

Annual Report

2016 - 2017



Many tracks, one road, sustaining community

NORTHERN RIVERS COMMUNITY GATEWAY



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Our Vision

Many tracks, one road, sustaining community.

Our Core Values

Vision

Respect

Commitment

Integrity

Innovative

Our Strategic Priorities

Strategic Investment

1. Build capacity for sustainability
2. Build on existing funding options and be proactive in sourcing additional revenue streams
3. Influence and lead investment in the sector

Innovation

1. Be proactive and responsive to a changing social environment
2. Create a culture of innovation

Social Impact

1. Measure the social impact of Northern Rivers Community Gateway



Many tracks, one road, sustaining community

NORTHERN RIVERS COMMUNITY GATEWAY

Organisational SNAPSHOT

65

Number of Staff

1100

Registered Volunteers

7

Student Placements

Geographic Coverage
Servicing the State of NSW



Accreditation

The Northern Rivers Community Gateway has undergone external accreditation of its systems and processes.

Area	Lismore	Wollongbar	Casino	Coorabell	Alstonville	Corndale
1. Educational program and practices	Meeting	Meeting	Meeting	Meeting	Meeting	Meeting
2. Children's Health and Safety	Meeting	Meeting	Meeting	Meeting	Meeting	Meeting
3. Physical environment	Meeting	Meeting	Meeting	Meeting	Meeting	Meeting
4. Staffing arrangement	Meeting	Meeting	Meeting	Meeting	Meeting	Meeting
5. Relationships with children	Meeting	Meeting	Meeting	Meeting	Meeting	Meeting
6. Collaborative partnerships with families and communities	Meeting	Meeting	Meeting	Meeting	Meeting	Meeting
7. Leadership and Service Management	Exceeding	Exceeding	Meeting	Meeting	Meeting	Meeting

About Northern Rivers Community Gateway

Our purpose

- Strategically secure funds to deliver programs and services targeting socially and economically disadvantaged individuals and families
- Establish an evidence base to plan, develop and manage innovative programs that deliver a positive social impact and develop individual and community capacity
- Provide facilities that support community groups and services to promote community engagement and harmony
- Provide collaborative leadership to celebrate diversity and advocate for social justice
- Advocate for empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- Provide opportunities for service users to have a voice in the decisions that affect their lives

Our Locations

Head Office and Community Hub:
76 Carrington Street, Lismore NSW 2480

Postal Address:
PO Box 525 Lismore NSW 2480

Other Locations:

- Grafton 2/70 Prince Street Grafton
- Murwillumbah Room 8 Murwillumbah Community Centre
- Wollongbar Before, After & Vacation Care Wollongbar Public School Simpson Avenue Wollongbar
- Lismore Before, After & Vacation Care Lismore Public School 10 Pound street Lismore
- Casino Vacation Care Casino West Public School 84 Hotham Street Casino
- Kyogle Vacation Care Kyogle Public School Summerland Highway Kyogle
- Corndale After School Care Corndale Public School Corndale Road Corndale
- Alstonville Before & After Care St Joseph's Primary School 11 Perry Street Alstonville
- Coorabell After Care 21 Mango Lane Coorabell

Celebrating 40 Years

Our Timeline

9 September

1976

Opened the doors of C.A.I.C (Community Aid and Information Centre) under Northern Rivers College of Advanced Education in Keen Street.

1980

First paid Coordinator employed.

1980

Neighbourhood Centre Inaugural Meeting.

1981

Moved to 13 McKenzie Street premises.

1986

Lismore Neighbourhood Centre was incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Act, 1984.

2003

Moved to 76 Carrington Street, the 'Old Library' building.

2012

Purchased of 76 Carrington Street from Lismore City Council.

Mayor Jenny Dowell presents the key to the building to CEO Jenni Beetson-Mortimer.

2013

Trading name changed to Northern Rivers Community Gateway.

2016

Name changed to 'Northern Rivers Community Gateway Incorporated'

Our Ball celebrating 40 years



OUR SUPPORTERS





Our Service Delivery

Our Programs

The Northern Rivers Community Gateway operates a number of welfare and community capacity building Programs in the township of Lismore, the Far North Coast and NSW.

OUR PROGRAMS

Community Hub Facilities:
Community Information
First Step Emergency Relief
Assisted Referrals
Community Calendar
NILS

Budget Counsellor
Financial Counsellor
Tax Help
Skills Development
(literacy, numeracy classes)
Computer Tuition/Seniors Kiosk
Community Pantry

Showers
Free Spectacles
(eligibility conditions apply)
Street Swags
Room Rental & Office Facilities
JP Services

Connecting Families Program
Child and Adolescent Trauma
Counselling Service
Reaching Out Survivors of
Sexual Assault
Aboriginal Homelessness Program
Volunteer Resource Centre

Community Visitors Program
Timebanking
NSW State Coordination – NILS
Program
Northern Rivers NILS
StepUp Loans
AddUp Savings Program

Warruwi Gambling Help
Before & After School Care
Vacation Care
Teenagers with Disabilities
Vacation Care Program
Cart Café
Work and Development Order
Organisation

