



**WANNON WATER**

# **Financial Inclusion Action Plan**

**Build  
2022-2025**



**wannonWATER**



# Acknowledgement

Wannon Water and the Victorian Government proudly acknowledge Victoria's Aboriginal communities and their rich culture and pay our respects to Elders past and present.

We recognise the intrinsic connection of Traditional Owners to Country and acknowledge their contribution to the management of land, water and resources.

We acknowledge Aboriginal people as Australia's first peoples and as the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land and water on which we rely. We recognise and value the ongoing contribution of Aboriginal people and communities to Victorian life and how this enriches us. We embrace the spirit of reconciliation, working towards the equality of outcomes and ensuring an equal voice.

## **Pareeyt Poondee-teeyt.**

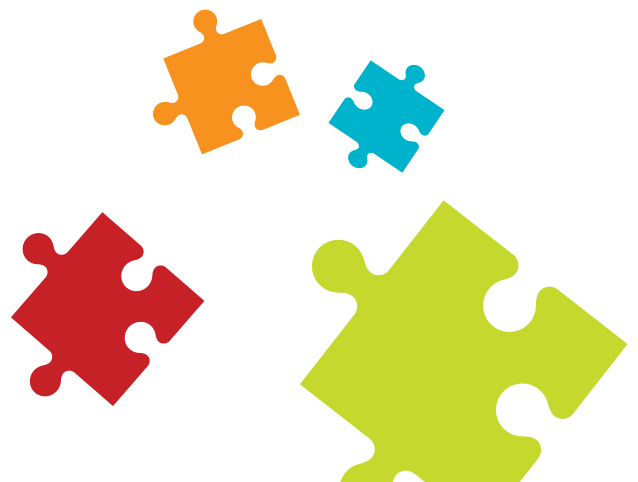
Water is Life.

*Dhauwurd Wurrung language group*

## **Pa poonteyt paman paman.**

And life is sacred.

*Keerray Wurrung language group*





# A message from our Chair and Managing Director

Each year, our strategic direction – beyond water for strong communities – is at the heart of our decision making.

It's tough to be in financial stress. People in financial hardship can not only find it difficult to access the essential services they need, but financial stress can have a profound impact upon their social and emotional wellbeing.

A significant proportion of people in our community are currently, or have at one time, been in financial hardship. Many households in our service region are on low incomes and there are multiple communities that experience significant socio-economic disadvantage. Many householders experience mortgage or rental stress. Furthermore, economic abuse is a form of family violence that has a direct relationship to financial hardship and we know that our region experiences high rates of family violence compared to the whole of Victoria.

Women, young people, people with disabilities and people from diverse cultural backgrounds are often over-represented in financial hardship figures. However, all of us are at risk, with many households only one catastrophic event away from being severely financially vulnerable.

Financial inclusion and resilience is an approach that seeks to ensure fair and affordable access to finance in order to achieve economic wellbeing. In other words, it's about ensuring people have access to basic essential services to live healthy and fulfilling lives.

We have a strong track record of supporting our customers in financial hardship. In 2020/21, we supported 515 customers with hardship rebates and high water use allowances totalling \$213,780. At 30 June 2021, instalment plans were in place for 2,670 customers. We provided additional allowances and rebates of more than \$4 million through programs such as concession card rebates, not-for-profit organisation rebates, utility relief grant scheme, water usage life machine rebates and water for community rebates.

Our strategic direction is to go beyond water for strong

communities. To realise this, we recognise we need to work in partnership with others to foster regional prosperity and ensure the health and wellbeing of those who live here.

This 2022 Build Financial Inclusion Action Plan (the Plan) follows on from our successful 2018 Foundation Financial Inclusion Action Plan where we achieved the following high-level outcomes:

- Employees trained to improve their ability to identify and support people impacted by family violence
- Worked with local organisations to support young people experiencing financial hardship
- Increased the number of employees accessing flexible work arrangements
- Engaged with customer and community members including vulnerable groups
- Indigenous traineeships and employee attendance at cultural awareness training and tours
- Strengthening of our regional organisational relationships in relation to financial inclusion and resilience.

The 2022 plan is one practical way we are working towards our strategic direction. It builds on our past performance and takes another step in improving financial inclusion and resilience for our customers. Additionally, this plan demonstrates our commitment to improving our support for our employees, suppliers and wider community who are experiencing financial hardship.

We thank Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand (Good Shepherd) for the support it has provided Wannon Water in the development of this plan. We are excited to continue to work with Good Shepherd, and also with EY, as we implement our Build Financial Inclusion Action Plan.



**Jacinta Ermacora**  
Chair



**Andrew Jeffers**  
Managing Director

# Why a FIAP is important to us

Wannon Water’s purpose is to deliver water and sewerage services and improve the lives of people in South West Victoria.

We are a regional urban water corporation wholly owned by the Victorian Government. We are the state’s second largest regional urban water corporation by area, covering 23,500 square kilometres and a total population of 100,400. Our region, South West Victoria, extends from the Otway Ranges to the South Australian border.

We provide services to 34 towns, including residential, commercial, industrial and rural customers.

We are a major employer in the region with around 215 employees in a range of roles including science, technology, engineering, maintenance and business administration.

Our purpose is to *deliver water and sewerage services and improve the lives of people in South West Victoria* and our strategic direction is *beyond water for strong communities*.



There is strong alignment between our strategic direction and the FIAP program. Socially disadvantaged groups have historically fared worse during pandemics and therefore it has become more important for us to support local communities, especially vulnerable groups.

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals aim to put the world on a sustainable path to 2030 and have been adopted globally by 193 countries, including Australia. The following goals align with our strategic direction and the FIAP program, and we will continue to consider ways in which we support the achievement of the global goals.



# Background

In early 2017, Good Shepherd invited us to be one of the first 30 trailblazer organisations in Australia to develop a Foundation FIAP.

A cross organisational working group developed the Foundation FIAP during 2017 and it was formally launched with other trailblazers' Foundation FIAPs in March 2018. This was a significant achievement for us given the size of our organisation and our location in a regional area.

The actions committed in the Foundation FIAP were implemented throughout 2018.

