inner West Neighbour Aid, we are privileged to walk alongside our community, creating safe and welcoming spaces where people can share who they are, what they know and what matters to them. This Annual Report celebrates those stories and the people who make our community vibrant, connected and special.

Allison Yee-Brogan,
General Manager

Vision

A community where seniors connect and share their knowledge to lead active, social and independent lives.

Purpose

Supporting seniors to live independently, build friendships and thrive in their local community.



Elsie, Anne, Robyn, Evette and Jo at the 5 Senses Garden

Values

Choice: Everyone has a voice, so we listen, we include and we see you.

Kindness: We are present and connect with empathy, compassion, dignity and respect.

Integrity: We are honest, reliable, trustworthy and fair.

Diversity: People with different ideas, strengths, interests and backgrounds make our community vibrant and special. We encourage learning and open mindedness.

Community: Is that feeling of belonging, everyone is welcome.

Innovation: We are continuously moving forward, innovating and improving.

2025 / 2026 Highlights

341	Clients assisted
51	New clients welcomed
26,113	Program hours
199	Gardens transformed
11	Lawns mowed, 36 services
137	Outings and centre-based sessions
138	Health and wellbeing sessions: Alive & Kicking, DanceMoves, Stand Tall
39	Workshops at the 5 Senses Garden
10	Living Well with Dementia Workshops
21	Community working bees at the 5 Senses Garden
38	Assisted shopping sessions: Online and Trolley Talk
6	Intergenerational partnerships
191	Total volunteers throughout the year, including student and corporate volunteers
58	New volunteers
41	Volunteers up to 5 years of service
12	Volunteers over 5 years
6	Volunteers over 10 years
73	Help at Home clients serviced



Long and Betty
Trolley Talk at Ashfield Mall

Our Organisation

Since 1992, our programs have supported seniors to stay active, healthy and connected to the community.



Our Board of Directors

The strength of the Board lies in the diversity of skills, experience and perspectives each Director brings, with expertise spanning government administration, information technology, finance, law, accounting, executive management, small business and community service. This breadth has provided Neighbour Aid with strong governance, thoughtful oversight and strategic direction throughout the year, while ensuring decisions are considered from a range of viewpoints. Sincere thanks to all volunteer Board Directors for their commitment, leadership, valuable insight, fresh ideas and knowledge.

The 2026 financial year has been a year of purpose, progress and important foundations for the future. Much of this has been made possible through the work of the current Board, longstanding Board Members and their predecessors, whose collective contribution continues to shape the organisation.

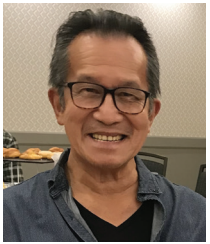
The names of board members in office at any time during or since the end of the financial year are:



Jeanette Gilbert
Volunteer Representative



Samantha Guthleben
Secretary,
Resigned July 2026



Simon Leong
Client Representative



Margaret Lergessner
Client Representative



Benjamin Lever



Peter Malhotra
Treasurer



Alison Muir
Chairperson



Suzanna Pawley



Tara Sarathy
Commenced Sept 2025



Steven Takacs-Gal

Rotary Inspirational Women's Award, Nomination



Margaret
DanceMoves at Woodstock Community Centre

Margaret Lergessner, Client Representative on the Board of Inner West Neighbour Aid, was nominated for the "Service Above Self" award for the second consecutive year. At 94, Margaret is an outstanding example of lifelong service and community commitment. She has served on the Neighbour Aid Board since 2023, bringing the important perspective of lived experience to monthly Board meetings and strategic planning. She is also valued for regularly speaking at Neighbour Aid events and helping strengthen connections with seniors and the wider community. As a member of a religious order, Margaret's commitment to supporting and caring for others extends well beyond her role with Neighbour Aid.

Margaret accepted the nomination reluctantly and humbly, on the condition that it be an opportunity to support Neighbour Aid rather than promote herself. We are very proud that her nomination progressed to the final selection stage in 2026. While she was not selected to proceed to the Awards Ceremony, reaching the final stage was a significant recognition of her contribution to community. Margaret continues to inspire those around her through her kindness, wisdom, active community involvement and compassion.

Our Team

Working alongside a team that is both open-hearted and open-minded is a true privilege. At Inner West Neighbour Aid, our people are the foundation of everything we do. Our team is respectful, knowledgeable, genuine, supportive and deeply caring.
Guided by a shared purpose, our team creates an environment where kindness flows naturally, collaboration thrives, and every contribution is valued. This strong sense of community opens the door to new possibilities, allowing us to grow, adapt and make a meaningful impact together.

The names of staff employed at any time during or since the end of the financial year are:


Mikali Anagnostis


Melanie Athan
Resigned August 2026


Stuart Blundell


Ruben Hadges
Resigned May 2026


Kevin Halbe


Chantel Jurcevic


Emel Jurd


Indah Kusumawati


Jake Lackner
Resigned Nov 2025


Ruth Njogah
Resigned July 2026


Megan O'Rourke
Commenced July 2026


Karen Paige


Joanne Santas


Maja Sorensen


Joshua Standen


Emma-Lee Torres


David Wilson


Allison Yee-Brogan

Shining the Light on Christine

Christine first connected with Inner West Neighbour Aid in 2012 as a client of our Subsidised Lawn Mowing program. After a few years away, she returned in 2019 through our Stand Tall exercise program and soon discovered a whole new side of Neighbour Aid through outings and the 5 Senses Garden Workshops. Her first outing was to the Margaret Olley exhibition, followed by lunch at the Canada Bay Club. Christine values the opportunity to chat and connect with others.