OTHER LOCATIONS

Alstonville ■ Casino ■ Coorabell ■ Corndale ■ Kyogle ■ Wollongbar



Many tracks, one road, sustaining community

NORTHERN RIVERS COMMUNITY GATEWAY

Our Community Hub is open Monday – Friday

76 Carrington Street, PO Box 525, Lismore NSW 2480

P 02 6621 7397 **F** 02 6622 0235

E reception@nrcg.org.au **W** communitygateway.org.au

@NRComGateway  NRCGateway



GRAFTON

2/70 Prince Street
Grafton, NSW 2460

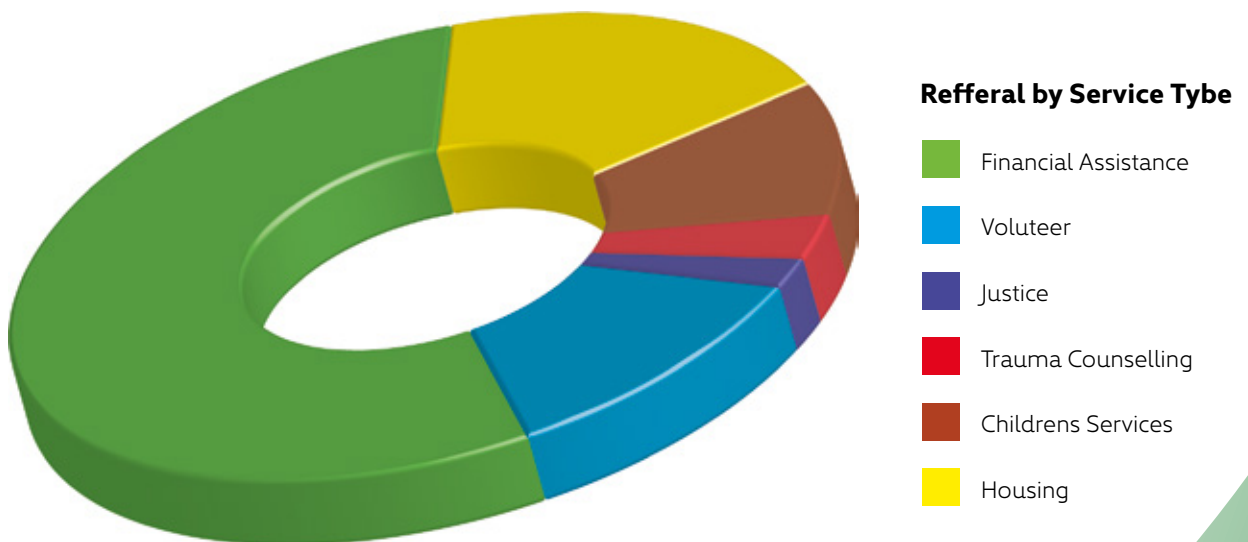
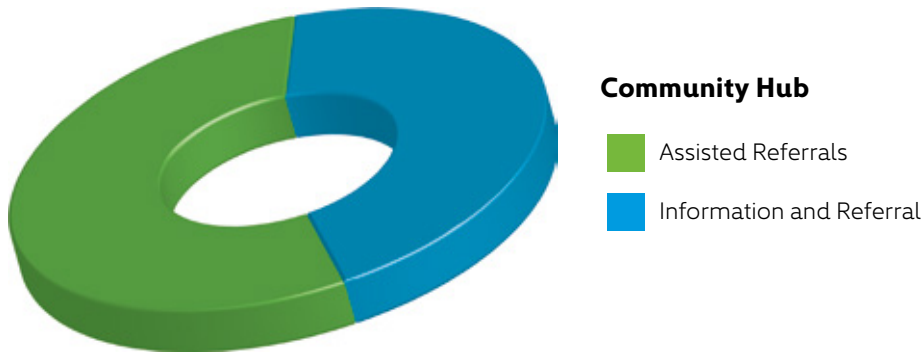
MURWILLUMBAH

Room 8, Knox Park, Nullum St.
Murwillumbah NSW 2487

Social Inclusion Branch

Community Hub

The Hub coordinates a range of programs and services to those most vulnerable in our community. These services include information and assisted referrals, Emergency Relief, Community Pantry, Tax Help, Broadband for Seniors, Community Calendar, Office facilities, JP Services, room rentals for community groups, laundry facilities and showers for people who are homeless. The Hub also organises events to build community capacity and resilience through building community connections. After the devastating floods in March 2017 the demand for our services increased especially for emergency relief and information and referrals. The ground floor of NRCG's Carrington Street building in Lismore was affected severely during the floods. However, we continued to deliver services in a makeshift hub and in collaboration with Red Cross we distributed to flood affected people food parcels and vouchers enabling them to purchase their immediate needs.