In the first half of 2019, EY conducted a quality assurance process to assess the progress of the goals in our Foundation FIAP. Wannon Water successfully completed all 13 actions committed to in the FIAP. Furthermore, EY provided very positive feedback to our team members, commenting on the extent and breadth of our work and the supporting evidence provided.

The high level outcomes of the Foundation FIAP are illustrated in the infographic below.

The Foundation FIAP was a great way of bringing together many of the activities across our organisation that support people to be more financially resilient.

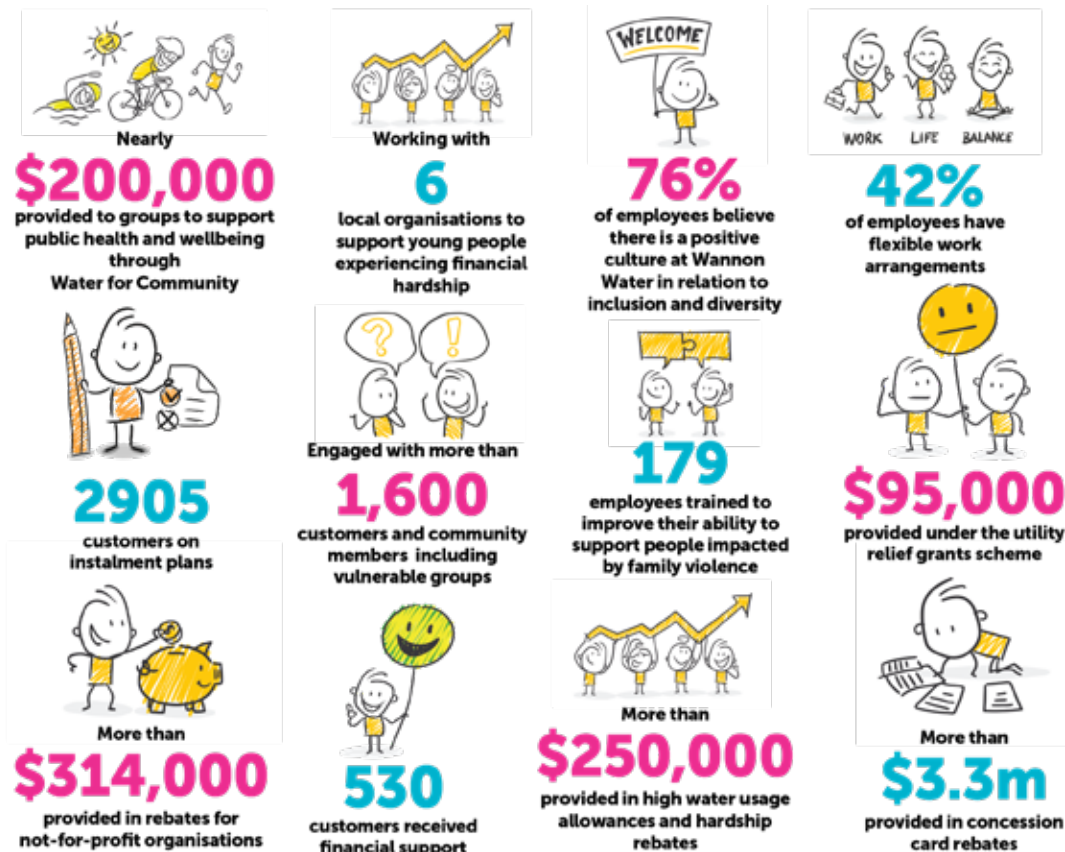
Employees involved on the Foundation FIAP working group told us that:

- They have a greater understanding of the causes and impacts of financial hardship
- They have deepened their understanding of customer needs
- Wannon Water has supported individuals' career growth and professional development
- Wannon Water has created opportunities to develop relationships outside our business, locally and nationally.

To further embed our learnings into our business practices we have committed to develop and implement a Build FIAP, ensuring it connects with our strategic direction.

The Build FIAP includes specific actions to support Core Commitments across each of the four FIAP Action Areas as well as actions to demonstrate the organisation's leadership in promoting financial wellbeing.

## Foundation FIAP high-level outcomes



# The FIAP journey







*Wannon Water played a lead role in launching Australia's first regional chapter of the Thriving Communities Partnership (TCP) in the south-west. The TCP is a national initiative with a goal to ensure everyone has fair access to the modern, essential services they need to thrive in contemporary Australia. This includes utilities, financial services, telecommunications and transport. The TCP aims to build more resilient communities and stronger, inclusive businesses.*

# Strengthening relationships

The Foundation FIAP provided a framework and momentum to strengthen our regional organisational relationships in relation to financial inclusion and resilience, including with local financial counsellors and other organisations that support people experiencing vulnerability.

The Foundation FIAP was a great tool to capture activities being undertaken to deliver upon our strategic direction, particularly in relation to vulnerability, inclusion and diversity.

Case studies that relate to our FIAP journey are highlighted on the following pages.

# Stories from our FIAP journey

## Family violence training

Our employees participated in multiple training and professional development sessions relating to family violence in 2018. They included all-employee family violence training, and specific training for customer relations team members and managers.

The training was provided by Good Shepherd and included the following learning outcomes:

- A practical understanding of the scope, nature and dynamic of family violence and economic abuse in Australia
- A brief overview of the relevant legislation that defines family violence and privacy considerations
- Knowing how to recognise potential family violence or economic abuse
- Effective responses to family violence, including privacy considerations and referral options.

Results from a pre and post-session survey showed that employees had a 30 to 40 per cent knowledge increase after the training was rolled out.

We also implemented changes to our procedures following the training, and in accordance with the Essential Services Commission Customer Service Code requirements. These changes have been verified through an internal management audit and an external audit.

Additionally, we participated in several local initiatives associated with the 16 Days of Activism campaign against family violence.