Christine is supported by her wonderful son Samuel who lives in Los Angeles. When it comes to local support, Christine says "Neighbour Aid is a fantastic organisation that brings out the best in me." Christine describes Neighbour Aid in three words: responsive, caring and supportive. For her, it is the genuine care of Neighbour Aid's team that makes the difference. She remembers a garden visit when Help at Home Coordinator Jo noticed that Christine was not quite herself and thoughtfully passed on her concerns to the Neighbour Aid team. A call to check on her wellbeing followed soon after. It was a gesture that demonstrated to Christine, how closely the team listens, notices and responds.



Christine at the 5 Senses Garden

Christine has much to share from a life rich in experiences, from her long nursing career and time living overseas in Canada and England, to working her passage home from London on the Sitmar Line.

In May 2024, Christine was invited to speak at Neighbour Aid's National Volunteer Week event. She spoke about ageing and shared her thoughtful reflections on planning for later life: staying active, creating a safe home, maintaining good health, nurturing friendships and accepting changing abilities with a positive attitude.

Christine's words reflect the spirit of Shining the Light. She speaks of *reminiscence*, remembering the past; and *reflection*, giving serious thought and consideration to life. Through her stories, her wisdom and her willingness to share with others, Christine reminds us that ageing is not simply about growing older, it is about continuing to connect and share the experiences that make a life well lived.

Our Programs

Health and Wellbeing

Alive & Kicking: Seniors form friendships, stay independent and mobile by exercising their mind and body at our weekly program including: gentle exercise with a qualified dance and movement instructor, art, trivia, brain training games and healthy ageing guest speakers.

DanceMoves: A weekly seated or standing dance class that focuses on self-expression and movement through dance. A qualified dance instructor demonstrates inclusive guided movements so seniors can explore their creativity, coordination, fitness and flexibility as well as sharpen their mind and memory.

Stand Tall: This strength program supports seniors to have a go, build their cardio, strength and confidence, reduce the likelihood of falls and meet new people. Delivered weekly by personal trainers at a local mainstream gym, sessions are safe and tailored to individual needs.



Helen and Vasugi
at the Kokoda Education Centre

5 Senses Garden Workshops: Inclusive weekly workshops focusing on health and wellbeing, creativity, cultural celebrations, food, nature and sustainability. These workshops are a great way to stay connected to the community and to continue to develop skills in a welcoming environment.



Janice and Betty
at Sydney Fish Market

Living Well with Dementia Workshops: These therapeutic workshops are tailored for people living with dementia and their carers. The workshops are held once a month and based around meditation, horticulture, music, art and dance in the beautiful surrounds of our 5 Senses Garden with qualitied facilitators.

Around the Home

Assisted Online Shopping: A temporary or ongoing fortnightly service for clients who find it difficult to get out to the supermarket. The order is discussed confidentially over the phone, placed online with the preferred supplier, so orders can be delivered directly to clients.

Dog Walking: We match clients with a volunteer dog walker who take them for an extra walk each week. Many clients and volunteer dog walkers bond over their mutual love of pets.

Pet Adoption: We partner with the RSPCA to help clients find the right dog or cat to match their needs. Pets bring unconditional love and in return receive a new home life.

Garden Aid: For clients who have gardens that need attention and receive limited support. Our staff members who are qualified horticulturalists, work with clients to plan a garden they will enjoy and lead a team of volunteers to help restore gardens so they are safe, easy to maintain and look great. This includes weeding, trimming, pruning, laying mulch and clean up.

Subsidised Lawn Mowing: Working with approved contractors, we help maintain the external beauty of client's homes with our subsidised lawn mowing program.

Help at Home: Help at Home is a private program of Inner West Neighbour Aid, it is not government funded and proceeds from Help at Home support other programs at Inner West Neighbour Aid. We provide services around the home including gardening, lawn mowing, landscaping, high pressure cleaning, window cleaning and cleaning light fittings, assembly of flat pack furniture and minor home maintenance.



Anne, Stand Tall at CSP Ashfield

Out and About

Outings: A great way to meet new friends and explore Sydney during the week. Outings include concerts, movies, cultural experiences, new cafes, garden spaces, galleries, fish and chips by the sea, longer drives outside of Sydney, exhibitions, tours, clubs and more.

Strong Together: Mainly a centre-based program that includes light exercise, lunch and afternoon activities, including bingo, puzzles and brain teasers, health and wellbeing guest speakers, art and craft and story-telling. This group also includes a monthly outing.

Visiting

Home Visiting: Clients are carefully matched with a volunteer according to interests, experiences and outlook on life. Fortnightly visits are relaxed and informal with strong, lasting friendships formed.

Intergenerational Programs

Alive & Kicking: Students from Rivendell School visit the Alive & Kicking program once a month. Student volunteers and seniors are encouraged to connect and engage over activities and interests.

Macquarie University, Professional and Community Engagement (PACE) Program: This program matches 3rd year Psychological Science students to a workplace that is aligned with their course. Students must complete 32 hours in one semester and Neighbour Aid has been involved with this program since 2012. This is regarded as an inter-generational connection for our clients as well as a great way to show case Neighbour Aid's programs, volunteer roles and organisational culture to people about to embark on fresh careers.