Emergency Relief

NRCG's First Step Emergency Relief program is the lead agency working in partnership with Murwillumbah Community Centre, Byron Community Centre and Kyogle Family Support to deliver emergency assistance to vulnerable people living in Lismore, Casino, Byron Bay, Murwillumbah, Kyogle and surrounding areas. This program provides intake and assessment, food parcels, Energy Accounts Payment Assistance (EAPA), Telstra phone cards, Telstra bills assistance, chemist vouchers and fuel vouchers. Our wrap around service model utilises a person-centred approach through intake and assessment and provides referral pathways internally and externally.

Community Hub Services Types



Volunteering Resource Centre

The Volunteer Resource Centre (VRC) has been revitalised this year with the employment of our new project officer from Scotland UK, bringing innovation and evidenced practice from around the world. The Volunteer Resource Centre has strengthened volunteering in the community through promotion, education and placement of volunteers as well as facilitating a network of approximately 60-member organisations to build the skills of Managers and volunteers.

VRC organised and hosted a Volunteering and Community Development Workshop facilitated by NSW Volunteering, Department of Family and Community Services. The workshop focused on understanding local experiences and community strengths and innovative approaches to meet the local volunteering needs. Seventeen local volunteering organisations participated in the workshop providing insight into the local community. Our volunteering resource centre was invited and attended the 'Volunteering - Conversation on Building Social Capital' in Sydney organised by the office of Dr Andrew Leigh, MP. Our local member, Thomas George MP announced at our 40th Anniversary Ball a grant to support Timebanking. This has led to an increase in the interest in Timebanking. The program is currently implementing



strategies in the region that have been trialled in the UK to further develop social capital. VRC also received additional funding from Family and Community Services, NSW Volunteering to deliver Certificate 1 in Active Volunteering. We have developed a partnership with Volunteering Queensland utilising our staff as trainers to offer this training in the region.

Community Visitors Scheme (CVS)

CVS has continued its activities in finding social companions for socially isolated residents in aged care facilities. Our visitors come from various backgrounds and are matched with a resident with similar interests for a long-lasting friendship. Our visitors make an exceptional contribution to the scheme and find it a rewarding exercise. International Volunteers Day in December was celebrated with a morning tea, music, fun and gifts.

Promotional activities were carried out throughout the region including participating in community events.

Financial Inclusion Branch

Northern Rivers No Interest Loans Scheme (NRNILS)

446

No interest loans were approved

\$366,600

was loaned.

NRNILS loans operate regionally from Tweed Heads to Grafton providing access to affordable goods and services that improve the quality of a person’s life. NRNILS work with clients at the centre to improve their financial capability through simple money management strategies, budgeting skills and financial counselling if necessary. Our program works on circular community credit; when one person repays, the money is then available for someone else in the community to borrow.

This year we supported 446 people to purchase various items to enhance their lives. This contributed \$3,66600 to the local economy. 34% of our clients identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

In response to the March 2017 Lismore floods, NRCG partnered with Good Shepherd Microfinance (GSM) and the NAB to increase the loan amount to \$2000 to assist those people affected by the floods.

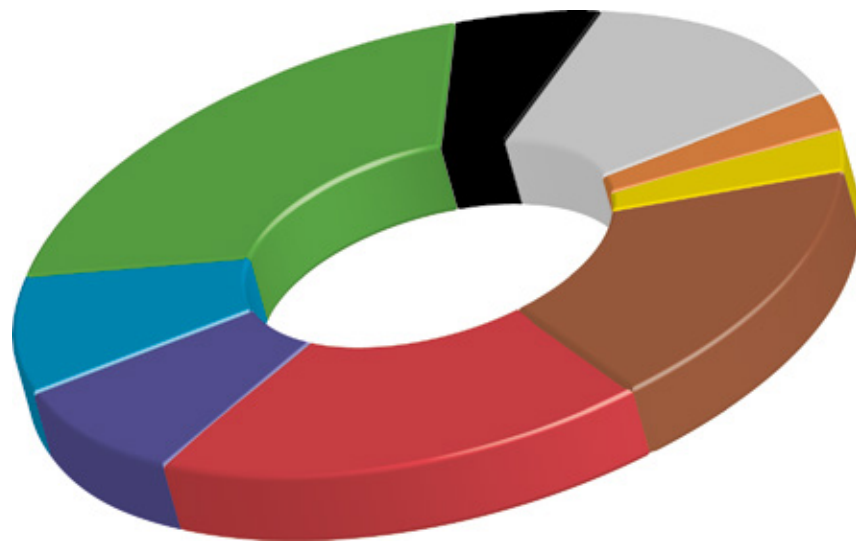
As the financial year ends NRCG underwent an extensive application process to become a collaborative loan provider (incorporating the loan manager and the client support provider) through competitive tendering for the new model of NILS implemented by GSM. This application included the re-tendering of NSW Fair Trading funding of NILS. This resulted in a positive outcome in the 2017/18 financial year.

StepUp low Interest Loans Scheme

StepUp is a low interest loan for people on a low income to purchase essential goods and services. Eligible people can borrow between \$800 - \$3000 with a \$5.99% interest per annum. NRCG StepUp loans cover from Tweed to Grafton. Loans totalled \$153,568 for the year

Loan Purpose

- Fridges
- Washing Machines
- Computers
- Other
- Furniture
- Health
- Household Repairs
- Vehicle Repairs
- Registration



Application Type

- Female
- Male



AddsUp

AddsUP is a matched savings plan for people who have successfully paid off a NILS or a StepUp loan. This scheme is offered by the National Australia Bank (NAB). Eligible clients save up to \$500 within a period of six months to one year and NAB will match dollar for dollar. AddsUp scheme is a reward program to build skills on savings and financial independence.

