

2026 – 2028 Strategic Plan

*Richmond Community
Services Inc.*





Acknowledgement of Country

In the spirit of reconciliation, Richmond Community Services Incorporated acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their continuing connections to land, sea and community. We recognise that we work on the traditional lands of the Dharug people and pay our respects to Elders past and present. We extend our respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

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Our Community Context

The Hawkesbury community continues to grow and change. Across the region, there are*:

- Approximately 67,000 residents
- More than 3,000 First Nations individuals
- Over 18,000 families
- 31.9% of the population identifies as young people
- A culturally diverse community, with languages other than English spoken at home, including Maltese, Punjabi, Italian, Arabic and Cantonese

At a planning day in October 2025, the team at RCSI identified that over the next three years, our community and organisation will face a range of pressures. Population growth, local development, and environmental changes are placing new demands on infrastructure and services. Families are experiencing increasing financial stress due to rising living costs and housing prices, while social challenges such as youth unemployment, homelessness, and family breakdowns continue to affect wellbeing.

At the same time, demand for our services is growing and becoming more complex, with staff stretched and resources limited. Funding changes and restrictions are adding further pressure, requiring us to do more with less and carefully plan for the long term. Sector-specific reforms, such as in aged care, will also influence how we deliver services and support our community.

These challenges reinforce the importance of being a resilient and responsive organisation that works alongside our community and advocates for positive change.

*Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing 2021 (Hawkesbury Local Government Area). Figures are based on the most recent available Census data.

What Our Community Says

Feedback from the 2025 Annual Community Survey highlights that rising cost-of-living pressures are having a significant impact on households across the Hawkesbury, affecting financial stability, wellbeing, and the ability to remain engaged in community life. Community members identified a strong need for practical and accessible support, including assistance with essential expenses, food security, and low-cost programs that reduce isolation and support mental health and wellbeing. Families and parents emphasised the importance of targeted family and parenting support, particularly for those experiencing financial stress and for households supporting children with mental health and behavioural challenges. Across all age groups, respondents consistently prioritised social connection, inclusive and welcoming activities, and a strong local organisation that is visible, responsive, and advocates on behalf of the community.

These priorities remind us why it's so important to keep investing in community-led services that respond to immediate needs while also strengthening long-term wellbeing.

Our Strategy

Our Purpose

The change we will bring about:

Making a positive difference in people's lives across the Hawkesbury.

Our Way

How we will achieve our purpose:

We build and maintain strong, trusted connections with the local community through clear communication, collaboration and presence. We actively listen to community voices, formally and informally, and respond through practical action, advocacy and continuous improvement.

We will:

- Hear, document, review and act on community feedback
- Work alongside partner organisations to reduce gaps and duplication
- Adapt our services to meet changing community needs
- Remain flexible, responsive and community-led in our approach

Our Impact

How people's lives will be better:

A stronger, more connected Hawkesbury community where individuals and families are empowered through access to information, support, connection and kindness.

Strategic Pillars

1. Connecting Community

We connect people with our services, other supports, and each other. We will strengthen RCSI's role as a trusted connector by:

- Increasing awareness of available services and how people can access them
- Strengthening referral pathways and partnerships
- Formalising interagency relationships and partnership agreements where appropriate
- Creating a welcoming community hub for people of all ages and stages of life

2. Targeted Support for Community

We listen to our community and respond to what matters most to them. We will ensure our work reflects real community needs by:

- Strengthening how we gather feedback from clients, groups, and events
- Capturing insights from conversations, experiences, and observations in our daily work
- Holding regular team discussions about emerging trends and changes in the community
- Advocating for individuals and groups who may not meet funded program criteria
- Representing the Hawkesbury community on issues that affect them, and contributing to local, regional, and state conversations
- Supporting stronger youth voice, participation, and a sense of belonging

3. Holistic Community Service Approach

We work alongside people to support the full range of their needs. We will continue to deliver holistic support by:

- Supporting families with food security, youth and aged services, and opportunities to stay connected
- Working with partners to respond to mental health needs where appropriate
- Supporting older people to navigate system changes and reforms
- Strengthening follow-up, evaluation, and outcome tracking to show our impact

4. Partnership Approach to Service Delivery

We work collaboratively with others to provide coordinated and effective support. We will strengthen our partnerships by:

- Building strong connections with local agencies, schools, health services, and community groups
- Sharing information and insights to reduce duplication and improve outcomes
- Bringing together our resources, skills, and knowledge to deliver more effective services
- Celebrating and sharing positive outcomes for individuals, families, and the community to strengthen partnerships and build community confidence

Strategic Priorities

1. Funding Security and Sustainability

- Secure longer-term and core funding to meet ongoing community demand
- Diversify funding sources, including philanthropy and corporate social responsibility partnerships
- Develop sponsorships with businesses that align with RCSI's values
- Advocate for funding models that reflect real community complexity and workload

2. Workforce and Volunteer Sustainability

- Improve staff retention, wellbeing and job security
- Strengthen volunteer coordination and retention
- Support student placements
- Increase the Management Committee

3. Sustainable and Planned Growth

- Grow services in a targeted and sustainable way
- Ensure growth is matched with appropriate staffing, systems and space
- Prepare the organisation for sector reform and future change

4. Youth, Family and Community Focus

- Strengthen youth supports, including mental health, education, employment and connection
- Improve outcomes for families and individuals
- Increase community understanding and awareness of RCSI services
- Support our clients through reforms and changes

5. Advocacy and Community Leadership

- Be a strong and informed voice on issues impacting the Hawkesbury
- Actively participate in regional planning and decision-making
- Strengthen RCSI's role as the heart of the Hawkesbury community

Our Vision towards 2028

- A growing organisation, bigger and better!
- New services that are dynamic and innovative are available for our community
- A leader in holistic, equitable and community-led service delivery across the Hawkesbury
- A welcoming place where young people feel they belong
- A central hub supporting children, families, youth, seniors and the broader community

Richmond Community Services seen as the **'Heart of the Hawkesbury'**

Making a
difference