Seeds to Trees:
Pre-schoolers from Concord West Rhodes Preschool join seniors at the 5 Senses Garden Workshops and Living Well with Dementia Workshops for art and craft activities, story-telling and music time. An opportunity for children and seniors to connect, learn and work together in a shared space.



Garden Aid: Before and After

Strong Together: Students from MLC School visit the Strong Together program once a month. Student volunteers and seniors are encouraged to connect and engage over activities and interests.

Trolley Talk: Students from Ashfield Boys High School are paired with clients to assist with their grocery shopping. Students may help with reading labels or lifting heavy items or remembering the location of items within the supermarket. This program takes place twice a month during school terms at Ashfield Mall. Stories are shared and students and seniors make a difference in each other's lives.

CALL US ON (02) 9799 5099 TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT OUR PROGRAMS

Our Volunteers

Wanting to "make a real difference" is a common trait of our volunteers. Meaningful change is often created through simple, everyday moments – a helping hand, a friendly conversation, a shared activity or simply being there when someone needs support. Our volunteers make a positive difference in ways that are sometimes small, but always valued.

We are grateful for those people who choose to volunteer with us, each bringing their own interests, skills, energy and personality. Whether someone gives their time once, regularly, for a short period or over many years, every contribution matters. Our volunteers are part of the fabric of our community, helping create a place where people feel connected, valued and supported.

10+ years' service

Stella Angelo
Jeanette Gilbert
Julie-Anne Hall
Gary Kearns
Heidi Lau
Robert Matthews

5+ years' service

Sonia Bellon Rico
Kim Bold
Lynn Cohen
Richard Crass
Annette Ellison
Sharon Filippi
Columcille Garvey
Vallzy Kudrna
Benjamin Lever
Alison Muir
Salwa Semaan
Kate Vincent

1+ years' service

Cecelia Addabbo
Sarah Alden
Cecilia Bardach
Davorka Bilic
Melissa Carey
Lianne Carter
Vanessa Casarotto
Al-Adeed Chowdhury
Imelda Craglietto
Clarissa Dempsey
Riley Dennis
Emma Edgar
Ruby Elkan
Jo-ann Gates
Owen Hanson
Nilima Hor
Ting Huang
Sarah Jauncey
Nazar Kucheruk
Simon Leong
Margaret Lergessner
Enid Leung
Isabella Li
Christina Li
May Liu
Peter Malhotra
Pamela Moitie
Danielle Morris
Frances Notman
Suzanna Pawley
Heidi Penkala
Joana Resnitzky
David Rollinson
Abdula Bejan Safi
Radhika Shrinivas
Steven Takacs-Gal
Barbara Taylor
Myat Theingi
Robyn Thomas
Zubeen Zaman
Wolfgang Zavodnyik

We welcomed the following volunteers this financial year

Kate Allan-Georgas
Alice Baker
Amelia Becker
Mark Bennett
Cassy Berry
Eloise Brett
Cassandra Cadie
Daniel Chambers
Maxine Chopard
Fox Christie
Marcus Chu
Ashley Clapham
Rachel Davies
Isobel Dean
Tobin Duggin
Manjima Dutla-Gupta
Noah El-Hassan
Fiona Feeney
Angus Gandiaga
Sam Gielen
Shabnam Gill
Cynthia Guzman
Kevin Halbe
Howard Hidler
Chun Hong
Jane Humphreys
Erin Hyland-Ward
Meghan Jiang
Marlowe Johannessen
Abigail Kerr
Riley Dennis
Emma Edgar
Ruby Elkan
Jo-ann Gates
Owen Hanson
Nilima Hor
Ting Huang
Sarah Jauncey
Nazar Kucheruk
Simon Leong
Margaret Lergessner
Enid Leung
Isabella Li
Christina Li
May Liu
Peter Malhotra
Pamela Moitie
Danielle Morris
Frances Notman
Suzanna Pawley
Heidi Penkala
Joana Resnitzky
David Rollinson
Abdula Bejan Safi
Radhika Shrinivas
Steven Takacs-Gal
Barbara Taylor
Myat Theingi
Robyn Thomas
Zubeen Zaman
Wolfgang Zavodnyik
Scarlett MacDonald
Hisae Maehata
Alex Misfud
Julian Mobbs
Melisa Morsali
Antonio Mussone
Neri-Denina Nemcansky
Vivienne Nguyen
Selina O'Young
Philip Pratley
Georgia Rose
Tara Sarathy
Jennifer Sargeant
Garry Stevens
Fitzroy Tan
Thanh Long To Le
Hayley Trinh
Vy Truong
Ally Willoughby
Charlotte Wirnsberger
Aeris Wu
Ava Xu
Lavinia Xu
Isla Young
Bradley Yu