*Customer was quite tearful and wanted me to pass on a big thankyou to everyone at Wannon Water including the meter readers.*

*Every time she fell in a hole we were so supportive and always helpful with any assistance that could be offered. She said we have always shown her sensitivity and care and were always persistent in helping her in any way we could!*

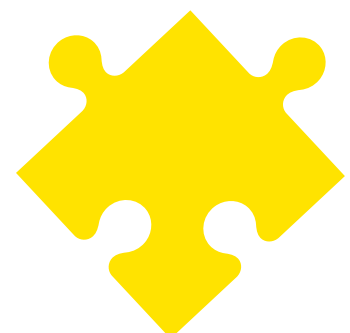
*Coming from a domestic violence relationship and fearful of men, she said anytime a male meter reader was at her property they were always caring and thoughtful towards her.*

- Notes taken after a discussion with a customer subject to domestic violence

## Work with rural financial counselling

We have been maintaining yearly catch-ups with Rural Financial Counselling Services Victoria West (RFCS Victoria West).

In 2020, RFCS Victoria West began to offer services to small businesses experiencing financial stress during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. This information was beneficial to the Customer Relations Team, as small business support was an area that we had not previously been able to provide referrals for.







*Employees on a tour of the Budj Bim Cultural Landscape including the Tyrendarra Indigenous Protected Area beside Darlot Creek, the Lake Condah Aboriginal Mission, Lake Condah and Budj Bim National Park.*

## Indigenous traineeships

Wannon Water actively pursued providing an indigenous traineeship each year from 2018-2020. This was supported by our internal Inclusion and Diversity Management Plan, and broadly supported the water industry's approach towards Advancing Aboriginal Inclusion.

This inclusion provided cultural benefits to the organisation and also provided insights into some of the specific cultural considerations required to set such initiatives up for success.

## Cultural awareness training and tours

Since 2017, Wannon Water has provided 152 opportunities for cultural awareness training with 22 events for employees which included various on-site tours, and in-house education.

This is supported by our Inclusion and Diversity Management Plan (August 2020) which included "2020/21 primary focus: A continued focus on indigenous cultural awareness outcomes and accessibility".

The cultural benefits included a 29 per cent increase in our People Matter Survey score in response to the question "there is a positive culture within my organisation in relation to employees who are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples".

*Participating in tours like this can help us to be great advocates of our amazing region through understanding the depth of intelligence that has existed in our region for tens of thousands of years.*

*I think there is also great importance in learning about our tragic more recent history, supporting our understanding about the need for reconciliation and a positive and collaborative future.*

- Quote from a Wannon Water employee



*For me the most important thing personally is to be home after school with the kids, and that flexibility in the workplace allows that.*

*The other thing is being with them in the morning and getting them ready for school because if there's a meltdown I'm there.*

*I sacrifice 15 minutes of my lunch time, which enables me to start 15 minutes later and that's how I get that school drop-off in in a morning.*

*Because I'm not stressed or worried about how am I going to manage the kids or take them places after school, I don't have that worry because I know all of that is handled.*

*So while I'm here, I'm 100 per cent here. My mind is not somewhere else thinking of this, that, and the other that I'm going to have to deal with.*

- Quote from a Wannon Water employee

## Modern slavery

The Australian Government passed the Modern Slavery Act 2018 in response to growing international awareness about supply chains that can exploit people involved in the production of goods and services.

Under the Act, Australian corporations with an annual consolidated revenue of more than \$100 million must produce an annual public statement detailing their actions to address and mitigate risks of modern slavery.

Although Wannon Water does not fall within this threshold, we have been proactively working with our industry partners to learn more about supply chain risk management, share our learnings in this area and understand potential opportunities to improve our practices. We are one of very few corporations involved in this activity that does not fall within the mandatory reporting threshold.

As part of this work, we have retrospectively applied a draft toolkit developed by VicWater to our existing contract for Cleaning Services for Corporate Facilities (let in 2019), to assist in determining supply chain risks as part of the procurement planning phase.

Observations from the Wannon Water pilot project:

- Our supplier worked collaboratively with us in assessing risk and provision of information in respect to their internal management processes relating to supply chain risks
- The supplier has processes in place to meet compliance required under the Act
- The supplier is in a development phase in respect to this area, as the Act was only introduced in 2018. Therefore a small number of opportunities for improvement were noted which have been discussed with the contractor
- The tools may also be used to examine supply chain risks and risk of wage theft.

## Flexible work practices

Wannon Water introduced broad flexible work practices in 2017 by offering different start/finish times, purchased leave, and transition to retirement planning, in addition to the part-time options that were already on offer. This links to our Future Workforce Planning Strategy and being an employer of choice.

We also access flexibility as an opportunity to improve gender equality. This has seen an increase (4 per cent) in our People Matter Survey data where "there is a positive culture within my organisation in relation to employees – Flexible Work Practices" from 2017 until 2020.

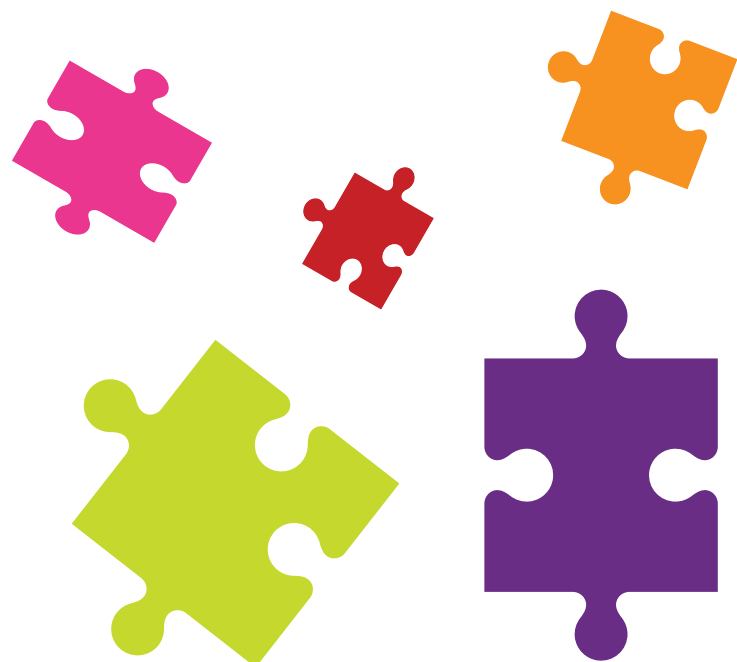
Since March 2020, COVID-19 has increased flexible requirements even further.