Home Energy Action

NRCG partnered with the Office of Environment and Heritage to implement the Home Energy Action Program (HEA). NRCG participated as a member of the design workshop to design the HEA program and contributed to the evaluation of the program. HEA is a replacement program offered by the NSW government, Office of Environment and Heritage to assist low income households to reduce the cost of their energy bills by replacing old appliances with more energy efficient appliances. Clients receive 40% discount on fridges and 50% discount on TV's. When a new appliance is delivered to the clients, the old appliance is taken away for recycling. NRCG assisted clients to access NILS loans to pay the remainder after the subsidy was applied. NRCG NILS staff provided assessment and approval processes providing access to discretionary clients such as those escaping domestic violence.

Warruwi Gambling Help

Warruwi Gambling Help is a responsible gambling program for Aboriginal people. Warruwi works in partnership with Aboriginal communities on the North Coast, Mid North Coast and New England regions. We develop strategies, conduct workshops and events to raise awareness and educate to overcome problem gambling. This year we conducted 43 events/workshops in the three regions. Community events varied in size from regional football tournaments, health promotions, community forums, Warruwi specific events in Aboriginal communities to large community events such as NAIDOC and football knockouts where we have had up to 5000 people attending our country events. We host stalls and yarn with the community at these events. The events were held in the most rural and remote regional communities and small to mid-sized regional cities in twenty different Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Warruwi program works with organisations/groups to secure funding for their individual projects/clients. We assisted the following groups and organisations:

- Casino Boolangle LALC – Deadly Dubai's Calendar;
- Ngurulla Macksville Wellbeing Women's Camps;
- Guyra Local Aboriginal Lands Council – Bush Tucker Gardens;
- Baryugil Community (Gurehglam Organisation) raised garden bed 'Uncle Merv' Program;
- Tenterfield Men's Group – Arts Program;
- Glen Innes Men's Group – Arts Culture Trailer Project;
- Moree Boomerangs – Team strip;
- Tenterfield Cricket team;
- Muli Muli – Financial Management Program;
- Inverell AMS BBQ trailer project.

Community Support

Connecting Families

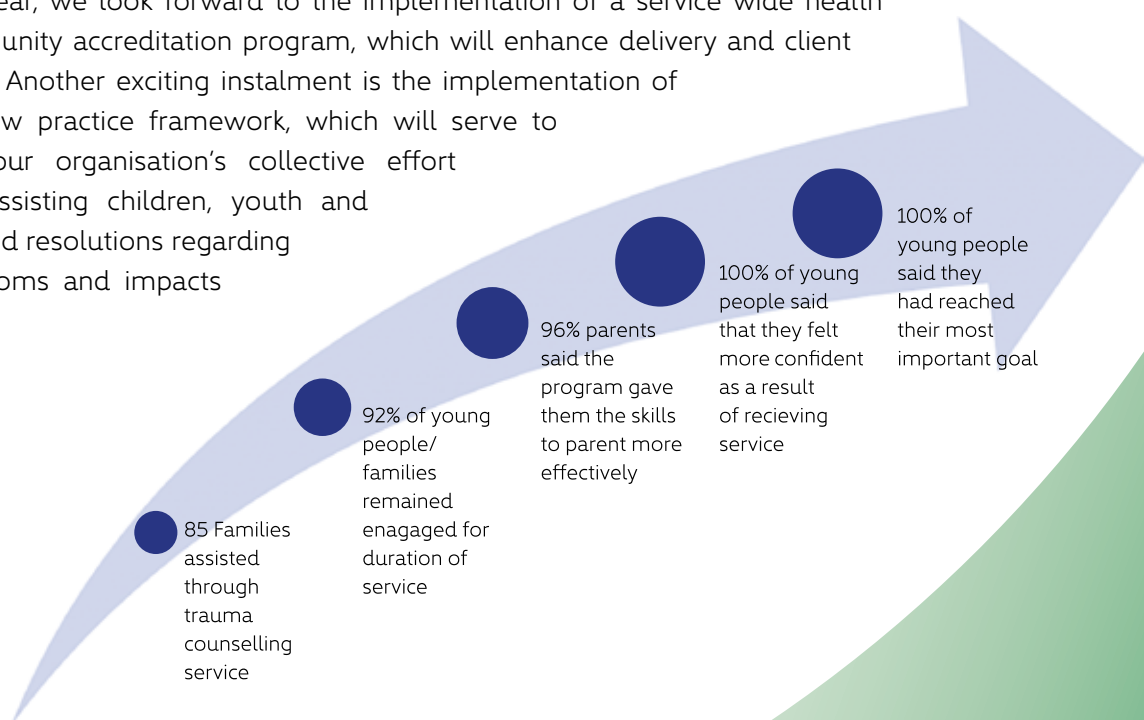
Over the year the Connecting Families program continued to deliver quality case management and parenting capacity building to families across the Clarence Valley. Finding greater grounding in its second year of delivery, staff worked towards becoming more imbedded in the local Grafton Community, and the surrounding Aboriginal communities in the Clarence region. With a strong focus on attachment, child lead play, and holistic support which worked towards inclusiveness of the entire family unit, the program was able to deliver just under 400 sessions to a range of families addressing needs associated with disadvantage. This year also saw the increased engagement of families who identified as Aboriginal, which was an exciting progression of the program in the teams endeavour to offer an inclusive and accessible service. Another exciting instalment in the Connecting Families program was the delivery of a group program targeted at men which aimed to engage fathers of the families involved, and provide education regarding attachment and child lead play. Due to the value and demand of these sessions, more programs will be offered in the 2017/2018 coming year.