We also thank and farewell the following volunteers this financial year

Shahan Abyan
Haani Adnan
Poornima Ajetrao
Finlay Aldridge
Venkat Arjunan
Ariston Banaag
Lexie Bellew
Sophie Beraldo
Evangeline Black
Danielle Bragg
Audrey Buck
Narelle Butler
Melissa Cambria
Cheryl Carpenter
Caitlin Croucamp
Shanelle Delfino
Camille Elmir
Caleb Figg
Ethen Franks
Patricia Ghaly
Lennox Gil
Freyja Gray
Tristan Hanley
Matilda Hardy
Danielle Hart
Phyllis Heggie
Lucinda Ho
Amelia Hodges
Charlotte Holloway
Patricia Howard
Dorothy Jamieson
Benjamin Kioko
Aditi Knowles
Anita Lagarto
Hana Lee
Gary Lynch
Francesca Masters
Gem Matthews
Kevin McGeechan
Anne McNabb
Miryana Mikovic
Trisha Molinari
Celia Murphy
Marlow Murray
Chelsey Nguyen
Thomas Owens
Olivia Pattison
Steven Pham
Elizabeth Pidcock
Jenny Pimenta
Nyah Portingale
Samantha Rodriguez Montes
Hamid Rokni
Sophia Ronan
Sarah Rouse
Jiana Saada
Pratistha Shah
Aurora Sharma
Camille Sheehan
Graham Simmons
Emma Stanton
James Stevenson
Alina Su
Charlotte Sweeney
Angela Tay
Melinda Tran
Nayana Vanza
Augustus von Wartburg
Khanh Vu
Caitlin Ward
Clare Wei
Michael Wohlfiel
Francesca Wraith
Ella Zraika

National Volunteer Week



Volunteers and Staff with
Cr John Faker Mayor of Burwood

National Volunteer Week is Australia's largest annual celebration of volunteering and an opportunity to shine a light on the people who generously give their time, skills and energy to strengthen our community. This year, several Neighbour Aid volunteers were recognised through local Volunteer Recognition Awards.

At the Burwood Council Volunteer Recognition Awards, the Garden Aid team was nominated for Volunteer Team of the Year. Gary Kearns attended on behalf of the team and Nilima Hor was nominated for Senior Volunteer of the Year. Rivendell School students Riley and Al were nominated for Young Volunteer of the Year, with Riley taking home the award. This was an incredible achievement and recognition of the contribution young people make to our community.

Stella Angelo, was nominated for the City of Canada Bay Council's Volunteer of the Year. Stella has volunteered with Neighbour Aid since 2013, contributing in many ways, as a former Board member, former home visitor, Trolley Talk volunteer and as our volunteer newsletter editor.

We congratulate Stella, Gary, Nilima, Riley and Al on their nominations and thank them for volunteering at Inner West Neighbour Aid.



Stella, Melanie and Maja with Cr Michael Megna
Mayor of the City of Canada Bay



National Volunteer Week, 5 Senses Garden

Shining the Light on Lianne

For Lianne Carter, volunteering with Inner West Neighbour Aid was about finding a new community to belong to. As she prepared to step back from work, she wanted to find a new "ecosystem" where she could continue contributing and connecting with others. After being invited to a volunteer event by a friend who was a Board Member at the time, Lianne knew she had found the right place.

Family, friendship, kindness and fun are important to Lianne. She began her working life with Australia Post before spending more than 25 years with the State Government in roles ranging from administration to management. Outside of work, she has always enjoyed reading, exploring, hockey, swimming, walking and keeping active. She also loves board games and learning new skills, recently completing a beginners' Bridge course.



National Volunteer Week 2024

Since July 2023, Lianne has volunteered across Trolley Talk, 5 Senses Garden Workshops, Strong Together, Alive & Kicking, Outings and DanceMoves, with DanceMoves a particular favourite. "You get to have so much fun singing and dancing – but I think I pretty much do that at every program!" And, of course, there is always time for a little "Carpool Karaoke" in the Neighbour Aid vans.

What Lianne values most is the people. She loves hearing clients' stories, sharing a laugh and seeing their confidence grow. One client who was initially shy and withdrawn now arrives smiling and full of energy, a change that "made my heart sing". Lianne describes Neighbour Aid in three words: adaptable, empowering and diverse. "The clients are the centre of everything you do. I feel like I matter, that you listen, and I know Neighbour Aid makes a difference."



Lianne and Frances
Our Team

With her curiosity, energy and love of people, Lianne brings her own light to Neighbour Aid. Her story reflects the many experiences, talents and personalities that our volunteers bring to our community and the difference they make every day.

Shining the Light Exhibition

Inner West Neighbour Aid's Shining the Light exhibition was held at the McGlade Gallery, Australian Catholic University, from 24 June to 1 July 2026. It was a powerful opportunity to showcase the stories, talents and experiences of older people and create a space for their voices to be seen and heard. With generous support from Strathfield Council, the exhibition brought together artwork, photography, storytelling and multimedia to challenge assumptions about ageing and celebrate the richness of later life.

Through individual and collaborative works, clients shared their life stories, challenges overcome and memories held closely. The exhibition created opportunities for connection and reflection, while contributing to a broader conversation about ageing and the valuable contribution older people make to our community.
It also inspired this year's Annual Report theme, Shining the Light. The exhibition was a celebration of people in the Neighbour Aid community and stories that have shaped who they are today. Everyone has a story.

STRATHFIELD COUNCIL

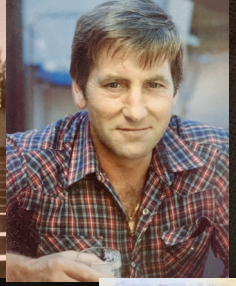
ACU
AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY









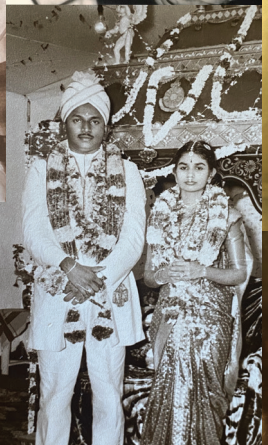














The president of the NSW Board of Fire Commissioners, Mr. L. G. Yeoth, pins the Queen's long service and good conduct medal to volunteer fireman J. Hudson's pocket while Mrs Hudson looks on. Mr Hudson has completed 46 years as a volunteer fireman with Tamworth Fire Brigade and was given a testimonial dinner on his re-



Our Service Providers and Partners

We work with like-minded people and organisations who share our values. Together we provide a welcoming community where seniors are respected and supported to stay independent, healthy and socially connected.