## Engagement sessions with part time employees and those aged 55+

We have held a range of employee engagement workshops since 2017, based on feedback from the annual People Matter Survey results.

Some of these engagement sessions have resulted in positive impacts, while others have identified the need for ongoing work.

On the positive side, part-time employee satisfaction increased 26 per cent, and engagement increased 8 per cent between 2016 and 2019. This links strongly to our Inclusion and Diversity Management Plan, and to our Future Workforce Planning Strategy.



*They have been able to complete more maintenance issues for the grounds and start other projects like the new shelter and resurfacing of the tennis courts*

- Quote from a committee member responsible for a local reserve

## Water for Community

In July 2018, we introduced the *Water for Community* rebate to recognise the mental, physical and social health benefits created through green public open spaces and sporting facilities (outdoor and indoor).

The rebate intends to support not-for-profit organisations in continuing to deliver and maintain these spaces for the benefit of the communities in our region.

In the first three years we have provided an average of \$173,000 each year to eligible organisations.

## Small Business Victoria – Participation in regional Winning Government Business Forum

Wannon Water managers attended a forum for local businesses aimed at assisting them to submit tenders or quotations that addressed the requirements of the works or service on offer.

We delivered a key message to businesses on the potential of value-adding to their proposal by highlighting the social outcomes they have in place that align to the Victorian Social Procurement Framework.

Submitting a proposal that highlights this social investment explains an activity that is not usually evident to those outside their business, and has the potential to increase the value for money provided by their proposal.

We also outlined our Sustainable and Social Procurement Strategy which has a number of key actions including:

- Supporting the sustainability of Victorian social enterprises, disability enterprises and Aboriginal business sectors
- Championing and delivering women's equality and safety
- Providing opportunities for disadvantaged Victorians
- Developing and sharing knowledge of human rights and supply chain risks.

## Building partnering capability

To effectively partner with others, it helps to have a shared understanding of what a great partnership looks like.

During our Foundation FIAP implementation phase, Wannon Water led the introduction of the international Partnership Broker's Association approach to other stakeholders in its region.

We hosted an initial Language of Partnership Forum which attracted 30 people from not-for-profit and local government organisations in the region.

Buoyed by the enthusiasm from participants in the initial forum, we led a working group of stakeholders across the region to support the delivery of locally delivered partnership broker training. In all, 47 people across 25 organisations in the region have been trained as partnership brokers.

As well as the shared understanding of partnership across the region, this training also extended networks among regional organisations and these brokers now have their own community of practice and support each other in improving outcomes for their communities.





## Tasty Plate

Tasty Plate is a social enterprise catering business that has been operating since 2008, providing training and support to people with a disability. It ensures they are engaged in the economic, social and cultural life of their community.

Tasty Plate operates a successful corporate and event catering service that delivers a fresh, vibrant and healthy approach to food and service in an environmentally sustainable way. It also runs a café at its Fairy Street site in Warrnambool.

A division of Brophy Family and Youth Services, Tasty Plate has seven staff and 30 participants who attend the service as part of the Structured Workplace Training Program, funded through the NDIS. It provides unique skill development to people with a disability and offers pathways to meaningful employment that benefits our community.

Wannon Water is a strong supporter of Tasty Plate and has engaged the business as a preferred catering provider since 2011. The relationship has allowed Tasty Plate to offer more training places to participants with a disability, knowing that it will have a steady stream of demand for catering. The link with Wannon Water has also created a range of learning tasks for the participants. They prepare food, manage special orders and deliver to the various offices and sites.

In turn, Wannon Water employees have had the opportunity to learn more about disability through the relationship – by regular contact with the Tasty Plate team and through presentations from the Tasty Plate founder and former CEO Helen Ridgewell.

In a motivational talk to Wannon Water employees, Helen spoke about the challenges she faced in setting up Tasty Plate, the business model now in place, and the fantastic outcomes that it has been able to achieve during its operation.

Executive manager Anna Maloney says exposure is the best way to educate the public on the ability of all people in our community. "Wannon Water employees are now familiar with the Tasty Plate team and understand their talents and abilities. We're very proud of our working relationship with Wannon Water. They're our most supportive customer and provide regular and consistent business."

Wannon Water spent \$26,533 in 2019/20 on catering services provided by Tasty Plate, a figure that was lower than previous years due to the pandemic.

The collaborative relationship has allowed both Tasty Plate and Wannon Water to foster inclusiveness and promote independence and opportunity for people with a disability. It demonstrates first-hand that people with a disability are productive members of society and industry.



# Build FIAP actions - overview

## Our Leadership Action: Great Tasting Water Project

We aim to improve the quality of tap water for the Portland, Port Fairy and Heywood communities which would contribute to positive public health outcomes and reduced financial impacts on households and local industry.



Improved community health outcomes



Reduced household water-related costs



Improved industry competitiveness by reduced costs



Improved reputation of region and Wannon Water

## Our core commitments

Products and services		Financial capability	
Hardship	Develop and communicate hardship policies and frameworks that meet the needs of staff, customers and community	Financial wellbeing in the workplace	Develop and implement programs for staff to increase understanding of personal financial inclusion and wellbeing
Usage and spending	Develop and implement programs to encourage appropriate consumption, spending, and usage	Partner for capability	Partner with external organisations that enhance financial capability in the community (e.g. financial counsellors, community organisations)
Prevention	Develop and implement systems that allow for early identification and intervention to avoid financial hardship	Behaviour	Provide programs that aim to influence behaviour for increased financial wellbeing
Understanding financial vulnerability		Economic security	
Advocate	Advocate for broader awareness and understanding of financial vulnerability	Economic security for staff	Offer services to support the economic security of staff who may experience financial vulnerability
Staff understanding	Develop and implement programs to increase staff understanding of customers' financial vulnerability	Employment support	Support programs that increase employment opportunities and support for those entering employment
Collaborate for understanding	Engage and collaborate with other stakeholders, including community organisations, to identify appropriate pathways and tools for support for vulnerable groups	Education	Support education programs for people who may otherwise experience financial vulnerability
Cooperate	Develop and implement complementary action plans (e.g. reconciliation, diversity) that address issues of financial inclusion and wellbeing for targeted groups	Procurement	Develop and implement social procurement programs

# FIAP Leadership Action: Great Tasting Water Project

We strive to go above and beyond the provision of safe water by playing a leadership role in delivering 'great tasting water' to the Portland, Port Fairy and Heywood communities.