Moving forward NRCG is exploring a new program model that will provide a precursor to the Connecting Families program which will work with pregnant mothers and provide an early intervention approach supporting expectant mothers pre-and post birth. A key focus will be exploring ways of increasing the outcomes of children in reaching their developmental milestones and in increasing the protective factors that significantly affect the development of the child. 2017/2018 is shaping up to be a big year for the program as it finds new ways of becoming embedded in the Grafton regional communities, and works closely with families towards building stronger and healthier relationships.



Trauma Counselling – Child & Adolescent Trauma Counselling Service

This year the Trauma Counselling service continued to provide much needed counselling services to children, young people, and their families. Over the course of the year the Trauma Counselling team were able to provide counselling and support to over 170 people struggling with the issues and impacts of trauma. 2016/2017 marked the first full year of delivery of the program in our Carrington Street head office, and saw the organisation explore new and innovative ways to deliver a Trauma Informed practice to our client group. New challenges arose with the impacts of the 2017 flood, that saw most of our downstairs section needing to be fully rebuilt and refurbished. However, this opened up new opportunities to create partnerships with other organisations such as Heartfelt House, who availed their space for a time to deliver our Trauma Counselling service and the continuation of our existing partnership with The Family Centre. The Trauma Counselling team continue to maintain a strong presence in the region participating in key networks such as the Child and Family Forum, Domestic Violence network, Social Workers network, and local youth interagency meetings. As the program progresses into the new year, we look forward to the implementation of a service wide health and community accreditation program, which will enhance delivery and client outcomes. Another exciting instalment is the implementation of NRCG’s new practice framework, which will serve to enhance our organisation’s collective effort towards assisting children, youth and families find resolutions regarding the symptoms and impacts of trauma.



Session by Age Breakdown***Trauma Counselling – Reaching out Sexual Assault Survivors***

In addition to the success of Child and Adolescent Trauma Counselling program over 2016/2017, NRCG continued to deliver the ROSA program, providing approx. 240 sessions of counselling to adult survivors of sexual assault. This important program utilises a range of evidence based therapeutic counselling approaches to support and empower people living with significant trauma. The program provides the opportunity for people to challenge the adverse narratives caused by incidents of sexual assault in their childhood.

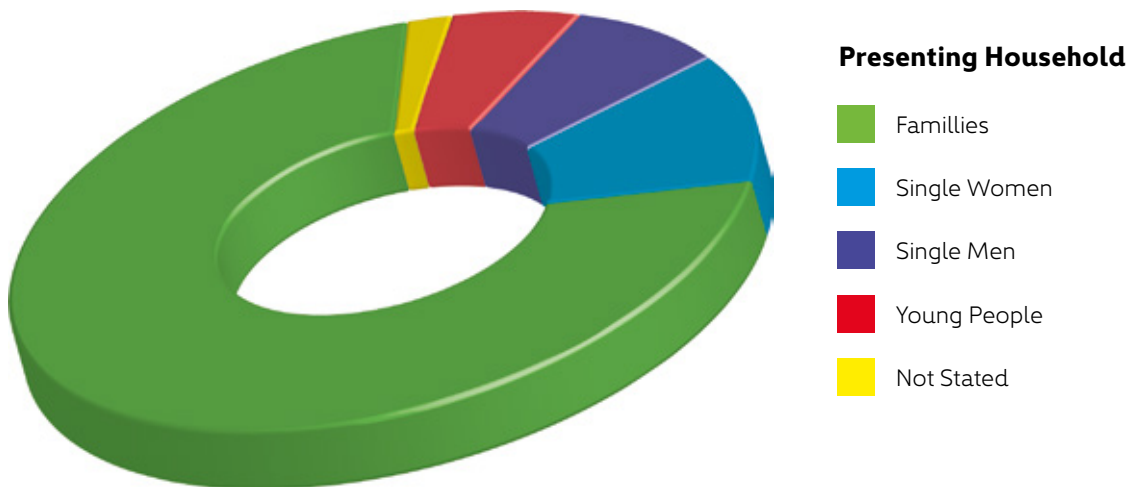
Over the course of the year the team were able to undertake a range of training opportunities specific to the needs of people living with trauma. This included our organisation wide Trauma Informed Care and Practice, attendance at the Happiness and It's Causes Conference, Supporting Environments that Repair training, and other training aimed to provide staff with up to date best practice approaches to service delivery.