Service Providers

Art Therapy with Karen Burns (5 Senses Garden Workshops)
Art Therapy with Skye Rogers (5 Senses Garden Workshops)
Chair Yoga with Kristen Buckley (5 Senses Garden Workshops)
Complete House and Garden (Subsidised Lawn Mowing)
Creating Balance (Living Well with Dementia Workshops)
CSP Ashfield (Stand Tall)
Dance Health Alliance (DanceMoves, Living Well with Dementia Workshops)
Essence Physio (Alive & Kicking)
Fleur Denny (Alive & Kicking)
Grams of Health (5 Senses Garden Workshops)
Health and Happy Heart (5 Senses Garden Workshops)
Just Lawn Mowing Sydney (Subsidised Lawn Mowing)
Koori Kinnections (5 Senses Garden Workshops)
McGlade Gallery, Australian Catholic University (Shining the Light Exhibition)

Partners

Ashfield Boys High School (Trolley Talk)
Burwood Council (DanceMoves)
City of Canada Bay Council (5 Senses Garden)
Concord West Rhodes Preschool (5 Senses Garden Workshops, Living Well with Dementia Workshops)
Macquarie University, Professional and Community Engagement (PACE) Program
Meriden School
MLC School (Strong Together)
Rivendell School (Alive & Kicking)
RSPCA NSW (Neighbour Aid Pets)

General Manager's Report



Allison Yee-Brogan, General Manager

It is my honour to present the General Manager's Report for the 2025 / 2026 financial year.

Strengthening Our Organisation

This year has been one of continued growth, change and strengthening for Inner West Neighbour Aid. As General Manager since 2012, I have seen the organisation evolve considerably, while remaining grounded in the same commitment to supporting older people to live independently, build friendships and remain connected to their community.

A key focus this year has been ensuring that our organisational structure is sustainable for the future. The introduction of the Senior Coordinator, Staff and Volunteers role has enabled greater separation between strategic and operational responsibilities, while strengthening support for our staff and volunteer teams. This is also an important step in succession planning, building organisational capability and developing leadership within.

Partnerships

Throughout the year, we continued to build relationships across the Inner West and beyond. Partnerships and conversations with councils, schools, community organisations, businesses and other service providers have created opportunities to share knowledge, strengthen referrals and explore new ways of working together. Our partnerships with Ashfield Boys High School, Meriden, MLC and Rivendell School offers exciting opportunities for intergenerational connection and learning. We have also strengthened connections with organisations including Carer Gateway, local community centres and other community and aged care organisations.

Technology and Systems

A major organisational priority has been improving our systems and technology. Following the unsuccessful implementation of the Nightingale database in July 2025, considerable time was invested in reviewing what went wrong, identifying our requirements and developing a more robust selection process.

After extensive research, demonstrations, staff consultation and reference checks, the Board has approved the preferred client management system for implementation and training in the 2026 / 2027 financial year. This is a significant investment in our future. The new system will reduce reliance on spreadsheets and manual processes, improve reporting and compliance and provide better tools for managing clients, volunteers, programs and communications. Importantly, the process has reinforced the value of careful planning, staff involvement and change management when undertaking significant organisational change.

We have also upgraded our telecommunications system and continued to identify opportunities to improve efficiency, reduce duplication and move towards more streamlined and digital ways of working.

Planning for the Future

Our office lease agreement expires in January 2027 and throughout the financial year we commenced planning and securing options. This is an important decision for an organisation that relies on its office as a base for staff, volunteers, vehicles, garden and lawn equipment, administration and quite often, drop in enquiries. The decision to pursue a lease renewal of our current premises was based on the need to balance affordability, accessibility, functionality and our longer-term strategic needs.

Our People

Our people and relationships continue to be one of our greatest strengths. We welcomed new staff, including David Wilson as Garden Aid Team Leader and Megan O'Rourke as Social Support Worker, Kevin Halbe and Joshua Standen as Junior Gardeners in the Help at Home team. We also appointed Maja Sorensen as Senior Coordinator, Staff and Volunteers, recognising her experience and contribution to Neighbour Aid and providing an important opportunity for internal leadership development. We farewelled Social Support Coordinator Ruth Njogah, Garden Aid Team Leader Melanie Athan, Social Support Worker Ruben Hadges and Help at Home Junior Gardener Jake Lackner. We thank them all for their dedication and passion. A post 30 June development has been the appointment of Emma-Lee Torres Bernal as Social Support Coordinator. We look forward to seeing Emma grow in this role and see her lead the Social Support team with her 10+ years of experience working at Neighbour Aid, as well as her care and knowledge of clients and programs.

I also acknowledge the tremendous efforts and commitment of other team members Mikali Anagnostis, Stuart Blundell, Chantel Jurcevic, Emel Jurd, Indah Kusumawati, Karen Paige and Joanne Santas.

