



FIND **your** path

# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2024 - 2025





Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are advised that this Annual Report contains the names and images of people who are deceased.

## Acknowledgement of Country

In the spirit of reconciliation Pathfinders acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging and also extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

## Contact Us

Head Office 215 Beardy Street,  
Armidale NSW 2350  
PO Box 1052 Armidale NSW 2350

Email  
[admin@pathfinders.ngo](mailto:admin@pathfinders.ngo)  
[www.pathfinders.ngo](http://www.pathfinders.ngo)

Phone  
(02) 5775 9800

ABN: 64 146 004 524

## Performance and Highlights

Our Board of Directors and Executive Team	1
Message from our Patron	2
Message from our Chief Executive Officer	3
Message from our Chair	5
Tribute to Aunty Rosemary Curtis OAM	7
Our Vision for Reconciliation	9
Expansion to the Northern Territory	11
Sanctuary Model Implementation	13

## Company Management

Human Resources & Subscribe-HR	15
Finance, Information Technology & Resources	16
The Royal Hotel in Glen Innes NSW	17
Rose Villa in Armidale NSW	18
Work Health, Safety and Risk Unit	19

## Programs and Services

Aboriginal Community Services	21
Family and Children Services	25
Out of Home Care Services	29
Specialist Homelessness Support Services	33
Support Your Path	39
Tilbuster Station	41
Pumpkin Run	43

## Directors Report

Principal Activities	45
Directors	49
Financials Statement	52





## Our Board of Directors

Pathfinders' governance structure is guided by the principles of accountability, transparency, integrity, stewardship, efficiency, and strong leadership.

As a not-for-profit community organisation, Pathfinders is supported by a dedicated and highly skilled Board, whose members bring a wealth of professional experience and diverse cultural perspectives. We extend our sincere thanks to the Board for their time, guidance, and continued commitment to the organisation and the communities we serve throughout 2024-2025.



**Korrina Schultz**  
Chair



**Mark Keogh**  
Director



**Kevin Emanuel**  
Director



**Damian Hall**  
Director



**Alex Shaw OAM**  
Director



**Rosemary Curtis OAM**  
Director

## Senior Management Executive Team



**Alan Brennan**  
CEO



**Joanne Hall**  
National Director



**Jillian Hardman**  
National Director



**Courtney Pay**  
National Director

## Message from the Patron

### A Year of Impact and Compassion

It is with great pride that I reflect on another remarkable year for Pathfinders.

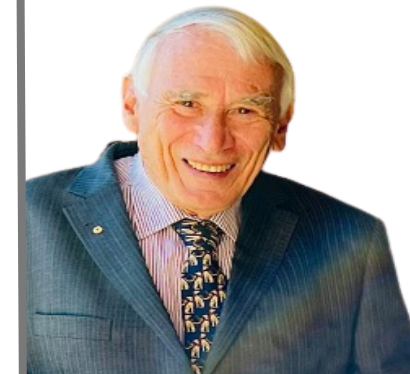
This year, the organisation has reached new heights, supporting more children, young people, and families through innovative programs, expanded locations, and enhanced resources for staff.

At every step, Pathfinders' growth has been driven by a commitment to compassion, quality of care, and a desire to transform lives - values that remain at the centre of this extraordinary organisation and echo the enduring legacy of Aunty Rosemary Curtis.

My well-documented lifelong dedication to child protection and family welfare finds resonance in Pathfinders' mission. As Patron for more than a decade, I am continually inspired by the team's tireless efforts to prioritise the well-being and safety of those they serve.

By delivering essential services - safe shelters, educational opportunities, and pathways to employment - Pathfinders ensures that every child and family has the foundation to learn, grow, and realise their aspirations. This work is not just commendable; it is vital to building stronger, more resilient communities.

The annual Pumpkin Run at Government House was, as always, a highlight, offering a moment to connect with the Pathfinders' team and celebrate their achievements. Yet, this year, the absence of Aunty Rosemary Curtis was deeply felt. Her compassion, wisdom, and indomitable spirit remain at the core of Pathfinders' work.



To the board, management, staff, and communities who make Pathfinders' mission possible, I extend my heartfelt gratitude. Your dedication transforms the lives of thousands, giving hope and opportunity where it is needed most.

As Patron, I am honoured to support your work and look forward to witnessing the continued impact of your efforts in the year ahead. Together, let us keep pushing to ensure every child and family can thrive.

**James Wood**  
**The Honourable James Wood AO, KC**







# CEO Report



## Building on Strong Foundations

As we reflect on another year of impact at Pathfinders, I am filled with pride and gratitude for the progress we've made, even as we mourn the profound loss of Aunty Rosemary Curtis OAM, a visionary leader whose passion and determination continues to guide our work.

Aunty Rosemary was more than a board member – she was the heart and soul of our mission, a compassionate yet fierce advocate who never wasted an opportunity to uplift those around her. Her legacy lives on in every project we undertake, particularly in our efforts to create safe spaces and opportunities for Aboriginal women and young people across our communities.

Aunty Rosemary's influence remains a guiding light in all we do. She was the most observant person in any room, a saviour of our board and business, admired by politicians and community members alike. Whether cooking kangaroo tail soup at NAIDOC events or spotting a fool a mile away, she was a force – compassionate, tough, and never a victim. Her ability to connect with everyone, from community members to decision-makers, was unparalleled, and her spirit continues to inspire us as we forge new partnerships and explore innovative models.

This year, we've made significant strides toward realising Aunty Rosemary's dream of a refuge for women escaping violence in Glen Innes. Despite numerous challenges, including delays and complex negotiations, we are on track to build a new Core and Cluster facility by June 2026, meeting our deadline and staying within budget.

This achievement is a testament to the collaboration between our dedicated team, the Department of Communities and Justice, and local government.

Aunty Rosemary was there at the very first meeting with the DCJ, her sleeves rolled up, her voice articulate and engaging, captivating everyone in the room. Her presence ensured this project carried her vision forward, and we remain committed to seeing it through.

Our work in supporting young people, particularly those involved with the criminal justice system, continues to grow. Through partnerships with Corrective Services and Juvenile Justice, we are helping young people create pathways to meaningful employment.

Our Pathfinders National Aboriginal Birth Certificate program in partnership with UNICEF and state Births Deaths and Marriage registries is opening doors in Queensland, Western Australia, Northern Territory and South Australia.

Another highlight of the year was catching up with Patron Justice James Wood in Darwin to discuss the range of opportunities we are exploring. Justice Wood was very pleased to hear about the opening of our new office in Palmerston and the appointment of an experienced Business Development Manager to run our Northern Australian programs. This is a significant milestone for Pathfinders, one that has been in the pipeline for a number of years.

Closer to home, our Tilbuster initiatives are flourishing. The Pumpkin Run was a resounding success again this year, showcasing the hard work, teamwork, and commitment of the young people involved. The journey culminated in a particularly memorable finale, with participants welcomed to Government House for a morning tea hosted by the Governor, Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley AC KC. This special event marked the run's end and celebrated the young people involved.

We've established a lawn mowing business that creates jobs while teaching young people marketing, scheduling, and financial skills. Plans are underway to build another shed in 2026, with slab piers scheduled for early next year, creating potential for industrial projects like pallet building.

Our disability programs are also expanding rapidly across the New England North West and Mid North Coast. We are fortunate to have a dedicated team which has been instrumental in organising services and ensuring quality care whilst considering expansion of our services to the Northern Territory.

The out of home care team continues to make impressive strides in this space, with the Intensive Therapeutic Care program rolling out across the Mid North Coast and New England regions. Our OOHC Manager, Courtney Pay, was appointed to the board of the Association of Children's Welfare Agencies – a testament to her strong commitment to the sector and her advocacy for smaller, regional providers like Pathfinders.

Our staff continue to be the backbone of our mission, and supporting their well-being and professional growth has been a cornerstone of our work this year. The embedding of the Sanctuary Model has fostered a trauma-informed, inclusive culture, empowering staff to build stronger connections with each other and the communities we serve.

The rollout of Subscribe-HR will streamline our human resources processes, making it easier for staff to access support and manage their professional development. The introduction of SharePoint has enhanced collaboration by providing a centralised platform for sharing resources and knowledge, while the creation of dedicated staff hubs across our sites has offered spaces for

connection, reflection, and innovation. Together, these initiatives ensure that our staff feel valued, supported, and equipped to deliver on our shared vision of creating safe, thriving communities.

In closing, I extend my deepest gratitude to our remarkable board members, whose wisdom and guidance steer us toward a brighter future, and to our senior management team, whose unwavering dedication drives our mission forward. To our incredible staff, your enthusiasm and commitment to Pathfinders' goals breathe life into our vision, creating lasting change in the lives of those we serve.

Above all, I am profoundly grateful to the communities we serve alongside – your trust, strength, and warm inclusion fuel our daily commitment to fostering safer, more resilient, and deeply connected spaces.

Alan Brennan  
CEO, Pathfinders



# Chair Report



## A Year of Heart and Hustle

What a year it's been! Our Board papers from the past 12 months show just how much love and hard work our Pathfinders' team has poured into supporting kids, young people, families, and communities. You all have made us a solid source of hope and strength for so many.

I feel so fortunate to have worked with and learned from the late Aunty Rosemary Curtis OAM. She was an incredible woman – full of wisdom, spirit, and heart. Her passing leaves a huge gap, but her fierce advocacy and leadership will keep inspiring Pathfinders and the communities we serve.

Tilbuster Station kicked off with lawn mowing and tree work, giving young people hands-on jobs and real-world skills. Now, we've levelled up to repairs, construction, and maintenance – serving local homes and businesses while opening more doors for young people to learn, earn, and shine. We always put people first, and this year we've made big moves to make that happen.

- **Core & Cluster Project:** We secured funds to build a Core and Cluster facility to support women and children escaping domestic violence.
- **Rose Villa:** We're thrilled to join NSW's Temporary Accommodation program. Rose Villa is now a safe haven for young women between the ages of 16 and 24 years who are homeless and require support to achieve independence.
- **New Properties:** We've added a few new properties to boost our Out-of-Home Care and disability services, giving more kids and young people safe, stable places to call home.
- **Darwin Office:** Our new hub in Darwin is already making waves, teaming up with local groups to deliver support, build community, and create lasting opportunities in the NT.

- **PNABC Expansion:** Led by the amazing Ron Naden, our National Aboriginal Birth Certificate Program is now in six states. This growth is a game-changer, helping more people access this vital document.
- **Support Your Path:** After successfully renewing their NDIS registration and expanding into offering Support Coordination, our Support Your Path team continues to inspire positive outcomes and empower independence.

Our staff are the heart of Pathfinders, and we've doubled down on making sure they're supported:

- Rolled out the Sanctuary Model, creating a trauma-informed, inclusive organisation where everyone feels safe and valued.
- Launched the Fitness Passport program so staff can stay active and healthy.
- Set up staff hubs—cozy spots to connect and recharge.
- Strengthened our supervision frameworks to give the team more guidance and tools to thrive.

We're embracing the future with our new Intranet and SharePoint systems. These tools are making life easier by:

- Giving instant access to resources and updates.
- Streamlining projects and teamwork.
- Cutting down on administration hassles and boosting data security.

This digital progress helps us stay nimble, innovative, and responsive to those we serve.

To my fellow Board members – you all bring such heart and wisdom to the table. Your big-picture thinking and tough questions keep us grounded and moving forward.

To our Senior Executive Team – you've taken our vision and turned it into real, lasting change. Your passion and creativity are everything.

And to our frontline staff – you're the soul of Pathfinders. You show up with courage and kindness in the toughest moments, creating safe spaces and sparking hope. You're out there changing lives every day, and we're so grateful for you.

Here's to another year of making a difference together.