During the impacts of the 2017 flood the program met new challenges in delivering its service, however through innovative approaches of the team, and the good will of local partners, the program was able to seamlessly continue its service to the community.

Looking forward the ROSA program stands to benefit from the upcoming Health and Community Services accreditation, and the implementation of the organisation wide practice framework, as it finds new and innovative ways to assist people overcome the impacts of childhood sexual assault.

Helping Hands

NRCG continued to support people in the Aboriginal community who were experiencing housing instability and crisis through the Helping Hands program. A total of 222 individuals and families received support through the Helping Hands program receiving various levels of case management, support, and brokerage to assist in the stabilisation of their housing. A major challenge over the year, which continues to be a much-deliberated topic across the region, was the affordable housing crisis. With the lowest private rental vacancy rate in the state of 1.1% (Sydney 1.9%), reduction of housing stock due to the recent floods, and the mounting pressure of rental cost intruding on the median household income (in some parts of the region averaging up to 61% of median household income), Aboriginal families in particular are finding it increasingly difficult to secure long term stable accommodation. Whilst these issues of housing require a state level approach to address the housing needs of the state, throughout the year NRCG continued to employ a range of strategies to curb the growing pressures on Northern Rivers families which included real estate engagement, advocacy at key forums, responses to strategy papers, strategic partnerships, exploration of successful social housing models and holistic case planning which considered the challenges of the current housing milieu. In the coming year NRCG plans to continue to advocate on behalf of Aboriginal families in regards to the multiple barriers to attaining safe, stable and affordable housing.



Top 5 Reasons for Seeking Support

- Housing Crisis (eg. Eviction)
- Housing Affordability Stress
- Financial Difficulties
- Relationship/Family Breakdown
- Unemployment



Cart Cafe

This year we were able to continue to build the Cart Café with two carts. The Cart Cafe is a social enterprise that facilitates social and economic improvement for young disadvantaged and vulnerable members of the community. This venture provides training and employment opportunities for community members who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. We received additional funding from ETC to support this program and through this partnership we have been able to effectively place youth at risk of homelessness and receive training and case management support in the placement of these trainees. The Cart Café provides training at its head office, 76 Carrington Street, Lismore serving quality coffee, tea, snacks and light meals. The Cart Cafe has also operated at many local community events including the Aboriginal Rugby League Knockout, Eat the Street, Senior league Baseball and little league championships, and the Lantern Parade. As the year closes we have been successful in tendering for Woodford festival, NSW Aboriginal Knockout and temporary placement of one cart in Lismore Central.

Northern Rivers Community Gateway

The **CART CAFE**

Coffee with a conscience

A not for profit organisation,
we are a social enterprise that facilitates social and economic improvement for disadvantaged and vulnerable members of our community. Our experienced Baristas provide employment pathways for marginalised people.

We support local business,
sourcing our products from ethical local producers in the Northern Rivers NSW, we endeavour to support our local businesses, the environment and our community.

MANY TRACKS, ONE ROAD
SUSTAINING COMMUNITY

REGISTERED CHARITY

Children & Disability Services

Rainbow Region Kids

Rainbow Region Kids (RRK) is a successful social enterprise that provides childcare across five local Governments areas, Lismore, Richmond Valley, Kyogle Shire, Byron Bay Shire and Ballina Shire. RRK is a fully accredited child care service for school aged children providing Vacation Care, Afterschool Care and Before School Care.

RRK Services operate from Lismore Public School, Wollongbar Public School, Casino West Public School, Kyogle Public school, Corndale Public School, Coorabell Public School and Alstonville St Joseph's Primary School RRK outside school hour's care is registered under the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Educational and Care (National Quality Framework) which includes the Educational and Care Services National Law and the Educational and Care Services National Regulations.

All RRK services have undergone assessment and rating conducted by Early Childhood Education and Care.

Rainbow Region Kids vacation care holds combined excursion activities and special theme days for all of the children to come together and meet children from surrounding areas in a child friendly, safe environment, with the opportunity to meet our team of friendly staff.

Exciting activities the children participated in this year included; fitness workshops, magic shows, OOO day, NAIDOC celebrations, Barefoot Bowls, discos, movies, tenpin bowling, cooking, circus skills and Macadamia Castle.

Key achievements that RRK have made include: Rainbow Region Kids provided care for the families affected by the April 2017 floods. NRCCG supplied transport collecting and delivering children from their homes or alternative accommodation, meals where supplied for the children from the flood effected families. RRK has partnered with St Vincent De Paul to offer Breaking the Barriers to local families that are facing financial and personal difficulties. The families that are assisted access all RRK vacation care services. This partnership has opened additional referrals from other local services. RRK has been working with UPA and caring for children whilst parents and carers attend group meetings and functions. RRK staff have been actively involved in local events such as the Aboriginal Knockout Football in Lismore by lending their time in the canteen and elder's tent.