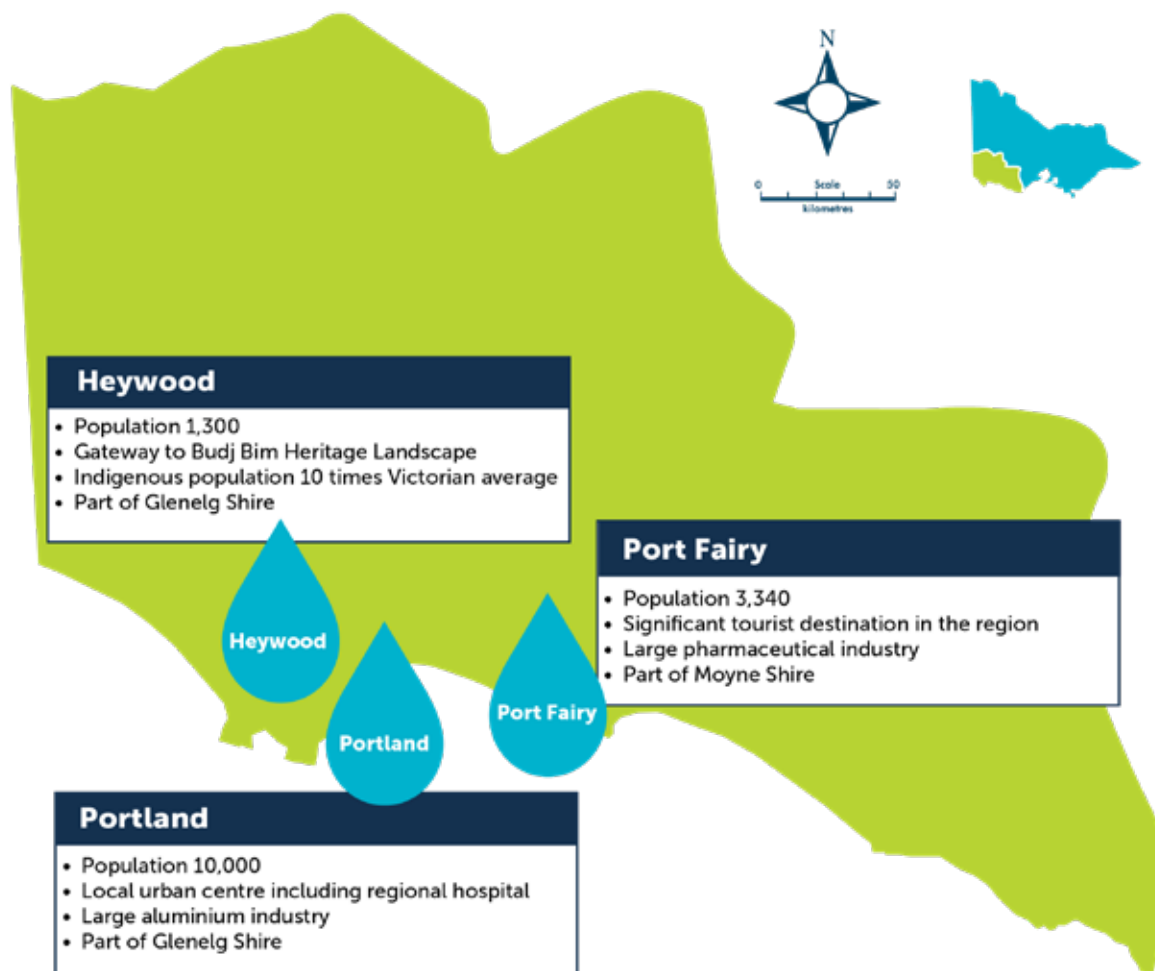
Customers in these three towns regularly report low rates of satisfaction with the taste of their tap water. They score it five out of 10 for overall water quality and four out of 10 for taste – the lowest ratings in the south-west service region. The water has high mineral salt levels, and even though the water is safe to drink, the taste leads to poor rates of drinking water consumption in these communities, with only 50 per cent of customers drinking the water.

We're aware and concerned that this puts additional pressure on household budgets as customers purchase bottled water and undertake frequent maintenance and replacement of household appliances. Worse, it leads to

poorer health outcomes and costs through substitution with unhealthy alternatives such as sugary drinks, leading to increased obesity and poor dental health.

In 2020, based on data gathered during the community engagements, our consultants GHD estimated these costs at \$23.46 million over 20 years.

We're also aware that the water quality has a direct impact on the regional economy, with major industries forced to further treat the water to prevent impacts on equipment, and reduced capacity to recycle water use. This has been estimated to add direct costs of \$2.88 million over 20 years.