**Korrina Schultz**  
**Chairperson, Pathfinders**







## In Loving Memory of Aunty Rosemary Curtis OAM

Respected Aboriginal Elder • Community Advocate  
• Pathfinders Board Member • Lifelong Champion  
for Justice

In late 2024, we said goodbye to an extraordinary woman whose legacy continues to ripple through the lives she touched and the systems she helped transform. Aunty Rosemary Curtis was more than a board member or community leader – she was a beacon of strength, wisdom, and relentless compassion.

Aunty Rosemary's passing was a profound loss not only to the Pathfinders' family but to the entire Glen Innes community and beyond. Her life was a powerful testament to what one person can achieve through courage, love, and unshakable purpose.

### A Life of Service and Strength

A proud Aboriginal Elder, Aunty Rosemary dedicated more than 50 years to improving the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across the Northern Tablelands and North West New South Wales. From her earliest years—protecting her siblings from forced removal – she carried a determination forged by hardship, injustice, and deep cultural pride.

She went on to become a formidable force in local, state, and national circles. Over the decades, she served as a:

- Foster carer for 35 years
- Glen Innes Severn Councillor
- Founding member of multiple Aboriginal organisations including the Tingha Aboriginal Corporation and Glen Innes Ngorabul Aboriginal Corporation

- Volunteer with Glen Innes Open Door, a youth drop-in centre
- Justice of the Peace
- Advocate for cultural healing in correctional facilities
- Member of Aboriginal negotiating panels, NAIDOC committees, and reconciliation forums

Her honours were many – including being named Glen Innes Citizen of the Year in 1996 and receiving the NAIDOC Unsung Hero Award.

But perhaps the most significant public recognition came in 2023, when she was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for her service to the Indigenous community of Glen Innes. Still, to those who knew her, Aunty Rose remained humble. "It's not about awards," she would say. "It's about making sure our people are okay."

Aunty Rosemary served as a Board Director at Pathfinders for more than 15 years. Her presence wasn't symbolic – it was transformational. She was a driving force behind many of Pathfinders' most impactful initiatives:

**Reconciliation Action Plan:** She was the key motivator behind the development of Pathfinders' RAP, later endorsed by Reconciliation Australia. Her vision of truth-telling and equity helped shape an organisation where Aboriginal voices were respected, elevated, and heard.

**Pathfinders Royal Hotel:** Aunty Rosemary successfully lobbied the Federal Government for \$300,000 in funding to purchase the Glen Innes Royal Hotel, which she envisioned as a training centre, youth refuge and hub of hope. That vision is now becoming a reality for the community.

**Tilbuster Station:** She helped secure \$500,000 in Federal funding for urgent repairs and upgrades at our youth training farm, home of the annual Pumpkin Run, which feeds those experiencing food insecurity across NSW.

**National Aboriginal Birth Certificate Program:** She was a passionate volunteer and relentless advocate, helping secure support for this national project, which has issued more than 20,000 birth certificates – opening access to school, employment, housing and voting rights.

"She made a positive impression wherever she went," said Pathfinders' CEO Alan Brennan.

"Her whole life was devoted to helping children, young people and families. She was tenacious in advocating for the underprivileged, particularly regional Aboriginal Australians. Her legacy will be felt for many years, and it will be hard to imagine Pathfinders without her."

### A Voice of Change, A Light in the Room

Aunty Rosemary's commitment to justice and reconciliation did not go unnoticed.

On hearing the news of her passing, Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley AC KC, Governor of New South Wales, said:

"The world is a sadder place with the passing of dear Aunty. She lit up every space she entered. Her commitment to improving the lives and livelihoods of First Nations people was sustained and unwavering, as was her deep pride in her people and culture. Now, her spirit flies free with her ancestors."

The Hon. Barnaby Joyce MP, Member for New England, also paid tribute to her advocacy:

"Rosemary was a mover and shaker who saw a need and did all she could to fill it. She changed many lives for good and will be sadly missed – especially by the Aboriginal community."

Glen Innes Severn Council Mayor, Cr Margot Davis, reflected on her deep local legacy:

"Rosemary was a passionate advocate for Indigenous education, cultural awareness, and social justice. She played a vital role in promoting reconciliation initiatives, supporting local Indigenous events, and ensuring that Indigenous voices were heard and valued. Her compassion and commitment to bettering the lives of those

around her will be remembered and cherished by all."

Rosemary's work to end homelessness was recognised by a posthumous nomination at the Australian Housing Institute's annual awards night for innovation in housing.

### A Legacy That Will Endure

Whether she was delivering tuberculosis medication in remote communities, advocating for incarcerated men preparing to return to country, or opening her doors to youth who had nowhere else to go, Aunty Rosemary did everything with generosity, conviction and humility.

She was a bridge – between cultures, generations, and communities. She brought people together to solve problems, tell the truth, and build a better future.

### A Final Tribute from CEO Alan Brennan

"Her vision for Pathfinders was one of hope, compassion, and action. Whether she was rolling up her sleeves at a sign-up day or securing funding for life-changing projects, her passion shone through.

Aunty Rosemary's legacy is one of love and unyielding determination. She moved mountains for those who couldn't move them alone.

While we will miss her wisdom, her humour, and her guidance, we find solace in knowing her work lives on in the countless lives she touched. She has left us with a legacy of strength and compassion that we must carry forward.

Rest in peace, Aunty Rosemary. Thank you for showing us how to be better – better leaders, better neighbours, and better humans. Your light will forever shine in our hearts."

### Forever in Our Hearts

Aunty Rosemary Curtis gave her life to the service of others. Her voice, her vision, and her courage live on in every project she helped build and every person she inspired.

We honour her. We miss her. We carry her legacy forward – with pride, gratitude and deep respect.

May you rest in strength, Aunty Rosemary. Your spirit will guide us always.



# Our Vision For Reconciliation

At Pathfinders, reconciliation is central to who we are and how we work. We recognise that true reconciliation requires sustained action, cultural learning, and shared commitment across every level of our organisation. Guided by our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan, we continue to strengthen relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities, embedding respect, equity, and self-determination into all areas of our work.

Currently, 20% of our staff identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, and we are working towards achieving a 30% representation target across our workforce. This ensures that Aboriginal voices, knowledge, and leadership are reflected in our decision-making and service delivery.

The principles of the Sanctuary Model underpin our approach, promoting safety, inclusiveness, healing, and respect. Through the integration of Cultural

Humility and Sanctuary commitments, we continue to build an organisational culture that values connection and accountability.

Throughout the year, Pathfinders partnered with a range of Aboriginal organisations and sponsored community events across the Mid North Coast and New England regions. These collaborations strengthened local initiatives, celebrated culture, and reinforced our ongoing commitment to Aboriginal communities. Initiatives such as the Pathfinders Cultural Hub in Coffs Harbour and the development of yarning circles continued to grow, offering meaningful opportunities for cultural learning, community engagement, and shared connection.

Pathfinders is proud to walk alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, Elders, and partner organisations to create stronger, safer, and more connected futures for all.



## Celebrating Naidoc Week

During NAIDOC Week 2024, Pathfinders participated in and supported a wide range of community events across the New England and Mid North Coast regions. Our teams engaged with local communities to celebrate Aboriginal culture and contributions, providing opportunities for families and children to participate in a variety of activities.

Across the regions, Pathfinders' staff were involved in street marches, community expos, and fun days, offering activities such as arts and crafts, face painting, and group creative projects. Events also included live entertainment, cultural performances, sports activities, and opportunities for children and young people to explore new skills and experiences in a safe and inclusive environment.

Pathfinders staff worked alongside local organisations, Elders, and community groups to support the delivery of these events, helping to create spaces that recognised and honoured the strength, resilience, and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Through involvement in NAIDOC Week events, Pathfinders strengthened connections with local communities, celebrating and promoting inclusion and engagement across all programs. The celebrations provided a meaningful opportunity for staff, families, and young people to come together to learn, share stories, and honour the rich heritage and ongoing cultural traditions of Aboriginal communities in the regions we serve.





## Expansion to the Northern Territory

Over the past two years, Pathfinders has been steadily and intentionally expanding our presence into the Northern Territory, laying the groundwork for a long-term commitment to supporting children, young people, families and communities across the region. This work has been shaped by careful planning, strong local partnerships, and a commitment to ensuring that the programs we introduce in the Northern Territory are practical, effective and genuinely aligned with community needs.

Much of this journey has unfolded behind the scenes. Our team has travelled across Darwin, Palmerston and Alice Springs, meeting with Elders, community groups, government departments and local organisations to understand the unique challenges that communities are facing. These conversations have helped shape new service models, opened doors for collaboration, and ensured that our expansion is grounded in local knowledge rather than assumptions. What has emerged is a strong, interconnected network of government, industry and community partners who recognise the value Pathfinders can bring and who share our commitment to creating meaningful opportunities for people experiencing disadvantage.

A major milestone was the opening of our Palmerston office. The launch was attended by the Mayor, senior NT Government representatives, leaders from Quality Construction and Maintenance (QCM), industry partners and community organisations, reflecting the broad local support behind Pathfinders' arrival in the NT. The office has quickly become a central point for coordination, engagement and community access,

and is now home to several key initiatives driving our NT expansion.

One of the most significant developments has been the introduction of Pathways Forward, a joint initiative between Pathfinders and QCM that creates structured, long-term employment pathways for young people who face barriers to entering the workforce. While the program provides hands-on experience across a wide range of trade and construction activities, its real strength lies in the wrap-around support Pathfinders provides to each participant. Alongside their work placement, participants receive dedicated mentoring and assistance across areas such as work readiness, life skills, housing stability, finances, daily logistics and overall wellbeing. This support helps remove the non-vocational barriers that often prevent young people from maintaining employment. The program is already emerging as a strong model for helping participants build confidence, stay engaged and transition into meaningful long-term work opportunities.

Pathfinders has been invited to co-design work readiness boot camps for young people in Alice Springs, supporting them to build skills, confidence and positive routines.

We are also developing additional partnership proposals aimed at improving employment and reintegration outcomes for people preparing to transition back into the community. This work aligns closely with Pathfinders' commitment to early intervention and practical support, while contributing to broader goals around reducing disadvantage and supporting equitable outcomes for all communities.

Beyond these new initiatives, Pathfinders is also extending our Support Your Path disability service into the Northern Territory, with Support Coordination now available to participants across the region. This expansion strengthens our ability to assist people in navigating their NDIS plans, connecting with local providers, and coordinating the supports they need to achieve their goals.

These achievements have been made possible through the strong relationships built across the region. Support from local organisations, community services, government departments and business leaders has helped shape our work and create new opportunities. The growing momentum

in Alice Springs, along with expanding partnerships, highlights the significant progress already achieved.

At the centre of this expansion is a simple goal: creating practical opportunities for people who need support to move forward. Pathfinders is proud of the trust, collaboration and progress made so far, and we remain committed to growing our presence in a way that is steady, purposeful and genuinely helpful to the community. With solid foundations now in place, the coming year will see our services continue to grow across the Northern Territory, opening new pathways for children, young people and families.



Following the opening of our new Palmerston office in Darwin, the Pathfinders National Aboriginal Birth Certificate (PNABC) Program hosted its first sign-up event on-site the very next day.

The event drew more than 120 participants, demonstrating the strong demand for accessible identification services. It marked a significant milestone for our Northern Territory team, highlighting the immediate impact the Pathfinders National Aboriginal Birth Certificate Program can have for families and individuals needing support.

PICTURED: Pathfinders staff Ronald Naden, Peter Verry and Karyn Moyle at the PNABC sign-up event.



# Sanctuary Model Implementation

The Sanctuary Model is a trauma-informed framework that creates safe, supportive, and inclusive environments for individuals and organisations impacted by trauma. For Pathfinders, adopting this model is not an add-on but a whole-of-organisation cultural shift that strengthens how we support children, young people, families, and staff.