RRK provides contracted care for clients of Department of Family and Community Services, Child & Adolescent Specialist Programs and Accommodation, St Vincent De Paul, UPA, Foundation Care, St Carthage's Community Care, Your Choice Clarence Valley Council, Evans Head Brighter Futures, Casino Brighter Futures, Mental Health Respite Program Far, North Coast Commonwealth Respite & Carelink Centre, Wesley Mission, Family Referral Service, On Track Community Programs, Northcott, OTCP and Life Without Barriers.

Dragonites

Dragonites Vacation Care combined with Lismore Vacation care to provide outside school aged care for teenagers with disabilities. The Dragonites program supported 16 families.

The Dragonites service allows parents and carers of teenagers with disability access to appropriate care at mainstream outside school hours and holiday care programs. The service provides social skills, cooking and living experiences and social outings.

Outings include movies, ten pin bowling, barefoot bowls, fishing at local beaches, Macadamia Castle, shopping for special themed days, Bunnings workshops and the inclusive all RRK service days.

One of the main interests of the students is multimedia and developing and producing skits with the staff.

NSW NILS State Coordination

This year the NSW NILS state Coordination program built on the work of the previous years. NRCG demonstrated its effectiveness in delivering a state-wide program from a regional location.

As the NSW State Coordinator (funded by NSW Fair Trading) of the No Interest Loan Scheme we are in daily contact with NILS providers around the state and feel we have a good grasp of some of the issues affecting microfinance at the grassroots level.

The program continued to facilitate regional meetings with NILS organisations across NSW to promote collaboration, support and education between services. The program partnered with the Office of Environment and Heritage to implement and train all NILS program in the Home Energy Action Program (HEA). NRCG participated as a member of the design workshop to design the HEA program and contributed to the evaluation of the program.

The program increased its capacity in developing research and consultation papers. We consulted with NILS programs to provide strategic advice to NSW Fair Trading on the future design of the program. Through the work of the program NRCG provided a submission to the Department of Social Services Financial wellbeing and capability discussion paper.

The program hosted and chaired the NSW Financial Inclusion Network, which meets with peak bodies, private sector, research institutes, government and non-government stakeholders to affect positive change in the NSW Financial Inclusion space.

As we finish this year this program has been reviewed and we are required to re-tender for this program.

Board of Directors

President: Robyn Riordan
Vice President: Neil Davies
Treasurer: Deniel Taylor

Directors: Deb Pugh
Neil Harris

Valuing our team

Values

Northern Rivers Community Gateway continues to remain closely connected to its organisational values. A review of our values brought about a change in values: vision, commitment, respect, integrity, and Innovation.

These new values were reviewed by our Board, staff and volunteers continue to underpin our organisation in 2016/17 through strategic Human Resource management, and communication around our strategic direction.

Evidence of our values-driven HRM strategy can be found in areas such as

- Talent management
- Performance review procedure and regular supervision
- Recruitment and onboarding
- Training and development

The second year of our Values Champions Team has seen the development of the values champion role to promote our values and to provide advice to Human Resource in strengthening our connection to our values.

Our Rewards and Recognition Project goes from strength to strength. This project enables staff and volunteers to nominate peers and management for formal recognition of outstanding efforts and behaviours aligned to the organizational values.

STAFF ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Northern Rivers Community Gateway staff participated in an Engagement Survey. The survey Provided responses on organisation and staff performance in relation to:

- Health and Safety
- General Engagement
- Our Values



I feel proud to say I work for the organisation

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree or Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree



I receive the right amount of training needed for me to do my work well

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree or Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Chair's Report



The Northern Rivers Community Gateway board saw another busy year in 2016/17. We celebrated our 40th year as a significant community organisation. We have expanded our social enterprise capacity with two coffee carts and the expansion of Rainbow Region Kids program.

The Board focus this year were strategic direction and governance. A board and CEO planning weekend was held late 2016 to develop the 2017-2020 Strategic plan.

The Management team contributed to this work with presentations to the board. The outcome provided our organisation with a clear strategic direction, many tracks one road sustaining community with three key strategic priorities: Strategic Investment; Innovation; Social Impact. Members of the Board also attended the Better Boards conference in Brisbane.

Our CEO and the team are to be congratulated on their response to the devastating floods that hit Lismore in March 2017. Although the building was underwater and severely impacted staff worked tirelessly to ensure the building was emptied and cleaned to enable the continuation of welfare services to those most in need. Our governance and risk management processes ensured that the organisation was fully insured for this type of event. Congratulations to the CEO for your foresight in this area.

Learning and development continues to be a focus of our organisation and ongoing professional development is the key to skilled and professional staff, particularly in relation to the Board and our key employee, the CEO. The Board endorsed a CEO study tour which included her presenting a paper at the IV International Conference on Complementary Currencies in Spain in May 2017. Her study tour built on research and key relationship building in Europe and the UK. On behalf of the Board I congratulate the CEO on the acceptance of her presentation to this conference that was run through the University of Catalunya. Strategic international partnerships of this nature have resulted in recruitment of a skilled staff member from Scotland.