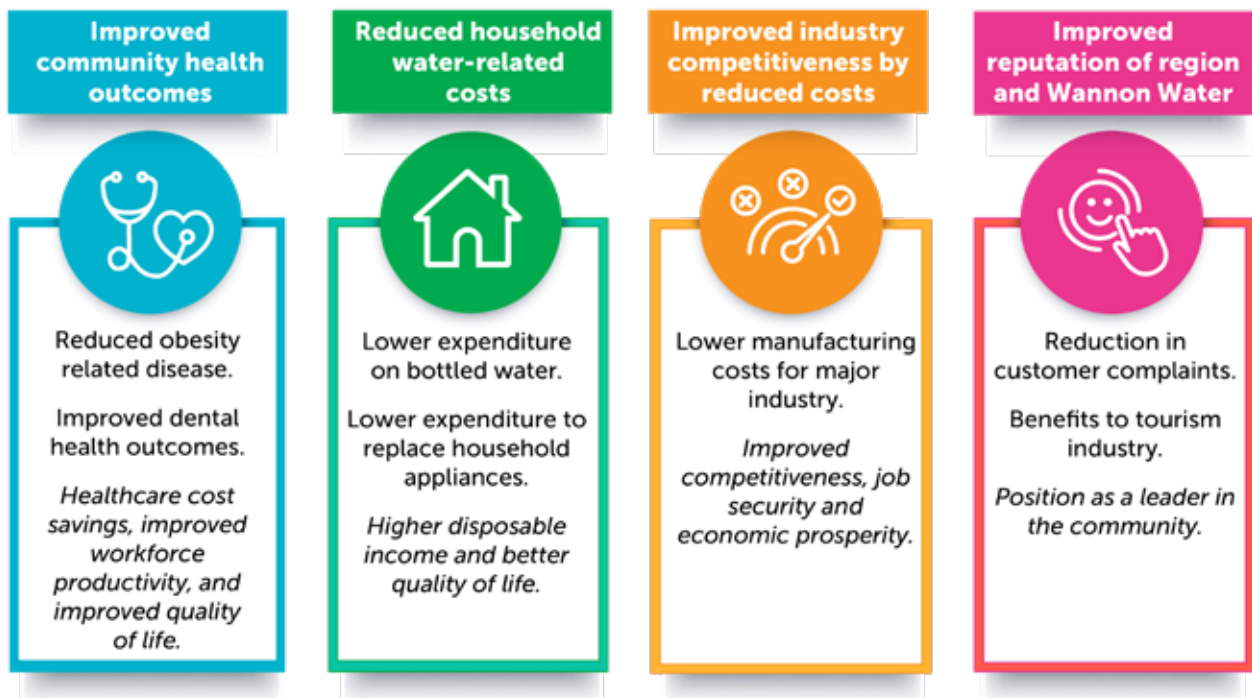






Through the Great Tasting Water project, we seek to:

- Improve the quality of water across Portland, Port Fairy and Heywood
- Increase consumption of 'great tasting water' and contribute to positive public health outcomes
- Reduce the financial impacts on households and enhance financial wellbeing
- Reduce the economic burden on commerce and industry
- Improve the reputation and growth potential of these townships
- Strengthen and improve equity for communities we serve.



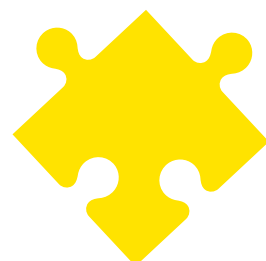
To quantify the benefits of increased tap water consumption as a result of providing better tasting water, Deakin University investigated the potential for reducing obesity-related diseases and Jaguar Consulting examined dental health outcomes.

Their results indicate the potential health related economic benefits for the three regional communities are likely to be more than \$20 million over 20 years. The flow-on effect will be reduced pressure on the local health system.

The project will be delivered in close collaboration with the community.

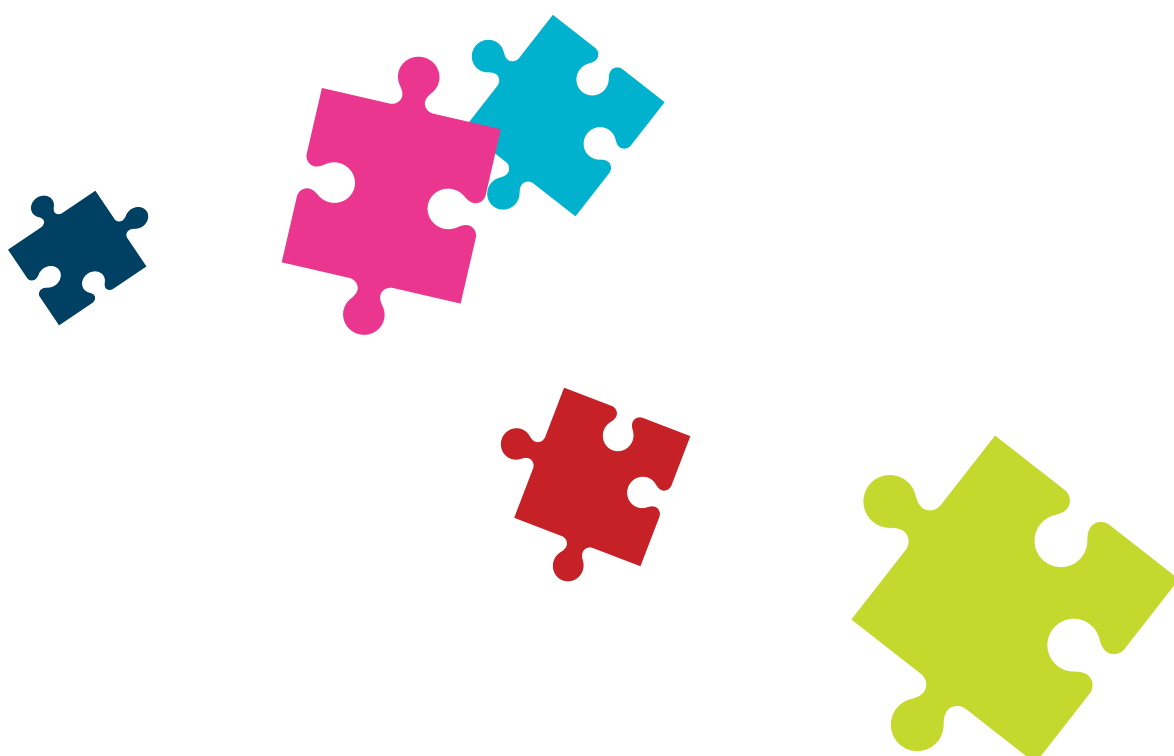
Building on the work done by Deakin University's Global Obesity Centre, we will create a coalition of partners across local and state government and work alongside local initiatives such as the Primary Care Partnerships, striving to enhance health and wellbeing across the region.