Sanctuary is not a program – it's a cultural change that reaches every corner of Pathfinders.

In 2024–2025, Pathfinders began the first stage of a three-year implementation. This foundation year focused on building awareness, introducing key tools, and sharing responsibility for change across all programs and service areas. A Steering Committee of senior leaders was established to oversee alignment with strategic goals, and a Core Team of 23 staff from across the organisation completed a week-long training program facilitated by the MacKillop Institute. The Core Team now meets monthly to champion Sanctuary, monitor progress, and drive initiatives such as Theme of the Month and Go-To Plans.

The Core Team is the backbone of change – 23 staff, across roles and regions, modelling Sanctuary in practice.

A further milestone was the creation of Pathfinders' first Sanctuary Training Team, who completed a

Train-the-Trainer program in February. This team has begun delivering professional learning across the organisation, ensuring staff are equipped to use core Sanctuary tools like Community Meetings, Red Flags, and the S.E.L.F. framework.

The first year was not without challenges, including lower-than-hoped staff engagement with Theme of the Month activities and the difficulty of balancing training development with workload demands. These challenges are being actively addressed through leadership modelling, Steering Committee oversight, and resource adjustments.

Despite these hurdles, the foundation has been firmly set. The next stage of implementation will focus on rolling out organisation-wide training, embedding Sanctuary tools into everyday practice, and measuring fidelity against the 29 Sanctuary Standards to guide continuous improvement.

Year One has laid the groundwork – the next years will embed Sanctuary into the DNA of Pathfinders.

With strong leadership, clear direction, and collective commitment, Pathfinders is ensuring Sanctuary becomes a lasting and integral part of the organisation's culture, consistently guided by the principles of safety, emotional intelligence, social learning, open communication, democracy, non-violence, growth, and cultural humility across all areas of practice.



## TRAINING THE TRAINERS

In February, Pathfinders' newly appointed Sanctuary Trainers came together in Armidale for their first "Train the Trainer" workshop. The two-day intensive session was facilitated by Cameron Burgess and Taille Abell from the MacKillop Institute.

During the workshop, trainers deepened their understanding of the Sanctuary Model's principles, commitments, and tools, while developing the confidence and skills to deliver engaging and meaningful training to staff across the organisation. This group will play a vital role in supporting teams to build safe, connected, and resilient environments for both young people and staff.



PICTURED: Pathfinders' Core Team coming together in Inverell for their first face-to-face meeting of the year, connecting staff from different programs and regions. Bottom: Core Team members participating in group work during Sanctuary Training.

## LAUNCHING OUR FIRST CORE TEAM

In November 2024, Pathfinders proudly launched its first Core Team, bringing together 23 staff members from programs across the New England and Mid-North Coast regions. Representing a wide range of roles and experiences, the team reflects the diversity, dedication, and strength of our organisation.

The group met for the first time in Coffs Harbour, where they took part in a week-long training program facilitated by the MacKillop Institute building shared understanding of the Sanctuary Model.

PICTURED: The Pathfinders Core Team on the final day of their week-long training in Coffs Harbour, joined by facilitators Tenille Abell, National Programs Practice Specialist, and Kate Martin, Sanctuary Faculty Consultant.







# Human Resources & Subscribe-HR a Cutting-Edge Employment Portal

During the 2024–2025 financial year, Pathfinders continued to strengthen its workforce, growing to 440 staff members, with 20% identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander—a slight shift from last year’s 23.75% as we focus on sustainable growth and retention.

This achievement reinforces our position at the forefront of employing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within the not-for-profit sector. We remain proud to be recognised as an employer of choice, with referrals continuing to be a major source of new recruits.

Our expansion included welcoming a number of new staff members this year. Growth in our Out-of-Home Care services and the ongoing success of the Support Your Path program continue to drive this increase, alongside the expansion of programs across New England, North West, Mid North Coast, and the Northern Territory.

Pathfinders remains committed to increasing Indigenous representation through targeted strategies, including traineeships and support for tertiary education, fostering a culturally inclusive workplace. To support our growing team, we are implementing new systems and technology to streamline recruitment, interviews, and onboarding processes, along with the use of SharePoint to improve workflow.

After months of development and collaboration, Subscribe-HR is set to transform our human resources operations. Designed with input from HR, Finance, and IT, the platform earned strong

feedback during user trials for its intuitive dashboard and functionality. Subscribe-HR will enhance efficiency and provide insights into payroll, leave management, training, WHS, performance, and recruitment – supporting our continued growth with a system tailored to Pathfinders’ needs.

The Marketing and Communications team continues to play a vital role in connecting Pathfinders’ programs, people, and achievements with the wider community. Supporting every program across the organisation, the team leads branding, design, and media engagement.

Throughout the year, the team collaborated with staff across sites to create promotional and informational materials, manage website updates, and produce engaging social media and SharePoint content.

Externally, they strengthened Pathfinders’ presence through consistent social media activity, advertising, and media coverage, including major exposure for the Pumpkin Run and the launch of new website pages for Support Your Path and NPSS.

Internally, the team supported SharePoint development, creating new resource hubs and improving communication across teams. Their creative and strategic work earned a nomination for the Marketing and Advertising Award at the 2024 Coffs Coast Business Awards – recognition of their innovation, professionalism, and impact in strengthening Pathfinders’ presence and community connections.



# Finance, Information Technology & Resources

As in prior years, the strength of our balance sheet remains essential to our ability to meet the needs of our clients and to deliver sustainable and strong outcomes. The Board’s focus on operational excellence and careful financial management has ensured that we have been able to continue to grow our core business and reinvest in our services and people. While there have been no new properties purchased, we continue to focus on the plans for the coming years and new funding opportunities.

Total revenue increased by \$3,266,946 (5.9%) from \$55,272,386 to \$58,539,332. Contracted revenue, comprising Government funding and fee-for-service income, increased by \$3,928,904. This reflects the growth in the Permanency Support, Short-Term Emergency Placement Programs, along with Individual Placement Agreements.

Other revenue has decreased by \$15,916 from \$5,634,442 to \$5,618,526. The main reason for this was sundry income with a decrease in donations (mostly made up of Crowdfunding).

Expenses for the year increased by \$4,549,682 (8.5%) from \$53,674,546 to \$58,224,228. The primary reasons for this are increases in wages and wage-related expenses, and increases in client and program costs as a result of a growth in contract and fee-for-service revenue. There is also the continued investment into maintaining the Company’s assets, ensuring they are fit for purpose.

## Resources

As the operations have continued to grow so have our resources. With the increased operations as well in the new financial year we will see growth again in the next year.

Organisational Assets	2025	2024
Properties – Rental	72	60
Properties – Owned	21	21
Motor Vehicles – Leased & Owned	111	109

## Information Technology

The Executive team has also committed to moving to Cloud-based servers in the 2025/26 year. This decision was made to move to ensure Pathfinders is at the forefront of giving staff the most efficient user experience and limiting technology downtime. During 2025/26, Pathfinders will also continue to develop SharePoint pages to give staff access to the necessary resources. Large amounts of time have also been spent in the 2025 financial year preparing for the 2025/26 rollout of the HR program (Subscribe – HR), which will enable self-service options and incident reporting for staff.



Pathfinders was proud to be acknowledged across business and community sectors throughout 2024–2025. We were finalists in multiple categories at the MidCoast Business Awards, going on to win Best Health and Wellbeing and Best Professional Service. Our efforts to create a supportive, high-performing workplace were also recognised at the Quality Business Awards Tamworth and Business NSW Regional Business Awards.

In the youth sector, we were shortlisted in five categories at the Youth Action Awards NSW, highlighting our work with young people, diverse communities, and strong partnerships. Additionally, at the Coffs Coast Business Awards, we were finalists for Outstanding Community Organisation and Marketing and Advertising, reflecting our innovative outreach and communications work.



## The Royal Hotel in Glen Innes NSW

The Royal Hotel in Glen Innes, a landmark in the community, has faced significant challenges due to a storm and a car accident that caused extensive structural damage.

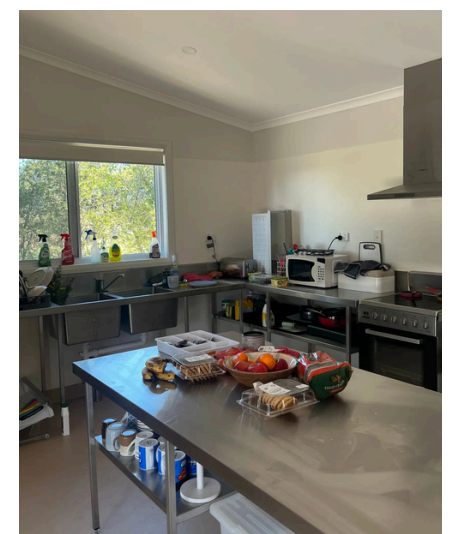
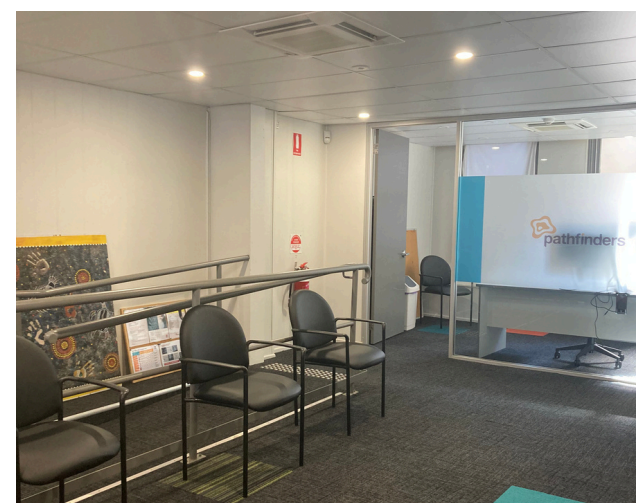
Despite these setbacks and the resulting delays in repairs, our dedicated team is working tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure the hotel is restored to its former glory and ready to serve the community as soon as possible.

To support this restoration and maintain the property's upkeep, we have appointed a permanent caretaker whose expertise ensures the site remains secure and well-maintained throughout the repair process. This strategic appointment reflects our commitment to safeguarding the Royal Hotel's legacy while preparing it for a vibrant future.

Once fully operational, the revitalised Royal Hotel will deliver immense benefits to the Glen Innes community. The restored facility will offer modern, short-term accommodation and will feature a state-of-the-art office facility to support our staff.

A dedicated educational centre will also be established, serving as a hub for community learning, workshops, and skill-building programs designed to empower residents, support local initiatives, and strengthen connections across the community, helping to build confidence and resilience in Glen Innes.

We thank the Glen Innes community for their patience and their ongoing support throughout the revitalisation process, and we look forward to welcoming everyone to the revitalised Royal Hotel soon.



## Rose Villa in Armidale NSW

Pathfinders is thrilled to announce a new partnership with Homes North Community Housing to provide safe and supported temporary accommodation at Rose Villa in Armidale. This initiative offers a secure and nurturing environment where residents can rebuild confidence and work toward independence.

The beautifully refurbished property features a fully functional communal kitchen, cozy living areas, private bedrooms, and inviting shared spaces designed to foster a sense of home and belonging. Pathfinders' dedicated team has worked diligently to transform Rose Villa into a warm, professional, and welcoming space, ensuring it meets the needs of both residents and staff while reflecting the care and respect at the heart of our mission.

Rose Villa plays a critical role in addressing homelessness by offering more than just shelter. Residents benefit from free education in essential life skills, including cooking, budgeting, and household management, alongside access to fresh food generously donated by SecondBite each week, helping to improve nutrition and support wellbeing.