It continues to be a privilege working with an incredible Board and I thank them for their guidance and support. The Inner West Neighbour Aid Board is held in high esteem and this is a testament to their individual contributions as well as how they operate together as a committed and driven team.

Thank you to our clients, volunteers and community partners, who continue to remind us why Neighbour Aid exists and why the work we do matters.

Looking Ahead

As Neighbour Aid continues to grow and change, our focus remains on building an organisation that is sustainable, well governed and capable of responding to the needs of our community. Strong leadership, capable staff and volunteers, effective systems and genuine partnerships will be central to this.

Following the recent announcement, post 30 June, that the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) will remain block funded and no longer absorbed into the Support at Home Program, I am invigorated by the possibilities ahead for Neighbour Aid. The next 12 months presents as an opportune time for both consolidation as well as innovation. I look forward to working towards our strategic goals, in a more stable environment both politically and financially.

I believe Neighbour Aid is well positioned to contribute constructively to the next stage of CHSP aged care reforms. We have a strong understanding of the experiences of our clients, volunteers, staff and community partners, as well as the operational realities of delivering services at a local level. I am keen for our voice to be part of the conversation, not simply to advocate for our own organisation, but to contribute to a CHSP model that is sustainable, responsive and genuinely works for older people and the organisations supporting them. Neighbour Aid is well placed to help shape what comes next.

Allison Yee-Brogan,
General Manager

"It's organisations like yours that make the Inner West such a vibrant, generous, and resilient community — your hard work and care truly make a difference."
Jo Haylen MP, State Member for Summer Hill acknowledging Inner West Neighbour Aid in Parliament, 2025.



Emma, Joanne, Ruben, Jo Haylen MP, Margaret, Allison, Steven and Emel
Inner West Neighbour Aid Office

Chairperson's Report



Alison Muir, Chairperson

I am delighted to present my report for the 2025 / 2026 financial year.

A Year of Change and Strategic Direction

It is a privilege to reflect on my first year as Chair of Inner West Neighbour Aid. It has been a year of significant change across the aged care sector, alongside important progress within our own organisation. Throughout the year, the Board has remained focused on providing strong governance, supporting our staff and volunteers and ensuring that Neighbour Aid remains responsive, sustainable and true to its purpose.

A major focus has been the continuing reform of aged care. The commencement of the new Aged Care Act and the transition to Support at Home have brought increased regulatory responsibilities and uncertainty across the sector. Neighbour Aid has responded by strengthening our compliance, risk management and governance processes and ensuring we are prepared for the higher expectations placed on registered providers.

The future of the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) has also been a significant theme. Neighbour Aid became a member of the CHSP Alliance which contributed to sector advocacy for CHSP to remain a separate, accessible and appropriately funded program. The Senate inquiry's recommendation in June 2026 that CHSP remain separate from Support at Home was an important development. We are pleased to see greater recognition of the important role CHSP plays in supporting older people to remain connected, independent and living well in their communities.

Our Strategic Direction

In February 2026, the Board endorsed the 2026 – 2028 Strategic Plan, following extensive discussion and consultation with staff and Board members. The plan provides a clear direction for the next three years, built around four strategic objectives:

1. Transform through technology and innovation
2. Lead with responsible governance and compliance
3. Grow sustainably and strategically
4. Champion a community that celebrates people of all ages

These objectives recognise both the opportunities and challenges ahead. They provide a framework for strengthening our organisation while continuing to focus on what matters most, the experience and wellbeing of the older people we support.

Technology, Systems and Sustainability

Improving our technology and systems has been an important area of Board attention. While the implementation of the Nightingale database did not deliver the outcomes expected, the experience provided valuable lessons about implementation organisational readiness and the importance of selecting systems that genuinely fit our size and needs.

The Board has subsequently taken a considered approach to identifying a new database solution, with a strong focus on functionality, value, implementation support and long-term sustainability. Investing in the right systems will be essential to improving efficiency, strengthening reporting and compliance, and supporting our staff and volunteers to deliver quality services.

Funding sustainability also remains an ongoing challenge. Like many community organisations, we are operating in an environment of changing government funding, increasing costs and growing demand. The Board continues to look at diversification, partnerships and sustainable growth while ensuring that financial decisions remain aligned with our purpose and values.

Board Development and Governance

Strong governance requires an ongoing commitment to learning. During the year, Board members participated in training covering governance, risk management, financial oversight, internal controls and effective decision-making. We also undertook development focused on running effective Board meetings and strengthening our collective governance practice.

We have continued to strengthen Board capability through recruitment and the development of a more structured Board induction process. Our induction work recognises that new Board members need more than information – they need context, support and an understanding of Neighbour Aid's history, people, programs and responsibilities.

I particularly value the contribution of our Client Representatives, who bring an important lived-experience perspective to Board discussions and help ensure that the voices of the people we support remain part of our governance.

Partnerships and Advocacy

Neighbour Aid's involvement in the CHSP Alliance and the Falls Prevention Alliance reflects our commitment to contributing beyond our own organisation. These partnerships allow us to share our experience, learn from others and advocate for issues that directly affect older people. Falls prevention is particularly relevant to our work. We support the Alliance's efforts to increase awareness of falls prevention and promote practical measures such as strength, balance and physical activity to help older people remain safe and independent.

Looking Ahead

There will undoubtedly be further change across aged care, funding and the community sector. However, Neighbour Aid enters the next year with a clear strategic direction, a committed Board, dedicated staff and volunteers, and strong connections across our community.