<b>Action statement</b>	<b>Implement the <i>Great Tasting Water</i> project to improve community health outcomes and reduce costs for household and business customers</b>
<b>Action area</b>	Products and services
<b>Stakeholders</b>	Customers and Community
<b>Output</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Business case completed outlining how better tasting water would be provided for Portland, Port Fairy and Heywood</li> <li>2. Funding secured to provide better tasting water to Portland, Port Fairy and Heywood</li> <li>3. Start on-ground infrastructure works to deliver better tasting water to Portland, Port Fairy and Heywood</li> <li>4. Partnerships established with local organisations to increase public awareness of water quality improvements and drive community-wide water consumption behaviour change</li> <li>5. Strategy to measure the financial and health-related benefits of the project established and implemented</li> </ol>
<b>Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased ability to meet current financial needs and expenses</li> <li>• Improved social, community and government support</li> <li>• Reduced economic inequalities</li> </ul>
<b>Measurements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of partnerships and customers engaged</li> <li>• Percentage increase in tap water consumption</li> <li>• Reduction of financial costs to households and industry by capturing the changes in consumption and spending through before and after survey</li> </ul>
<b>Timeframes</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. March 2022</li> <li>2. June 2022</li> <li>3. December 2023</li> <li>4. December 2023</li> <li>5. December 2023</li> </ol>
<b>Responsibility</b>	Strategic Services



# Core commitments

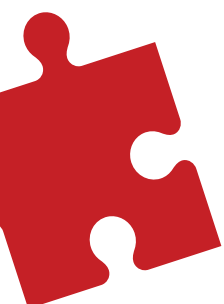
<b>Action statement</b>	<b>Review our financial assistance and high water usage policies and procedures to ensure we are meeting the needs of vulnerable customers, particularly as the community recovers from the economic impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic</b>
<b>Action area</b>	Products and services
<b>Stakeholders</b>	Customers
<b>Output</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review of financial assistance and high water use allowance procedures completed in consultation with customers and key local stakeholders</li> <li>2. These procedures are updated on the basis of the review recommendations</li> </ol>
<b>Outcomes</b>	Improved support for financially vulnerable customers, staff, suppliers and wider community
<b>Core commitments supported</b>	Hardship
<b>Measurements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of customers graduating out of the hardship program</li> <li>• Number of customers receiving financial assistance</li> <li>• Value of financial assistance provided</li> <li>• If new measures implemented, then measure the number of customers benefitting from the new measures</li> </ul>
<b>Timeframes</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. September 2022</li> <li>2. June 2023</li> </ol>
<b>Responsibility</b>	Customer Relations





<b>Action statement</b>	<b>Review our approach to customer water efficiency measures to support a reduction of costs for customers through more efficient use of water</b>
<b>Action area</b>	Products and services
<b>Stakeholders</b>	Customers
<b>Output</b>	Review completed and a coordinated approach to customer water efficiency implemented on the basis of findings
<b>Outcomes</b>	Increase in targeted and scalable resources to build financial capabilities
<b>Core commitments supported</b>	Usage and spending; Behaviour.
<b>Measurements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of customers benefitted</li> <li>• Value of reduced costs</li> <li>• Number of initiatives, events or activities undertaken to improve awareness about water efficiency</li> </ul>
<b>Timeframes</b>	June 2023
<b>Responsibility</b>	Retail Services

<b>Action statement</b>	<b>Review and ascertain improvement opportunities in our systems to proactively identify customers who may be experiencing hardship</b>
<b>Action area</b>	Products and services
<b>Stakeholders</b>	Customers
<b>Output</b>	New systems implemented for early identification of potential signs of financial vulnerability and enabling Wannon Water to provide proactive support
<b>Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organisational culture enables staff to better identify and support financially vulnerable groups</li> <li>• Improved access to appropriate financial products and services</li> </ul>
<b>Core commitments supported</b>	Prevention
<b>Measurements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of customers that have been reached out to proactively</li> <li>• Value of financial assistance provided to these customers</li> </ul>
<b>Timeframes</b>	December 2023
<b>Responsibility</b>	Customer Relations



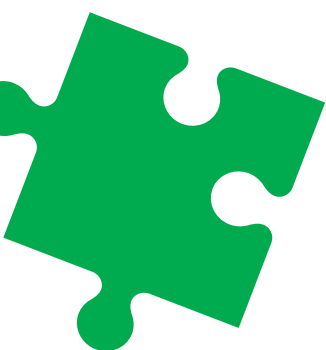
<b>Action statement</b>	<b>Pursue strategic partnerships with organisations throughout the region to keep abreast of local trends and issues, work collaboratively to support people experiencing financial hardship, and apply the learnings for the benefit of our customers</b>
<b>Action area</b>	Understanding financial vulnerability
<b>Stakeholders</b>	Customers and Community
<b>Output</b>	Developed partnerships with like-minded organisations in the region and supported relevant initiatives to improve financial wellbeing outcomes for customers and the community
<b>Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased intra and inter-sector engagement and collaboration</li> <li>More partnerships and collaboration to support vulnerable groups</li> </ul>
<b>Core commitments supported</b>	Collaborate for understanding
<b>Measurements</b>	Maintaining or improving upon the results from our two yearly stakeholder perceptions survey
<b>Timeframes</b>	June 2023
<b>Responsibility</b>	Community & Corporate Services

<b>Action statement</b>	<b>Improve our understanding of the factors that impact customer affordability</b>
<b>Action area</b>	Understanding financial vulnerability
<b>Stakeholders</b>	Customers, employees and community
<b>Output</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engaged with the water industry and other experts to gain a better understanding of the factors that impact customer affordability</li> <li>Developed recommendations for future pricing submissions</li> </ol>
<b>Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased understanding of barriers to financial inclusion, resilience and wellbeing, including economic inequality</li> <li>Organisational culture enables staff to better identify and support financially vulnerable groups</li> </ul>
<b>Core commitments supported</b>	Staff understanding; Collaborate for understanding
<b>Measurements</b>	Price Submission demonstrates consideration of customer affordability findings
<b>Timeframes</b>	December 2022
<b>Responsibility</b>	Community & Corporate Services