Staff provide practical support, such as transport to appointments or facilitating on-site visits, to ensure services are accessible. Through this partnership, Pathfinders and Homes North are committed to creating pathways to stability, education, and long-term wellbeing, helping to empower residents to break the cycle of hardship and build brighter, more independent futures.





## Work Health, Safety and Risk Unit

The Pathfinders Work Health, Safety and Risk (WHS & Risk) Unit plays a central role in maintaining the safety, wellbeing, and compliance of our organisation. Supported by the Pathfinders Health and Safety Committee, which includes managers, workers, and Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) from across the organisation, the Unit provides leadership in identifying risks, implementing controls, and supporting a strong safety culture. The Committee meets regularly to monitor emerging trends, address workplace issues, and ensure consistent oversight of health and safety across Pathfinders' diverse programs.

Over the past year, the WHS & Risk Unit was active in both proactive and responsive measures to strengthen safety outcomes. With more than 440 staff employed across permanent, part-time, and casual positions, and more than 160 young people in care, along with multiple community-based activities, the organisation faces a broad range of potential risks. Through education, consultation, and workplace assessments, the Unit has provided ongoing guidance to staff on their responsibilities and legal obligations under SafeWork NSW standards.

Training was a major focus throughout the year, ensuring that staff have the knowledge and skills required to uphold safety in their roles. Key training areas included introductory work health and safety for new and existing staff, emergency planning and evacuation procedures, farm safety at Tilbuster Station, and the installation and use of defibrillators

in key office locations. In addition, eight Health and Safety Representatives completed formal training and now play an important role in representing staff perspectives and contributing to the Health and Safety Committee.

Workplace assessments continued as a priority, with site inspections and data collection informing the identification and management of risks across programs. These assessments, conducted in collaboration with managers and staff, have supported the implementation of practical safety measures and improved awareness of safe work practices.

A review of the Duress Alarm Watch system was undertaken during the year to strengthen safety for staff working in the field. Significant time and investment have been committed to this initiative, which will continue to be refined to ensure staff have effective tools for personal safety while delivering services in community settings.

While workplace safety can sometimes be overshadowed by competing priorities, the Unit has worked consistently to highlight the importance of integrating safety into daily practice. The coming year will see a continued emphasis on training, workplace assessments, and system improvements to uphold compliance, strengthen our organisational culture, and ensure the health and safety of all Pathfinders staff, volunteers, contractors, clients, participants and community remain at the forefront of our operations.



PICTURED: Team members from the Inverell and Glen Innes Specialist Homelessness Support Services, along with the Inverell Family and Youth Support Service, participating in Falcon Duress Watch Alarm training at the Inverell office, facilitated by the WHS team.



PICTURED: The Tilbuster Station team showing off their new sun smart hats. At Tilbuster, sun safety is a top priority, and with support from Pathfinders' WHS team, staff and young people are now better protected while working outdoors.

BELOW: Armidale staff came together to take part in a 'Safe Tea' event in October 2024, recognising National Safe Work Month and taking time to reflect on the importance of safety and looking out for one another in the workplace.



### DURESS WATCHES

Pathfinders has introduced Falcon Duress Watch Alarms across a number of community programs, strengthening safety and wellbeing for our frontline staff. The discreet devices allow workers to send an instant alert if they feel unsafe, ensuring help is only a button away.

The rollout followed a successful pilot with the Family Connect & Support Program on the Mid North Coast, where feedback from staff was overwhelmingly positive. Building on this success, the WHS team provided in-person training to ensure staff felt confident and supported in using the new technology.







# Aboriginal Early Years Program

Pathfinders' Aboriginal Early Years Program (AEYP) supports Aboriginal children aged two to six years in accessing quality early childhood education and preparing for a strong start at school. Delivered across Inverell, Ashford, Tingha, Glen Innes, Armidale, Walcha, Uralla, Guyra, Gunnedah, Quirindi, Narrabri, Wee Waa and Pilliga, the program continues to expand its reach to meet community needs.

The program's primary focus is to ensure children are supported into formal early learning environments such as preschool or long day care. Dedicated AEYP support workers work closely with families to find suitable placements, assist with enrolment paperwork, and support children through the critical transition into school. Support workers remain engaged even after the child has entered preschool or school, continuing to offer guidance and respond to emerging needs to ensure a smooth and positive educational journey.

In 2024–2025, the program supported approximately 99 children and their families across 13 communities, delivered by a dedicated team of three staff. Referrals to both internal Pathfinders services and external agencies played a key role in providing holistic family support. A proposal to the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) was successful, securing funding and enabling the extension of the program to Glen Innes and Pilliga in January. Later in June, the program expanded into Guyra, supporting families who had relocated to the

township and ensuring they remained connected to early learning opportunities.

The year began with a celebration of culture and community. In July, the team participated in NAIDOC Week events across the regions, creating vibrant, welcoming spaces where children and families could celebrate with and engage in Aboriginal culture. This was followed by the launch of Time for a Yarn, a community initiative designed to offer safe spaces for families to connect and access early childhood guidance. While the project ran for a short period, it laid the groundwork for future culturally appropriate family support initiatives.

Community outreach was a strong focus this year, with the team actively involved in school and community events, school holiday programs, and national celebrations such as National Children's Week and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day. These events created valuable opportunities to connect with new families, raise awareness of the program, and deepen partnerships with early childhood services, schools, and community organisations.

The Aboriginal Early Years Program remains a vital bridge between families, early learning centres, and schools. By helping to build confidence, remove barriers to access, and promote culturally safe learning environments, the program continues to provide young children with the foundations for success in education and beyond.

## SERVICE LOCATIONS

- Inverell
- Ashford
- Tingha
- Glen Innes
- Armidale
- Walcha
- Uralla
- Guyra
- Gunnedah
- Quirindi
- Narrabri
- Wee Waa
- Pilliga



## NAIDOC WEEK EVENTS

Pathfinders' Aboriginal Early Years Program (AEYP) continued to support NAIDOC Week events, engaging families and the wider community in celebrating Aboriginal culture. The team attended the NAIDOC Week Community Expo at Minimbah Preschool and Primary School in Armidale, participated in activities at The Keeping Place, and supported the basketball events hosted by Pathfinders and Basketball NSW. These celebrations strengthened connections with families and communities while celebrating culture in a positive and inclusive way.



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS:

99 CHILDREN & FAMILIES SUPPORTED

13 REGIONAL SUPPORTED COMMUNITIES

03 DEDICATED TEAM OF STAFF





# Pathfinders National Aboriginal Birth Certificate Program

For more than a decade, the Pathfinders National Aboriginal Birth Certificate Program (PNABC) has worked to ensure that First Nations Australians have access to a birth certificate, a fundamental right and essential document for participating fully in society. Without a birth certificate, individuals may be unable to enrol in school, open a bank account, apply for a driver's licence, or access government and Medicare services. The program continues to remove these barriers, supporting thousands of people across the country each year.

In 2024–2025, PNABC supported over 1,500 individuals and held 16 community sign-up events in partnership with local organisations, service providers, and community leaders. The program continued to strengthen its national footprint, hosting events in both urban and remote communities across New South Wales, Queensland and South Australia. Notably, the team worked closely with UNICEF Australia for a third consecutive year, strengthening the impact of the program and amplifying the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through national advocacy.

A major milestone this year was the expansion of the program into South Australia. In February, sign-up events were held for the first time in Murray Bridge and Mount Gambier, followed by a successful event in Port Augusta in April. The warm reception and strong community participation affirmed the need for this work in the region and highlighted the need for additional events across South Australia to reach and support more families in the future. The events also helped build strong local partnerships and community connections.



Outreach also continued across New South Wales, with events held in Tamworth, Narrabri, Wee Waa, Moree, Boggabilla, Inverell, Glen Innes, Armidale, Coonamble, Bourke and Brewarrina. In Queensland, the program participated in ID Connect events in Toowoomba and Goondiwindi, while also supporting Financial Wellness Week events in Townsville and on Palm Island in July 2024.

The program maintained a strong presence at community events and service fairs, such as the Pit Stop in Coffs Harbour, Dalaigur & Scribbly Gum Dalai Preschool in Kempsey, the Goanna Academy event in Coffs Harbour, and a cultural event held at the Redfern Cultural Centre in Sydney. Each event was an opportunity not only to support individuals in obtaining a birth certificate but also to connect with service providers and identify further needs in the community.

An increase in online applications were received through the Pathfinders website and email this year, reflecting the growing awareness of, and trust in, the program's national reach. Many of these applications came from individuals in remote or regional locations, where accessing formal identification documents remains a persistent challenge.

Through partnerships with schools, health services, community centres, preschools, legal services, Chuffed.org and Aboriginal organisations, PNABC is helping close the identity gap, ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have lifelong access to identification and opportunities across Australia.



PICTURED: Staff attending the Pathfinders National Aboriginal Birth Certificate Program's first sign-up events in South Australia. The inaugural Port Augusta gathering welcomed 190 community members, with many receiving their birth certificates on the day thanks to the support of the SA Births, Deaths and Marriages Registry. Following the success of this launch, more events are planned across the state to meet the growing demand.



PICTURED: PNABC attended First Nations Financial Wellness Week in Townsville and Palm Island, Queensland, in September. The events provided a valuable opportunity for community members to get their money matters in order, with support from banks, super funds, financial counsellors, and government services. PNABC was also onsite to assist with birth certificate applications.







## Inverell Family Youth Support Service

The Inverell Youth and Family Support Service (IFYSS) continues to empower young people and families in Inverell and surrounding communities, strengthening wellbeing and resilience. Focusing on early intervention and practical support, the program assists families facing challenges such as parenting pressures, school engagement, housing instability, and domestic and family violence. We are pleased to announce that the IFYSS contract has been renewed until 2030, ensuring long-term stability for the service.

Over the course of 2024–2025, the service supported over 450 clients through the Early Intervention and Placement Prevention program, along with an additional 126 clients through the program’s Aboriginal Family Workers. Across the year, individuals and families engaged with the service, with a dedicated team of five staff providing one-on-one case support, group programs, and community engagement activities. With a strong local presence in Inverell, Tingha, and Ashford, the team built relationships with young people, schools, and community partners to ensure accessible, tailored support for each family’s unique needs.

The service delivered a range of programs including Circle of Security Parenting, RAGE (Re-Navigating Anger and Guilt Expression), SHARK Cage, and Rules and Relationships, equipping parents, carers, and young people with practical tools to strengthen relationships, regulate emotions, and build safer, more positive futures. While participation in the parenting program remained a challenge, the team worked to address barriers through targeted promotions and strengthened referral pathways. Feedback from parents who did attend was overwhelmingly positive, reporting improved confidence in their parenting and stronger emotional connections with their children.

Throughout the year, IFYSS supported families experiencing complex issues such as homelessness, intergenerational trauma, mental

health concerns, and caring for children with additional needs. By providing wraparound, strengths-based support, the program was able to prevent children and young people from entering out-of-home care, help families establish safe and stable home environments, and build resilience for long-term wellbeing. The Aboriginal Family Worker program and Supported Playgroup continued to play a crucial role in delivering culturally responsive, inclusive support for Aboriginal families, with strong participation and positive outcomes.

The Bunbun Supported Playgroup in Ashford provides a welcoming, inclusive space for families with young children to come together each week. The program offers a mix of play-based learning, creative activities, and outdoor play, while also giving parents and carers opportunities to connect with one another and access practical parenting information. Regular visits from guest presenters cover topics such as school readiness, early intervention, child safety, and healthy living, ensuring families have access to valuable resources and support. This year, Bunbun supported more than 50 local families, with participation continuing to grow each week. Funded by Families NSW and delivered by IFYSS staff, the playgroup remains a trusted and well-attended service for families in the Ashford community.