As Chair, I am grateful for the trust placed in me during my first year in the role and for the support of my fellow Board members. Most importantly, I thank our staff and volunteers for their commitment and professionalism, supported by the strong, committed leadership of our General Manager, Allison. Thank you also to our clients for allowing us to be part of their lives.

Together, we remain focused on ensuring that older people are supported to live independently, build friendships, contribute to their communities and continue to have their stories heard.

Alison Muir
Chairperson



Board Members and Staff, Connect and Grow meeting at Croydon Park Club

Treasurer's Report



Peter Malhotra, Treasurer

I am pleased to present the Treasurer's Report for the 2025 / 2026 financial year. The annual audited accounts to 30 June 2026 are presented for consideration and adoption. A full version of the audited Financial Statements are available on request. I am proud that we have continued to manage our funds in a financially sustainable and risk-aware way, ensuring every financial decision and dollar delivers meaningful impact for our community. This financial year, Inner West Neighbour Aid has reported an operating surplus of $19,156 and total net assets of $414,284. This is compared to 2025, where the operating surplus was $94,558 and total net assets were $395,128.

Operating Summary

	2026	2025	% Change
Income	$1,448,414	$1,442,868	0.4 %
Expenses	$1,429,258	$1,348,310	6.0 %
Surplus/(Deficit) before income tax	**$19,156**	**$94,558**	

The 2025 / 2026 financial year was one of careful financial management, with a strong focus on maintaining services to our clients while responding to changes in funding, rising costs, including petrol costs and ongoing financial pressures. Importantly, expenditure was closely monitored throughout the year and remained well controlled despite increased staffing and operating costs.

Managing Financial Challenges

The year began with significant fluctuations in our reported financial position, largely due to the timing of CHSP funding payments. CHSP funding was not always received in the expected month, creating considerable challenges for cash-flow management and financial forecasting. Management actively followed up with the funding body and sought greater certainty around payment timing.

A positive outcome was the confirmation of CHSP indexation, increasing funding by $24,327. This provided some additional financial capacity while maintaining the same contracted service hours.

Strengthening Income

Diversifying income remained an important priority. During the year, $97,581 in grants was secured from $157,853 of applications, representing a 61% success rate, together with corporate donations of $3,100.

We also improved payment processes by replacing the previous Commonwealth Bank mini-readers with SumUp air-readers, securing four readers for the price of three and a free charging station. Following repeated security issues with the CBA debit card, additional prepaid cards were introduced for online purchases, including Assisted Online Shopping for clients.

Investment in Technology

Investment in technology and stronger financial administration were also key priorities. A new telecommunications system was installed in June 2026 under a 60-month fixed-price agreement with Business Telecom, providing greater cost certainty for phone, internet and equipment. In preparation for the introduction of Payday Super from 1 July 2026, Neighbour Aid integrated QuickBooks with QuickSuper and registered with Australian Super's Employer Portal. Payday Super processing commenced in June 2026, ahead of the legislative commencement date, supporting a smooth transition and timely payment of employee superannuation.

Employee Entitlements and Compliance

Neighbour Aid also registered for the Portable Long Service Leave Scheme with Service NSW in October 2025. This provides eligible employees with portable long service leave entitlements as they move between participating community service organisations and ensures Neighbour Aid meets its responsibilities under the scheme.

Help at Home

Help at Home continues to be an important social enterprise for Neighbour Aid, providing unsubsidised garden and lawn mowing services that help people remain safe and independent in their homes. While the program has operated at a modest deficit during 2025 / 2026, the Board remains committed to its value and purpose, recognising that its contribution extends beyond its financial return. The program responds to a genuine community need and strengthens Neighbour Aid's capacity to support clients in a practical and professional way. During the year, activity and client numbers continued to grow, with 68 clients registered by June 2026 and billable hours improving in the latter part of the year. The purchase of a Toyota Hilux ute through a favourable vehicle changeover also supports the program's ongoing operational needs. The focus remains on improving utilisation and sustainability while maintaining the quality and community benefit that Help at Home provides.

Looking Ahead

Ending the year with a surplus, positive cash position and net assets of $414,285 provides a sound base for the year ahead. Financial sustainability will remain a priority, particularly as government funding arrangements continue to evolve, grant income remains competitive and service delivery costs increase. The Board and management will continue to monitor expenditure carefully, strengthen income diversification and ensure that available resources are directed towards achieving the greatest benefit for our clients and community.

Risk Sub-Committee

The Risk Sub-Committee was established in February 2024 and meets quarterly. The Sub-Committee continues to strengthen the board's governance responsibilities and risk review role. As Chairperson of this Sub-Committee, I would like to thank Shabnam Gill, board members Samantha Guthleben and Jeanette Gilbert and General Manager Allison Yee-Brogan for their valuable contribution and support.

I thank our auditors, MNSA Pty Ltd for their professional auditing services and commitment to the community. Thank you to my fellow board members, Allison Yee-Brogan and Indah Kusumawati, Finance and Administration Coordinator for her work on the Financial Report. As I approach the close of my three year tenure as Treasurer, I am extremely proud of the collaborative efforts of the board, management and staff and their careful stewardship of Neighbour Aid's resources throughout the year.