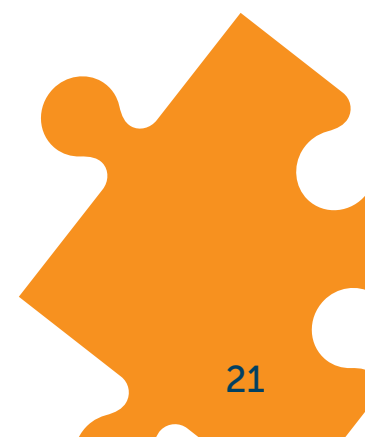
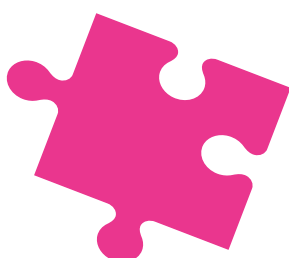
<b>Action statement</b>	<b>Participate in Victorian water industry working group to implement a toolkit which helps in assessing the supply chain risks of modern slavery and wage theft</b>
<b>Action area</b>	Understanding financial vulnerability
<b>Stakeholders</b>	Suppliers
<b>Output</b>	The toolkit has been embedded into our procurement process
<b>Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in strategies to address economic inequality (e.g. equitable pay, mentoring, superannuation, education, housing)</li> <li>• Policies, processes and actions implemented to address economic inequality</li> <li>• Collective actions become industry norms</li> </ul>
<b>Core commitments supported</b>	Advocate
<b>Measurements</b>	Number of times the toolkit is used
<b>Timeframes</b>	June 2022
<b>Responsibility</b>	Corporate Services

<b>Action statement</b>	<b>Undertake a review of our suppliers to ascertain how they can contribute to social and sustainable outcomes</b>
<b>Action area</b>	Economic security
<b>Stakeholders</b>	Suppliers
<b>Output</b>	Develop and implement a program to enhance suppliers' capability to contribute to social and sustainable outcomes
<b>Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased pathways and tools for ongoing support for vulnerable groups</li> <li>• Policies, processes and actions implemented to address economic inequality</li> </ul>
<b>Core commitments supported</b>	Procurement
<b>Measurements</b>	Number of suppliers participating in program.
<b>Timeframes</b>	June 2023
<b>Responsibility</b>	Corporate Services



<b>Action statement</b>	<b>Support the sustainability of Victorian social enterprises, disability enterprises and Aboriginal businesses</b>
<b>Action area</b>	Economic security
<b>Stakeholders</b>	Suppliers
<b>Output</b>	Increased our spend with social enterprises, disability enterprises and Aboriginal businesses
<b>Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased pathways and tools for ongoing support for vulnerable groups</li> <li>• Increased economic resources</li> </ul>
<b>Core commitments supported</b>	Procurement; Cooperate; Employment support
<b>Measurements</b>	Value of spend with social enterprises, disability enterprises and Aboriginal businesses
<b>Timeframes</b>	December 2023
<b>Responsibility</b>	Corporate Services

<b>Action statement</b>	<b>Enhance the capability of regional suppliers within our service area to tender for Wannon Water works and services</b>
<b>Action area</b>	Economic security
<b>Stakeholders</b>	Suppliers
<b>Output</b>	Design and commence delivery of a program that increases the capability of regional suppliers to tender for Wannon Water works and services
<b>Outcomes</b>	Policies, processes and actions implemented to address economic inequality
<b>Core commitments supported</b>	Procurement; Partner for Capability
<b>Measurements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of regional suppliers that have tendered for works and services</li> <li>• Total regional spend</li> </ul>
<b>Timeframes</b>	December 2023
<b>Responsibility</b>	Corporate Services





<b>Action statement</b>	<b>Support the professional growth of employees working in local community organisations by providing access to our learning and development framework and industry education programs</b>
<b>Action area</b>	Economic security
<b>Stakeholders</b>	Employees; Community
<b>Output</b>	Community organisations have accessed Wannon Water's learning and development framework and industry education programs to enhance the skills and capabilities of their employees
<b>Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in strategies to address economic inequality (e.g. equitable pay, mentoring, superannuation, education, housing)</li> <li>• More partnerships and collaboration to support vulnerable groups</li> </ul>
<b>Core commitments supported</b>	Employment support; Education
<b>Measurements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of community organisations that have leveraged our learning and development framework and industry education program</li> <li>• Number of non-Wannon Water employees in the region who have participated in professional development opportunities Wannon Water has led or partnered on</li> </ul>
<b>Timeframes</b>	June 2023
<b>Responsibility</b>	People & Resilience

<b>Action statement</b>	<b>Embed financial wellbeing as a critical component in the employee mental health and wellbeing framework</b>
<b>Action area</b>	Financial capability
<b>Stakeholders</b>	Employees; Community
<b>Output</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. We have engaged with employees to understand their financial wellbeing needs</li> <li>2. We have incorporated financial wellbeing initiatives within the mental health and wellbeing framework</li> </ol>
<b>Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased pathways and tools for ongoing support for vulnerable groups</li> <li>• Planning for future: Increased protective economic supports (e.g. savings, retirement, planning, superannuation, housing)</li> </ul>
<b>Core commitments supported</b>	Financial wellbeing in the workplace; Economic security for staff
<b>Measurements</b>	Number of employees who have accessed financial wellbeing initiatives
<b>Timeframes</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. June 2022</li> <li>2. December 2022</li> </ol>
<b>Responsibility</b>	People & Resilience



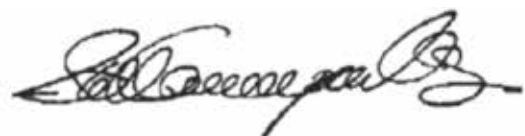
# Statement by the FIAP Advisory Group

We would like to acknowledge and congratulate Wannon Water for continuing their financial inclusion journey and strengthening their commitment to financial wellbeing through the development of a Build FIAP.

As a regional urban water corporation in Victoria, Wannon Water continues to play a leadership role in fostering regional prosperity. Their actions go beyond the provision of safe water to creating an environment in which their customers, employees and communities can thrive.

Financial stress can impact us all, at any stage in our lives. Through the FIAP program, our aim is for organisations across all sectors to understand the impact of financial stress and hardship on people's lives and commit to providing timely and effective responses to support them. By building capacity, awareness and greater access to safe and appropriate products and services, organisations will generate better social and economic outcomes for their customers, employees and wider community, as well as the overall business.

We extend our best wishes to Wannon Water as they build on their achievements, demonstrate leadership and continue to take actions that will promote financial wellbeing within their community.



## Stella Avramopoulos

Chief Executive Officer

Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand

On behalf of the FIAP Advisory Group

## Supported by:





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