Community engagement remained a key focus for IFYSS throughout the year. In September, the program was active in Tingha, taking part in the Best Community Services Family Fun Day and the annual Tingha Connect. That month, the team partnered with GambleAware to deliver a gambling awareness session at Ashford Central School and presented at an Inverell Rotary meeting to strengthen relationships with local stakeholders. Youth engagement was further supported through activities such as a kayaking day in October and participation in the Inverell Careers Expo in June, providing young people opportunities to connect with service providers and employers and explore future education and employment pathways.



**INVERELL ROTARY CLUB**

In September, our Inverell team attended the Inverell Rotary Club dinner as guest speakers. Rebecca Brewer, from IFYSS, spoke about the challenges facing community services and the positive impact Pathfinders has in supporting children, young people, and families. She also highlighted the importance of strong partnerships in creating resilient communities.

We thank the Inverell Rotary Club for their ongoing partnership and valued support at community events.

### GAMBLEAWARE NSW

The Inverell Family and Youth Support Service (IFYSS) team partnered with GambleAware NSW, to deliver an educational presentation at Ashford Central School on the hidden links between gambling and gaming. This partnership forms part of GambleAware NSW’s broader initiative to raise awareness of gambling-related harm and support community education, particularly among young people.

The session explored how online and console gaming can mirror gambling behaviours through features like loot boxes and reward systems, and how gambling promotions are increasingly embedded in social media, sports, and digital entertainment targeting young people.



### JOEY’S ADVENTURE KAYAKING TOURS

During the October school holidays, IFYSS partnered with Joey’s Adventure Kayaking Tours to deliver a kayaking program at Lake Inverell through the NSW Regional Holiday Break Program. This initiative provides young people with free, fun, and engaging activities during the holidays, creating opportunities they may not otherwise have to try. With perfect weather, participants enjoyed a three-hour paddle, exploring the lake and discovering its rich wildlife, including pelicans, black swans, and eagles.







## Family Connect and Support

Pathfinders is proud to deliver Family Connect and Support (FCS) in partnership with Social Futures. FCS is an early intervention and support service designed to help families navigate challenges and build resilience before issues become crises. The program operates across the Mid North Coast, including the Mid-Coast, Coffs Harbour, Port Macquarie-Hastings, Kempsey, Nambucca, and Bellingen regions, linking children, young people, and their families with services, resources, and supports within their local communities.

This year, FCS supported over 1,200 clients through a skilled and compassionate team of 12 staff. Homelessness emerged as one of the most pressing issues, particularly in Coffs Harbour, where referrals were significantly higher. This reflects the growing housing crisis in the region and highlights the urgent need for more coordinated local support. Many families self-referred to FCS for the first time, while others returned for further assistance as new challenges arose. Vulnerable children aged 0–5 years made up 31% of clients, children and young people aged 0–18 years affected by mental health made up 98.3% of clients, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families accounted for 39.9% of clients.

The program continued to grow in visibility and reach, with staff engaging directly with families through school visits, community events, and partnerships with local services. Outreach remained central to the program's success, ensuring families felt supported and connected when they needed it most.

A key feature of the year was the team's strong presence across community events and programs across the regions we serve. Highlights included participation in major events such as the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day in Kempsey, Community Connect in Taree, Homelessness Community Day in Port Macquarie, and the Pit Stop Event in Coffs Harbour, alongside proud support for the Yuwa Nyinda Dream

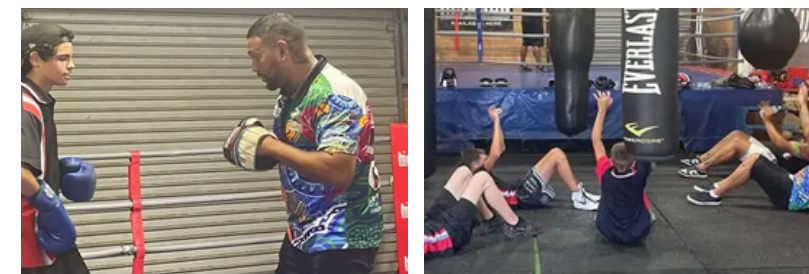
Academy Festival, which celebrated and uplifted Aboriginal youth voices. Beyond events, staff delivered targeted programs and ongoing initiatives that strengthened community connections. These included delivering the Love Bites program at St Paul's College, hosting the Bellbrook Yarning Group throughout the year, and providing family-focused activities at the First Steps Count Child and Community Centre.

The program also partnered with initiatives such as the National Aboriginal Sporting Academy, Healthy Harold sessions, the Clothesline Project, and the Biripi Baby Shower. In December, donations from the Dunghutti Elders Council and headspace Kempsey were received and distributed to families in need, providing extra support at a critical time.

The new year began with the GO PLAY Holiday Program and continued with more family activities at First Steps Count, while FCS also supported the Wutumagudhurr Gumbirr Men's Group and launched a Youth Fitness Program in Kempsey. Together, these activities reflect the program's ongoing commitment to community-based support.

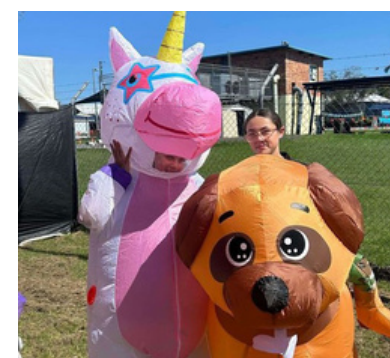
Unexpected challenges also shaped the year. Severe flooding across the Mid North Coast significantly impacted Kempsey, Port Macquarie, and Taree, with Pathfinders staff, clients, and office locations directly affected. Despite these pressures, the team maintained strong support for vulnerable families through regular welfare check-ins, immediate assistance, and active involvement at Disaster Recovery Centres.

As we reflect on the year, FCS continues to demonstrate the importance of early intervention and community based engagement. The program's reach and partnerships ensure families have access to the right support at the right time, building stronger, safer futures for children and young people across our regions.



### YOUTH HEALTH & FITNESS PROGRAM

During the year, our FCS team supported the new Community Youth Health & Fitness Program in Kempsey, hosted by Durri Aboriginal Corporation Medical Service, where young people aged 12–18 took part in boxing and fitness sessions. The program helps build health, confidence, and discipline, promotes healthy lifestyles, and encourages completion of 715 Health Checks.



PICTURED: Family Connect and Support staff at the Yuwa Nyinda Dream Academy festival in Kempsey, a community event organised by Learning the Macleay and Dhina Durriti to inspire young people.

### NULLA NULLA YARNING

During the year, the Nulla Nulla Yarning Group returned, offering a safe and welcoming space for women in the community to connect and support one another. The group's activities focus on self-care and wellbeing. We thank our partners Many Rivers Family Violence Prevention Legal Services, Kinchela Boys Home Aboriginal Corporation, and headspace Kempsey for their ongoing support in helping make this program possible.



### WUTUMAGUDHURR GUMBIRR – "GROW STRONG YOUNGER BROTHER" PROGRAM

This year, our FCS team launched the Wutumagudhurr Gumbirr – "Grow Strong Younger Brother" group, in partnership with local Aboriginal organisations. The program provides strong male role models and mentors to support young men, helping them connect and build positive relationships.





# Out of Home Care Services

Pathfinders' Out of Home Care (OOHC) program provides safe, supportive, and therapeutic care to children and young people who are unable to live with their families. The program spans across multiple regions, including New England North West and Mid North Coast, and includes a range of services such as Foster Care, Residential Care, Short-Term Emergency Placements, Mentoring, Supported Independent Living, and specialist therapeutic models.

During 2024–2025, Pathfinders supported approximately 260 children and young people across 12 locations in NSW and into QLD, delivered by a committed team of approximately 350 staff and carers.

Throughout the year, Pathfinders continued to build strong partnerships with the Department of Communities and Justice, local professionals, and community-based organisations to ensure the needs of every child and young person were met with dignity and care.

Pathfinders operates several Interim Care Model (ICM) properties, offering a therapeutic and restorative alternative to traditional care placements for children aged nine to 14. These short-term residential services, now available across multiple locations, provide stable, nurturing environments for children and young people who need time to settle and heal before moving into longer-term placements. Each site is designed to support routine, emotional regulation, and self-confidence through activities such as gardening, animal care, and hands-on projects. The model runs over a three to six-month period and is underpinned by trauma-informed practices. Originally piloted just outside Armidale, the success of the Interim Care Model has seen it expand to meet growing demand in other regions, while

continuing to offer individualised, supportive care in calm, home-like settings.

Short-Term Emergency Placement (STEP) remains an essential part of the OOHC offering, providing three-week intensive support for high-needs young people aged 12 to 18. STEP homes operate across all of Pathfinders' geographical regions and are designed to be responsive, one-to-one placements while longer-term care options are secured.

The Mentoring Program continued to provide one-on-one tailored support for young people who have transitioned into Supported Independent Living with individual goals and living skills. Matched with trained mentors, young people engaged in activities that built life skills such as budgeting, meal prep, driving, job readiness, and cultural connection. The program has proven especially effective in boosting confidence and independence for those in transition.

The Therapeutic Care Team played a crucial role this year by equipping carers and frontline staff with trauma-informed tools and strategies. Recognising the impact of complex trauma on children in care, the team delivered ongoing training, consultation, and practical supports to improve emotional safety and recovery outcomes. The team has been instrumental in the roll out of Therapeutic Crisis Intervention training across our youth work teams.

The OOHC program has seen an uplift in positive outcomes for our young people in Intensive Therapeutic Care over the last year such as an increase in education engagement and gaining meaningful employment. We have even had some young people reconnect and return to living in a family home with their previous foster carers.

Across all care types, Residential Care homes offered 24/7 staffed support in safe, structured environments. Using a therapeutic care framework, the homes promoted stability and cultural identity, with case management and mentoring embedded into everyday routines. This approach helped young people work toward long-term wellbeing and independence.

Donations and community support played an important part in enhancing the lives of young people in care. In July, sleep kits were generously donated by New England Family Support Services, followed by Christmas gifts from Inverell Dental Services' annual Christmas donation fundraiser, hams from Bindaree Beef, and contributions to the local Toy Drive by Inverell-based staff. Boyce Inverell also made a financial donation in April to support the program's ongoing efforts and ongoing work.

Young people took part in a range of community-based events throughout the year. The program was involved in Foster Care Week, National Child



Protection Week (featuring on Prime News in September), the Psychosocial Safe Summit, and Youth Week celebrations in Tamworth and Port Macquarie. These events helped raise awareness, strengthen local connections, and celebrate the resilience of children and carers within the Out of Home Care system.

A particular highlight was the Pumpkin Run, which engaged young people from across our services in all stages of the project, from planting seeds at Tilbuster Station in November, to harvesting and distributing fresh pumpkins in May to community kitchens, shelters, and food programs. The initiative combined learning, responsibility, and community contribution, making it a standout achievement for the year.

With new facilities, upskilling of staff, targeted therapeutic support, and a continued focus on restoring safety and trust, Pathfinders' Out of Home Care Program remains committed to creating secure and hopeful futures for vulnerable children and young people.







## Non-Placement Support Service

Pathfinders' Non-Placement Support Service (NPSS) continues to deliver essential, high-quality support for children and young people in out-of-home care (OOHC), their families, and the broader care system.

As an approved provider under the Department of Communities and Justice's Casework Support Scheme (CSS), NPSS plays a critical role in bridging gaps in care and ensuring that young people receive consistent, trauma-informed, and culturally respectful support tailored to their individual needs.

The program offers a range of services, including supervised family time, youth mentoring, supervised transport, respite care, and staffing for individual placement arrangements. These services are flexible and client-centred, responding to the unique challenges faced by children and young people aged 0 to 18.