Peter Malhotra
Treasurer



From left to right, Therese, Jane, Mikali, Joyce, Emma, Carmela, Denise, Nilima, Anne, Frances, Therese and Megan
Christmas in July at Coogee Legion Club

Audited Financial Statements

Income Statement for the year ended 30 June 2026

	2026 $	2025 $
Income		
Gross receipts	1,268,152	1,235,585
Grants received	22,525	37,683
Donations	14,740	8,318
Service Fees - Help at Home	75,669	85,397
HCP - Access CHSP	2,417	7,088
Membership fees	2,750	1,300
Interest received	8,478	1,266
Other income	53,683	66,231
	1,448,414	1,442,868
Expenses		
Audit Fees	5,382	3,620
Board and governance expenses	13,396	5,555
Impairment expenses	15,319	–
Employee benefits expenses	1,064,664	985,474
Insurance expenses	23,746	21,343
Motor vehicle expenses	66,802	66,099
Other expenses	120,207	131,442
Project costs	55,534	68,177
Rent	64,208	66,600
	1,429,258	1,348,310
Surplus before income tax	19,156	94,558
Income tax expense	–	–
Surplus after income tax	19,156	94,558

Our comprehensive audited financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2026 are available on request.

Audited Financial Statements

Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2026

	2026	2025
Income	**$**	**$**
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	561,868	543,724
Trade and other receivables	3,034	6,500
Other current assets	43,524	24,916
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	608,426	575,140
NON-CURRENT ASSETS		
Property, plant and equipment	-	-
Intangible Assets	-	15,319
Deposits Paid	12,376	12,376
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS	12,376	27,695
TOTAL ASSETS	620,802	602,835
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Trade and other payables	42,280	50,157
Provisions	159,174	154,023
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	201,454	204,180
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Provisions	5,064	3,527
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES	5,064	3,527
TOTAL LIABILITIES	206,518	207,707
NET ASSETS	414,284	395,128
MEMBERS' FUNDS		
Retained profits	414,284	395,128
TOTAL MEMBERS' FUNDS	414,284	395,128

Our comprehensive audited financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2026 are available on request.

Auditor's Letter

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF INNER WEST NEIGHBOUR AID INCORPORATED (ABN 20 500 363 056)

Opinion

We have audited the financial report of Inner West Neighbour Aid Incorporated, which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2026, Income Statement, and notes to the financial statements including a summary of material accounting policy information, and the directors' declaration.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report of the registered entity is in accordance with Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* (ACNC Act), including:

(i) giving a true and fair view of the registered entity's financial position as at 30 June 2026 and of its financial performance for the year then ended; and

(ii) complying with Australian Accounting Standards to the extent described in Note 1, and Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2022*.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of our report. We are independent of the registered entity in accordance with the ACNC Act, the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110: *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)* (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

In connection with our audit of the financial report, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial report or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information; we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Sydney | Melbourne | Canberra

Emphasis of Matter – Basis of Accounting

We draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared for the purpose of fulfilling the registered entity's financial reporting responsibilities under the ACNC Act. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Responsibilities of the Directors for the Financial Report

The directors of the registered entity are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and the ACNC Act and for such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the directors are responsible for assessing the registered entity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the directors either intend to liquidate the registered entity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the registered entity's internal control.

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Auditor's Letter

- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the directors.

– Conclude on the appropriateness of the directors' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the registered entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the registered entity to cease to continue as a going concern.

– Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with the directors regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

MNSA Pty Ltd

MNSA Pty Ltd

Mark Schiliro
Director

Chartered Accountant & Registered Company Auditor
Director of MNSA Pty Ltd (Registered Audit Company)

9th September 2026

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Our Financial Support

The support we receive enables us to continue to develop the programs and connections within our community. We are grateful for the invaluable contribution of our funding bodies.

Main funding bodies

Australian Government
Department of Health, Disability and Ageing

NSW GOVERNMENT
Office of Responsible Gambling,
NSW Department of Creative Industries,
Tourism, Hospitality and Sport

Grants

Burwood Inc.1874

CLUB BURWOOD GROUP

CANADA BAY CLUB
FIVE DOCK | CONCORD

City of Canada Bay

CLUB ASHFIELD

STRATHFIELD COUNCIL

Carers NSW Australia

CORO·88

Australian Government
Department of Social Services

Corporate Support and Other Donors

CommonwealthBank

Grill'd

ABBOTT TREES

D'ANGELO SOLICITORS

Our Donors

Thank you to all of our generous donors. Your support enables us to connect with more people in our community.

Labiba Abraham
Helen Bryant
Betty and Barry
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Cherene Casinader
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Vittoria Cremona
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Patricia Sedgman
Steven Takacs-Gal
Richard Thomas
Franca Tomasetta
John Villari
Allison Yee-Brogan
Amal Youssef
Georgia Ziakas

Over $200

Samantha Guthleben
Maureen Handley
Craig Linn
Alison Muir
Nancy Musumeci
Joseph Szima
Elsie Tan
Volunteer *(wishing to remain anonymous)*

Donations In Kind

Abbott Trees, mulch for Garden Aid clients
Allison Yee-Brogan, Apple Iphone11
Burwood RSL, Room Hire

Pro Bono Services

Doug Thatcher, Database Services
Dominic Squadrito,
D'Angelo Solicitors Five Dock



Audley National Park

Support us

As a local not for profit we are keen to connect and work with like-minded people and organisations who want to make a difference.

Contact us to find out more

Inner West Neighbour Aid is an Incorporated Association
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