Over the past year, NPSS has continued to grow in both demand and capacity. Our mentoring program remains a vital part of the service, offering young people ongoing one-to-one support to build life skills, confidence, and a sense of stability. Whether supporting young people to develop

budgeting and cooking skills, connect with their culture, or gain the confidence to pursue education or employment, mentors act as a steady and compassionate presence in their lives.

Demand for supervised family time has remained consistent, with our trained support workers providing professional support for more than 800 visits between children and their families over the past year.

Each visit is arranged with the child's wellbeing at the centre, creating a safe environment where families can stay connected. Our team works closely with caseworkers, carers, and other professionals to ensure every visit is carefully planned, sensitively facilitated, and thoroughly documented.

NPSS operates from offices in Armidale, Tamworth, Inverell, Coffs Harbour, Port Macquarie and Taree, with staff travelling to surrounding regions to meet service demand, this past year covering more than 290 000kms. Our Support Workers are carefully selected and trained, ensuring they can respond with sensitivity, professionalism, and a strong understanding of trauma and child development.

PROGRAM  
HIGHLIGHTS:

800 FAMILY  
TIME VISITS

290,000 REGIONAL  
KILOMETRES





# Inverell and Glen Innes Specialist Homelessness Support Service

The Inverell and Glen Innes Specialist Homelessness Support Service, which includes the Inverell Women's and Children's Refuge, provided vital assistance to individuals and families experiencing or at risk of homelessness throughout the year. During 2024–2025, the program supported more than 370 people across Inverell, Glen Innes, and surrounding areas, delivered by a dedicated team of outreach and refuge staff. Services included case management, crisis accommodation, outreach, advocacy and access to resources.

The majority of clients supported were women and children, with many referrals linked to domestic and family violence and family breakdown. Between 38–42% of clients identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, and many faced additional challenges such as mental health concerns, disability, financial hardship, or involvement with the justice system. The Inverell Women's and Children's Refuge operated at or near full capacity for much of the year, with most clients being women and children aged up to nine years.

Housing pressures remained a significant challenge, with record-low vacancy rates and limited temporary accommodation creating barriers to securing stable housing, placing added strain on families already experiencing hardship.

Despite these pressures, there were many positive outcomes, with numerous clients assisted into longer-term properties through Pathfinders' support and connections with local services.

Throughout the year, the team participated in a number of community events and awareness initiatives. In July, the team coordinated a Homelessness Week Donation Drive, encouraging local support and involvement. In October, the program was represented at a Rotary Presentation, raising awareness about homelessness and the service's impact. In November, staff participated in the Clothesline Project across Armidale and Inverell as part of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence. Community outreach continued in March with staff attending the Glen Innes Public Schools Community Services Expo to connect with families and increase awareness of local support.

Community donations were another highlight of the year. Generous contributions came from Service NSW, Commonwealth Bank Glen Innes, and the Inverell Women's Golf Club, providing additional gifts and support for families during the holiday season. Financial donations from New England Chiropractic, Sapphire City Motor Sport Club, and the Glen Innes Dance Group also played a vital role in supporting the ongoing work of the program and the Inverell Women's and Children's Refuge.



PICTURED LEFT: SHS staff with New England Chiropractic Inverell team members, who generously donated \$6,500 to support Pathfinders' Inverell Women's & Children's Refuge. The donation will provide essentials for families escaping domestic violence and fund upgrades to the refuge's outdoor play area and shared garden.

PICTURED: Glen Innes SHS Support Worker Jessica Davidson accepting the cheque from Dr Mahri Koch and the Glen Innes dancers for \$2,480.



PICTURED: Pathfinders' SHS Support Worker Jacqueline Dickson, former SHS Coordinator Jan McKay, and Inverell Rotary Club President Helen Tickle at the Inverell Rotary Club dinner.



PICTURED TOP ROW: Pathfinders SHS team members Catherine Blair, Jacqueline Dickson, Jessica Davidson, and former SHS Coordinator Jan McKay with donations collected by Service NSW and CommBank Glen Innes, along with gifts from Hunter New England Health Inverell staff, being donated for distribution to local families.

PICTURED MIDDLE LEFT: Jodie Haidle (SHS Support Worker), Lyn O'Brien, and Pat Pickering with donated toys from the Inverell Women's Golf Club and Big W Inverell, supporting children at the Inverell Women's & Children's Refuge playground.



PICTURED: Mother's Day celebrations at the Inverell Women's and Children's Refuge, where mums were treated to pamper packs and a family pizza night to mark the occasion.

PICTURED LEFT: Glen Innes SHS Support Worker Cindy Wilson collecting a generous bakery donation from Smeatons Bakery, who now provide weekly goods to support locals experiencing hardship.





# Armidale Youth Homelessness Support Service

The Armidale Youth Homelessness Support Service continues to provide essential support to young people experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness across the New England region. With a focus on early intervention, crisis support, and sustainable housing pathways, the service works closely with young people aged 16 to 24 to address immediate needs and build long-term stability through wraparound support and community connection.

From July 2024 to June 2025, the service supported 142 clients. The majority of clients identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (58.5%), with 41.5% identifying as non-Indigenous. Client numbers were consistently higher among women than men, with a small proportion identifying as other. Referrals came through a range of pathways; the most common sources of referrals were from Specialist Homelessness Services, family and friends, and informal networks.

The leading reasons young people sought support included housing crisis (accounting for around one-third of all cases), financial difficulties, housing affordability stress, and relationship or family breakdown, with domestic and family violence also featuring as a significant cause.

During the year, support was delivered by a committed team of five staff, who provided case management, outreach, advocacy, and access to safe accommodation options. Alongside addressing immediate housing needs, the team helped young people navigate challenges such as family breakdown, unemployment, and disconnection from education.

The year began with strong community engagement. In August, the team participated in Homelessness Connection Day in Armidale, raising awareness about the realities of youth homelessness. In September, staff and community members joined the Vinnies Community Sleepout, showing solidarity and helping to raise funds for those without a safe place to call home.

December saw two key community initiatives. The service coordinated a donation of food and essential items to the Uralla Community Neighbourhood Centre, supporting families facing financial hardship. The team also received generous contributions through the annual UNE Christmas Giving Tree, an initiative coordinated each year by the University of New England. Thanks to this donation, dozens of young people and families received festive gifts and support during the Christmas period.

One of the year's most significant achievements was the launch of a new Life Skills Program in collaboration with New England Community College. Developed with College staff, the 19-week course was designed to help young people gain practical skills for independent living and employment. With support from Pathfinders staff, participants attended weekly classes in cooking, health, literacy, numeracy, digital skills, and vocational pathways. The program also covered résumé writing, job applications, and interview preparation. Every young person who completed the course achieved a General Adult Education Certificate I. The program was also extended to support Pathfinders clients in Out of Home Care.

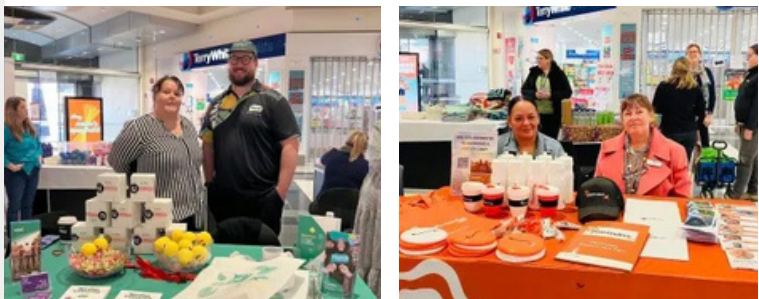
In April, the service held a Community Open Day at the Refuge with support from a range of local service providers. The team also joined national efforts to mark Youth Homelessness Matters Day, using social media and community conversations to raise awareness and advocate for young people experiencing housing insecurity.

Throughout the year, the Armidale Youth Homelessness Support Service remained focused on person-centred support and early intervention for young people. By working in partnership with education providers, community organisations, and housing networks, the team continues to build a strong foundation for young people in the New England region to create brighter, more stable futures.



PICTURED ABOVE: Staff attended the graduation ceremony for participants of the new 19-week Life Skills Program, run in partnership with New England Community College. The program supported participants to develop practical skills, increase confidence, and build pathways toward further education, training, and employment opportunities.

PICTURED RIGHT: During Homelessness Week, Pathfinders joined local services at the Armidale Homeless Connect Day to raise awareness and share information about supports available to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness.



## YOUTH HOMELESSNESS MATTERS DAY (YHMD)

SHS staff from Armidale and Inverell joined the national Youth Homelessness Matters Day campaign by hosting a community event at Armidale Central Plaza. The initiative aimed to raise awareness about the challenges faced by young people experiencing homelessness and advocate for increased support services. Throughout the day, staff engaged with the community in meaningful conversations, collected petition signatures calling for a national strategy to end youth homelessness, and received generous donations to assist young people.



# The Clothesline Project

Pathfinders' commitment to raising awareness and standing with survivors was powerfully demonstrated last year through the delivery of the Clothesline Project, held during the global 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence campaign. The initiative once again brought people together across regional communities to honour the strength and resilience of those impacted by gender-based violence, while encouraging open conversations and collective healing.

Events were held in Armidale, Kempsey and Inverell, where participants were invited to design T-shirts expressing their personal experiences or create messages of support. Each shirt became a canvas for advocacy and solidarity, forming part of a striking public art display intended to amplify the voices that can no longer remain silent. These events provided a safe and supported environment, facilitated by Pathfinders' Specialist Homelessness Services team, with counsellors on hand to offer guidance and emotional support throughout the process.

The events drew strong community involvement, with local schools, service providers, and families taking part in painting workshops and contributing to the visual displays. In Kempsey, the event featured a gallery-style exhibition alongside a

video presentation that showcased community voices and artworks created by St Paul's College students. Following the workshops, the completed T-shirts were displayed publicly in each town, transforming local spaces into visual statements of courage and community unity.

In Armidale, the display was located outside the Pathfinders' office on Beardy Street, while Inverell's shirts were hung outside the Inverell Shire Council building. Kempsey's display was featured throughout the first week of December at the Gowings Complex in Kempsey Central, offering a walk-through experience for the wider community.

The success of the Clothesline Project was made possible by the generosity and collaboration of local businesses and community organisations. Supporters included The Inverell BEST Community Shed, Northaven Ability Florist, Many Rivers, headspace Kempsey, Dalaigur Preschool, Community Housing Kempsey, AES Kempsey, Shine for Kids, Dhina Durriti, Learning the Macleay, Kempsey Shire Council and Inverell Shire Council. The Clothesline Project continues to play a vital role in encouraging community engagement around the issue of gender-based violence. By providing an opportunity for expression and visibility, the project supports a collective commitment to awareness and positive social change.



## COMMUNITIES UNITE IN ARMIDALE AND INVERELL

Events were held across the New England region, including Armidale and Inverell, where the Clothesline Project was proudly supported by local businesses and community organisations.

The success of these events was made possible through the generosity and collaboration of local partners, including The Inverell BEST Community Shed, which made a valued donation to support the activities.

The completed displays were showcased outside the Inverell Shire Council building and Pathfinders' Armidale office, transforming public spaces into powerful visual statements of community strength and solidarity, while continuing to raise awareness and spark conversations about family violence and community healing.



## RAISING AWARENESS ON THE MID NORTH COAST

During the global 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, Pathfinders' Family Connect and Support (FCS) team on the Mid North Coast – Ashley Sloane, Michelle Mayhew, and Clarissa Griffen – partnered with Kempsey Shire Council to deliver a series of Clothesline Project events across the region.

Each event invited community members to create and display t-shirts bearing messages of hope, strength, and resilience in support of survivors of domestic and gender-based violence.

The partnership helped bring the community together in a powerful show of solidarity, with the work also featured in a video produced by Kempsey Shire Council, highlighting local efforts to raise awareness and drive meaningful change.



# Support Your Path

The 2024–2025 year marked continued growth for Support Your Path (SYP), Pathfinders' dedicated disability support service. Following an audit by Approved Quality Auditors, DNV, in May 2024, SYP successfully renewed its NDIS registration on 19 November 2024.

Operating across the New England and Mid North Coast regions, SYP supported people living with disability to build independence and strengthen community connections. Services were delivered in Tamworth, Armidale, Inverell, Glen Innes, Coffs Harbour, Kempsey, Taree, and Port Macquarie, with a strong focus on person-centred care tailored to each participant's goals.

SYP provides a mix of housing and NDIS supports, including independent living in rental properties, daily living assistance, social participation, employment supports and community engagement. A key development this year was the expansion of Support Coordination services, particularly in Coffs Harbour, enabling participants to access more holistic support when navigating their NDIS plans.

Program Snapshot (as at June 2025, across MNC and NENW): Pathfinders is currently supporting 21 participants in housing, 51 participants through the Support Your Path (SYP) disability support program, and 58 participants with Support Coordination. Our team includes 32 dedicated staff members: one full-time, nine part-time, and 22 disability support workers.

Accessibility and community engagement remained priorities throughout the year. Updates to the Pathfinders' website improved usability for people of all abilities, while SYP staff and participants contributed to community events

including the Pumpkin Run in Coffs Harbour, Linksfor Life Disability Expo, Ready Set Connect events, and the Warialda Expo. Partnerships were also strengthened with organisations such as Mission Australia, Homes North, and Loaves and Fishes Food Pantry in Coffs Harbour – providing new housing pathways, volunteer opportunities, and stronger community connections.

Workforce development was another area of focus. Staff accessed a range of professional development opportunities, both online and in person. In partnership with TAFE NSW, several SYP staff commenced a Certificate III in Individual Support (Ageing and Disability) in October 2024, delivered virtually twice a week. A new workplace placement arrangement with TAFE NSW also provided students in Coffs Harbour with valuable hands-on learning experiences within Pathfinders' disability services.

Pathfinders is proud that Support Your Path received the Enablement Award for Most Outstanding Regional Not-for-Profit Providing NDIS Services for Children, Youth and Families in Australia 2025, in the Care Services category. This national recognition reflects SYP's innovation, leadership, and commitment to person-centred services that inspire positive outcomes for participants and their families.

Support Your Path will continue to strengthen its regional presence, grow partnerships, and expand services to meet increasing community needs, while maintaining its commitment to high-quality, person-centred supports that empower individuals to live life on their own terms. Opportunities ahead in the Northern Territory will also be explored, ensuring growth is aligned with community priorities and culturally responsive practice.



PICTURED: Support Your Path staff celebrating after receiving the 2025 Enablement Award for Most Outstanding Regional Not-for-Profit in NDIS Care Services. This national recognition acknowledges the team's innovation, leadership, and dedication to person-centred supports, and highlights the positive impact their work is having for children, young people, and families.



PICTURED: Our Support Your Path (SYP) team took part in the One Community Ready-Set-Connect events in Coffs Harbour and Taree. These fast-paced connection events bring participants and service providers together in a fun and engaging way, highlighting the wide range of disability supports available and the positive impact they have for individuals and carers.



PICTURED: Pathfinders staff across all offices marked International Day of People with Disability (IDPWD) a United Nations-observed day held on 3 December each year, with morning teas across the network.

The day brought teams together to reflect on the importance of inclusion and accessibility, recognising the contributions of people with disability within our communities and reinforcing Pathfinders' ongoing commitment to creating inclusive spaces for all.







## Tilbuster Station

Pathfinders' Tilbuster Station continues to provide practical learning opportunities, skill-building, and community engagement for young people while also contributing meaningful support to local and regional initiatives. Located just outside of Armidale, Tilbuster Station offers a unique environment where young people can gain hands-on experience through farm-based projects, carpentry, volunteering, and social enterprise activities. Regular visitors included young people from the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) and a range of other support services across the region. Young people referred through the Department of Youth Justice also completed their required community hours at Tilbuster. Many of these young people chose to continue attending even after their hours had finished.

A key focus of the year was the annual Pumpkin Run. Young people prepared the soil, planted and maintained the crops, and later harvested hundreds of pumpkins for distribution to food relief organisations. The experience built skills in agriculture, responsibility, and teamwork while giving participants a strong sense of pride and contribution to the community.

Throughout the year, young people and staff remained actively involved in community-led initiatives. The team continued their volunteer work at the Kindly Animal Sanctuary, building on a valued partnership that later inspired a special project involving the construction and donation of custom-made dog kennels. These kennels were part of a larger carpentry initiative, with materials sourced through generous donations from local businesses and collected throughout the year. The project involved blending hands-on skill development with generosity and offering a meaningful way for young people to give back to the community.

Recreational and wellbeing-focused activities were also part of the program this year, including a touch football team formed in November, promoting health, teamwork, and social connection. In April, the RAGE (Re-Navigating Anger and Guilt Expression) and Love Bites programs were delivered over eight weeks with participants from Armidale, Tamworth, and Inverell. Delivered in partnership with headspace, these programs provided valuable tools for emotional regulation and mental wellbeing, while also supporting confidence and positive relationships.

The Tilbuster Mowing Program was another significant development in 2025. Commencing in March, it now operates weekly, providing lawn care and property maintenance across Pathfinders' sites while creating an additional workday for young participants.

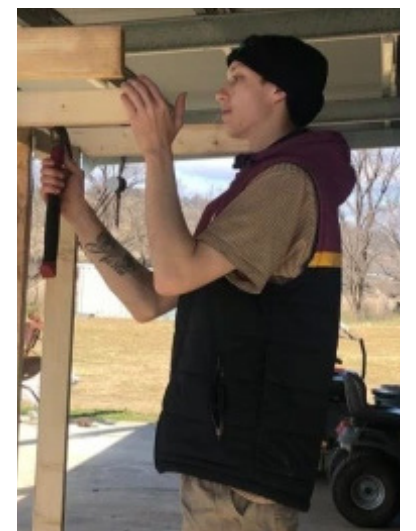
One of the most significant contributions this year came in response to natural disaster recovery efforts. Two trips to the coast were made at the end of the year to support communities. The first was to Kempsey, Port Macquarie, and Taree, where young people and staff supported flood-affected Pathfinders' colleagues and communities. Support included donations of whitegoods, clothing, blankets, bedding, and pumpkins, as well as help with flood clean-up and removal of damaged kitchens, bathrooms, and house foundations.

Tilbuster Station staff later returned to the Mid North Coast and joined with Samaritan's Purse. Working at Riverside Caravan Park, a heavily impacted over-50s village along the Manning River, staff assisted in clean-up and home restoration efforts. More than 240 homes were affected. Pathfinders' carpenters helped reinstall walls, flooring, and windows, working alongside community volunteers to bring normality back to residents' lives.

PICTURED TOP: Pathfinders' first touch football team, the Pumpkin Eaters, bringing staff and young people together to build social connections and teamwork.

PICTURED LEFT: Pathfinders staff and young people participating in the RAGE and Love Bites programs, delivered in partnership with Headspace Armidale at Tilbuster Station over 14 weeks. Fifteen participants from across Pathfinders programs engaged in the workshops, building skills in emotional regulation and respectful relationships.

PICTURED: Young people at Tilbuster Station constructing dog kennels for the Kindly Animal Sanctuary in Armidale. Supported by generous donations from Home Timber and Hardware, O'Brien Electrical & Plumbing, and the Armidale Central Rotary Club.



PICTURED: Pathfinders staff and Samaritan's Purse volunteers supporting flood-affected communities on the Mid North Coast, including Kempsey, Port Macquarie, and Taree. Activities included distributing essential items, assisting with clean-up, and restoring homes alongside community volunteers, helping residents rebuild after significant flood damage.





# The Pumpkin Run

The 2025 Pumpkin Run marked another remarkable year for one of Pathfinder's most loved and community-driven initiatives. Beginning with the planting of seeds in November at Tilbuster Station, young people engaged in Pathfinder's programs cared for the crops across several months, learning responsibility, teamwork, and agricultural skills along the way. By May, more than 10 tonnes of pumpkins had been harvested, ready to be shared with individuals and communities experiencing food insecurity.

The launch was supported by special guests including Armidale Regional Council Mayor Sam Coupland, Deputy Mayor Todd Redwood, and The Hon. Aileen MacDonald OAM MLC, Shadow Minister for Youth Justice. All three commended the program for its contribution to both community wellbeing and youth development. The Hon. Aileen MacDonald praised the young people's commitment, remarking that they "get just as much out of the Pumpkin Run as they put in," highlighting the program's impact and sense of purpose.

The first stop was Soul Hub in Newcastle, where the team worked side by side with volunteers to prepare, cook and serve pumpkin meals to people facing homelessness and hardship. From there, the team visited Allambi Care and OzHarvest, donating pallets of pumpkins to be distributed throughout the region. In Sydney, the team partnered with Newtown Mission and the Addison Road Community Centre, handing out hundreds of fresh pumpkins and supporting kitchens that feed thousands of people every week.

This year's Pumpkin Run also extended well beyond the main route. In the lead-up to May, Pathfinder's

teams across the state organised cooking days and community deliveries in towns such as Inverell, Glen Innes, Coffs Harbour, Port Macquarie, Taree and Kempsey. Warm pumpkin soup was prepared and shared at shelters, schools, and food relief organisations. One highlight was a local initiative at the Inverell Women's and Children's Refuge, where residents and staff planned a group cooking session to build skills and ease the burden of food costs.

In Glen Innes, pumpkins were donated to local food charities, while in Inverell, deliveries reached Food For The Soul, Macintyre High School, and Pathfinder's own Homelessness and Refuge Services. Across the coast, teams in Coffs Harbour and Port Macquarie prepared and delivered homemade pumpkin soup to frontline community services, further extending the program's reach.

The Pumpkin Run culminated in a special morning tea at Government House in Sydney, hosted by Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley AC KC, Governor of New South Wales. Guests were treated to pumpkin-inspired treats crafted by Government House chefs using pumpkins grown at Tilbuster Station. The Governor recognised and praised the efforts of Pathfinder's young people, highlighting the initiative as a shining example of community spirit.

Now in its 11th year, the Pumpkin Run continues to provide more than just food relief. It strengthens community connection, promotes youth development, and offers young people meaningful opportunities to contribute. From planting to harvest, and from meal preparation to delivery, each stage of the Pumpkin Run builds skills in resilience, leadership, and social responsibility.





DIRECTORS REPORT 2025

Your directors present their report on the company for the financial year ended 30 June 2025.

Principal Activities

The Company (called Pathfinders Ltd) is a public company limited by guarantee.

The Company is a charitable institution dedicated to:

- Providing housing and supported accommodation for the homeless, including operating refuges for youth, women, and children.
- Supporting disadvantaged families, individuals, children, and young people.
- Offering 24/7 Out of Home Residential and Foster Care for children and young people under the guardianship of the NSW Minister for Communities and Justice.
- Assisting people with disabilities to engage more effectively in their communities.
- Delivering rural skills, child protection, family support, youth services, youth homelessness, and vocational training programs for disadvantaged young people.
- Alleviating poverty.
- Providing training, work readiness and educational programs.

Pathfinders (ABN 64 146 004 524) operates as a nonprofit organisation registered under the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission Act 2012, functioning as a company limited by guarantee without a share capital. All our Directors serve voluntarily and do not receive any compensation for their roles. The Board of Directors is responsible for formulating both short-term and long-term strategies for Pathfinders, guided by the organisation's Constitution and legal obligations.

The execution of these strategies and the day-to-day management of the organisation are officially entrusted to the Chief Executive Officer and the Executive Team by the Board. To address complex matters, the Board has established committees that delve into specific issues, with the outcomes of these committee meetings reported at subsequent Board meetings.

Pathfinders Key achievements:

1. Successful ITC Tender submission won and implemented across Mid North Coast and New England.
2. Successful audit and/or re-accreditation of NDIS, CHP and ASES.
3. Develop and host Pathfinders Cultural Camps at Pathfinders Tilbuster Station farm.
4. Development of Pathfinders Education and Learning Strategy including commencing the process to become a Registered Training Organisation in partnership with Procure Spot.
5. Implementation and development of activities for Equine Assisted Learning and Equine Assisted Psychotherapy programs.
6. Celebration of the Pathfinders 11th Annual Pumpkin Run.
7. Expansion of Pathfinders geographical footprint to the Northern Territory and Office setup.
8. Pathfinders attendance and Key Speaker Presentation at ACWA’s annual conference 2024.
9. Successful Organisation registration with the National Redress Scheme.
10. Development and implementation of a range of offerings for Pathfinders Staff Wellbeing programs.
11. Expanding and developing the Pathfinders OOHK Program, including foster care, ITC, STEP, IPA, ICM, THBC and TSIL’s aligning with DCJ OOHK Reforms and Permanency Support Program.



12. Continuation of partnership with UNICEF Australia.

13. Expanding on existing Education and Training services already offered including Aboriginal Early Years programs, Supported Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Playgroups, School Programs, Education Support and Breakfast clubs, developing Marie Delaney Training centre and commercial kitchen and training centre at the Royal in Glen Innes.

14. Commencement of building works and improvements including cladding at the Royal in Glen Innes and new shed at Tilbuster in Armidale.

15. Growing and Expanding the Disability program Support Your Path (NDIS) to support individuals to thrive in their community, support their independence, and live their life freely with hope and equal opportunity.

16. Delivering a National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Birth Certificate Program, ensuring access to a birth certificate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and continuing to crowd fund.

17. Contributing to State-wide policy development through participation on peak bodies and committees such as ACWA, Yfoundations, Foyer Australia and NCOSS.

18. Implementing frameworks for Pathfinders Strategic Plan (2020-2025) with defined organisational KPIs for progress tracking, fully supported by Scaling Up methodology.

19. Facilitating collaboration between DCJ, Health, and FCS providers to integrate FCSS with NSW Child Protection Programs, in line with recommendations from Pathfinders Patron, The Hon. James Wood.

20. Implementation of HSRs across Pathfinders geography and establishment and implementation of WHS working groups, and creation of WHS Committee.

21. Finalist and award recipient in multiple Business Awards across our geography:

2024 Quality Business Awards (Tamworth Business Chamber)

- Finalist Excellence in Large Business
- Finalist Employer of Choice

2024 Mid-Coast Business Awards (Taree)

- Finalist Outstanding Community Organisation
- Finalist: Best Personal Service
- Winner: Best Health and Wellbeing
- Winner: Best Professional Service

2024 NSW Youth Work Awards (State Award)

- Finalist Outstanding Work with Young People
- Finalist Outstanding Therapeutic Residential Care Team
- Finalist Outstanding Youth Participation (Tilbuster Station)

2024 NSW Business Awards (Port Macquarie)

- Finalist: Excellence in Large Business

2024 Coffs Coast Businesses Awards (Coffs Harbour)

- Finalist: Outstanding Community Organisation
- Finalist: Marketing and Advertising



## Directors

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

### Directors Name

- Korrina Schultz
- Rosemary Curtis
- Mark Keogh
- Alex Shaw
- Damian Hall
- Kevin Emanuel

## Meetings of Directors

During the financial year, 7 meetings of the Board of Directors were held and the attendances by each Director during the year were as follows:

### Director s Meetings

	Eligible to attend	Number attended
Rose Curtis	4	4
Alex Shaw	7	7
Korrina Schultz	7	7
Mark Keogh	7	1
Damian Hall	7	3
Kevin Emanuel	7	7

## Membership Details

Pathfinders Ltd is a public company limited by guarantee and no shares or options are issued. If the company is wound up, the constitution states that each member is required to contribute a maximum of \$10.00 each towards meeting any outstanding obligations of the company.

Membership Class	Number of Members	Individual Members Contribution on winding up of Company	Total Members contribution on winding up of Company
Ordinary Members	22	\$10	\$220
Associate Members	5	\$10	\$50
Total	27	\$10	\$270



Auditors' Independence Declaration

A copy of the auditor's independence declaration as required under section 60-40 of the ACNC Act 2012 is attached to these financial statements. Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors.



Korrina Schultz  
Director  
Dated: 3 November 2025



Damian Hall  
Director  
Dated: 3 November 2025



Crowe Central North  
ABN 91 680 058 554  
134 Taylor Street  
Armidale NSW 2350 Australia  
PO Box 660  
Armidale NSW 2350 Australia  
  
Tel 02 6776 5100  
Fax 02 6772 9492  
www.crowe.com.au

AUDITORS' INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION  
UNDER SECTION 60-40 OF THE AUSTRALIAN CHARITIES  
AND NOT-FOR-PROFITS COMMISSION ACT 2012  
TO THE BOARD MEMBERS OF  
PATHFINDERS LTD

ABN 64 146 004 524

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, during the financial year to 30 June 2025 there have been:

- (i) no contraventions of the auditor independence requirements as set out in the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 in relation to the audit; and
- (ii) no contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

CROWE CENTRAL NORTH



Kylie Ellis  
Partner  
Registered Company Auditor  
134 Taylor Street  
ARMIDALE NSW 2350

Dated: 3 November 2025

The title 'Partner' conveys that the person is a senior member within their respective division, and is among the group of persons who hold an equity interest (shareholder) in its parent entity, Findex Group Limited. The only professional service offering which is conducted by a partnership is external audit, conducted via the Crowe Australasia external audit division and Unison SMSF Audit. All other professional services offered by Findex Group Limited are conducted by a privately owned organisation and/or its subsidiaries.

Findex (Aust) Pty Ltd, trading as Crowe Australasia is a member of Crowe Global, a Swiss verein. Each member firm of Crowe Global is a separate and independent legal entity. Findex (Aust) Pty Ltd and its affiliates are not responsible or liable for any acts or omissions of Crowe Global or any other member of Crowe Global. Crowe Global does not render any professional services and does not have an ownership or partnership interest in Findex (Aust) Pty Ltd. Services are provided by Crowe Central North, an affiliate of Findex (Aust) Pty Ltd. Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation. Liability limited other than for acts or omissions of financial services licensees.  
© 2019 Findex (Aust) Pty Ltd



**PATHFINDERS LTD**  
**ABN 64 146 004 524**

**STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025**

	Note	2025 \$	2024 \$
Revenue	2	57,116,821	54,452,704
Other Income	3	843,153	529,385
Interest revenue calculated using the effective interest method		579,357	290,297
Administration expenses		(2,982,486)	(2,884,448)
Borrowing costs		(710,843)	(361,648)
Depreciation and amortisation expense	4	(2,364,622)	(2,072,747)
Employee benefits expense		(38,243,272)	(33,392,420)
Occupancy costs		(12,922,580)	(14,963,283)
Funds repaid to funding bodies		(1,000,424)	-
<b>Surplus before income tax expense</b>		<b>315,104</b>	<b>1,597,840</b>
Income tax expense	1	-	-
<b>Surplus after income tax expense</b>		<b>315,104</b>	<b>1,597,840</b>
Other comprehensive income		-	-
<b>Total comprehensive income for the year</b>		<b>315,104</b>	<b>1,597,840</b>

**PATHFINDERS LTD**  
**ABN 64 146 004 524**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION**  
**AS AT 30 JUNE 2025**

	Note	2025 \$	2024 \$
<b>ASSETS</b>			
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents	5	13,981,984	8,807,335
Trade and other receivables	6	1,287,887	1,298,841
Financial assets	8	2,945,498	2,789,980
Contract assets	7	2,789,969	1,558,125
Other assets	9	341,985	373,342
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>21,347,323</b>	<b>14,827,623</b>
<b>NON CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Property, plant and equipment	10	14,108,871	14,945,227
Intangible assets	11	10,742	2,799
Right-of-use assets	12	2,818,530	3,295,775
<b>TOTAL NON CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>16,938,143</b>	<b>18,243,801</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b>38,285,466</b>	<b>33,071,424</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>			
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Trade and other payables	13	2,813,658	3,074,661
Contract liabilities	14	6,586,034	1,872,412
Financial liabilities	15	731,956	716,330
Provisions	16	1,873,460	1,495,004
Lease liabilities	17	1,285,541	1,180,237
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<b>13,290,649</b>	<b>8,338,644</b>
<b>NON CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Financial liabilities	15	8,274,533	7,844,322
Provisions	16	732,298	632,930
Lease liabilities	17	1,672,315	2,254,961
<b>TOTAL NON CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<b>10,679,146</b>	<b>10,732,213</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<b>23,969,795</b>	<b>19,070,857</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<b>14,315,671</b>	<b>14,000,567</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>			
Asset maintenance and refurbishment reserve	18	100,000	100,000
Planned maintenance reserve	18	438,018	394,483
Accumulated funds		13,777,653	13,506,084
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>		<b>14,315,671</b>	<b>14,000,567</b>



PATHFINDERS LTD  
ABN 64 146 004 524  
  
STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

	Asset Maintenance & Refurbishment Reserves \$	Planned Maintenance Reserve \$
<b>Balance at 1 July 2023</b>	100,000	352,217
Surplus after income tax expense	-	-
Total comprehensive surplus for the year	-	-
Transfer to/(from) reserve	-	42,266
<b>Balance at 30 June 2024</b>	100,000	394,483
Surplus after income tax expense	-	-
Total comprehensive surplus for the year	-	-
Transfer to/(from) reserve	-	43,535
<b>Balance at 30 June 2025</b>	100,000	438,018

	Accumulated Funds \$	Total \$
<b>Balance at 1 July 2023</b>	11,950,510	12,402,727
Surplus after income tax expense	1,597,840	1,597,840
Total comprehensive surplus for the year	-	-
Realisation of reserves	-	42,266
Transfer to/(from) reserve	(42,266)	(42,266)
<b>Balance at 30 June 2024</b>	13,506,084	14,000,567
Surplus after income tax expense	315,104	315,104
Total comprehensive surplus for the year	-	-
Realisation of reserves	-	43,535
Transfer to/(from) reserve	(43,535)	(43,535)
<b>Balance at 30 June 2025</b>	13,777,653	14,315,671

PATHFINDERS LTD  
ABN 64 146 004 524  
  
STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

Note	2025 \$	2024 \$
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Receipts from customers	67,579,215	61,048,388
Interest received	1,158,713	579,268
Payments to suppliers and employees	(61,591,777)	(56,680,499)
Interest paid	(710,843)	(361,648)
Net cash provided by operating activities	6,435,308	4,585,509
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Payments for plant and equipment	(379,474)	(8,712,718)
Receipt from investments	(155,518)	1,539,675
Net cash used in investing activities	(534,992)	(7,173,043)
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Proceeds from borrowings	9,707,656	7,400,000
Repayment of borrowings	(8,982,519)	(817,004)
Repayment of lease liabilities	(1,450,804)	(1,134,104)
Net cash (used in)/provided by investing activities	(725,667)	5,448,892
Net increase in cash held	5,174,649	2,861,358
Cash at the beginning of the financial year	8,807,335	5,945,977
Cash at the end of the financial year	13,981,984	8,807,335





Annual Report  
**2024 -2025**

[www.pathfinders.ngo](http://www.pathfinders.ngo)