As you will hear from our Treasurer and our external audit report, we have increased our recurrent income for the year. We are in a strong financial position to address the future.

On behalf of the Board I wish to compliment the CEO and Managers on their leadership particularly in the aftermath of the flood and their response to the community of Lismore. As a Board of Strategic direction, along with governance

this is the Boards responsibility and I am privileged to have chaired the Board for the past 12 months and to be part of the direction that has lead us to such a sound position to address the future.

Finally, a sincere thank you to the Board for their dedication and to our CEO who has demonstrated strong leadership and to our staff and volunteers whose commitment is outstanding.

Robyn Riordan

Treasurers Report



The Northern Rivers Community Gateway continued its expansion this year.

The organisation continued to maintain good accounting practice in complying with company standards. This was supported by an independent external audit. Attached are the audited financial statements. A Finance Committee comprising of the Treasurer, President, CEO and Corporate Services Manager monitor expenditure. Financial and organisational management currently includes bi-annual external audits, internal financial management and monitoring controls monthly, quarterly, biannual and annual reports to funding bodies, and the Board. Insurances including professional indemnity, public liability and work cover are in place as well as a solid base of policies and procedure to govern all areas of our operations.

The organisation was successful in increasing its recurrent funding base again this year and further strengthens our financial position. Our income increased to \$2,581,519 this year. Our expenses were \$2,440,997. This resulted in a surplus of \$53,793. The organisation continued to reinvest surplus into short term deposits yielding increased income. The organisations assets at the end of the year were \$476,848 demonstrating the organisation maintains a solid position.

Thank you to the CEO for good management of finances through the monthly finance committee meetings and to our auditors WCA Audit & Assurance Services. Thank you to the managers for their co-operation during the year with helping the CEO with keeping good recording of their expenses.

I look forward to working with the Board and CEO into the future.

Deniel Taylor

CEO Report



Many tracks, one road, sustaining community continues to epitomise the work of our organisation. This financial year was one of celebration with our 40th year but also one of devastation both for our organisation and the community of Lismore with the floods of March 2017. Although our community building was devastated and has to be demolished internally on the ground floor there are many highlights. We were insured which will enable us to rebuild a more purpose-built environment. Our staff pulled together to build a makeshift intake area where we continued to provide emergency relief, financial support and case management to clients. Our community partners supported us in providing free space. Our childcare programs were able to assist flood affected families through access to vacation care.

Our diversity is our strength, we continue to support disadvantaged individuals and families through true wrap around service delivery. Our volunteer programs are core to building resilient communities. With over 50-member organisations we are able to support the delivery of community services in the region with access to more than 1000 registered volunteers. Our Timebanking is a worldwide innovative initiative that encourages individuals to volunteer their time according to their abilities and interests. Timebanking makes use of the assets and resources available in the community.

September 2016 year was significant for our organisation as we celebrated our 40th year of providing welfare and community capacity building programs to the community. Our year of celebration culminated in the 40th Anniversary Charity Ball which was the highlight of the year. Supported by local business and the music of Lisa Hunt it was a true night of celebrations. Thank you to the Lismore Mayor Isaac Smith, Cr Gianpiero Battista, Cr Marks, Cr Bennet Cr Ekins and Lismore City Council Director of Sustainability Brent McAlister for showing your support in attending this event. Thank you to Julie Hornibrook for attending as guest speaker and providing invaluable information on the history of our organisation. As a social worker in Lismore in the 1970s Julie was a key member of the health and community service sector that established our organisation in 1976. Joy Hall who has volunteered for nearly 40 years is a true testament to the inclusiveness and resilience of our organisation Joy learnt the computer as a volunteer and two days a week compiles the community calendar published in the Northern Star and Echo.

Thank you and special mention to Thomas George MP for launching the event and continuing to support our organisation with the announcement of funding to implement Timebanking in the Far North Coast.

The 2016/17 year was also very important in relation to our commitment to innovation. We continued to work with Beacon Strategies to develop the Supported Mothers, Stronger Futures Program. NRCG has been on a journey to design the service model which has involved undertaking an evidence review, community consultation, service mapping and a population needs assessment. We have demonstrated our commitment to ensuring this idea becomes a reality by investing resources in external expertise as part of the service design process. We are currently seeking funding to be able to implement this program.

We also engaged Beacon Strategies to assist us in developing our practice framework. Having consulted with managers and staff this work continues into the 2017/18 financial year.

We are the lead agency to deliver emergency relief services across the Far North Coast to the most vulnerable in our community and work in partnership with Byron Community Centre, Murwillumbah Community Centre, Casino and Kyogle Community Services. We also work as a member of the Aboriginal alliance to deliver homelessness case management services to Aboriginal people. Our commitment to Aboriginal service delivery is shown through our Aboriginal employment strategy, our Warruwi gambling program working with Aboriginal communities in the Far North Coast, New England and Mid North Coast as well as our involvement in key Aboriginal events such as the Aboriginal knockout.

Our social enterprises have gone from strength to strength with the Cart Café providing real employment opportunities to vulnerable people. With two coffee carts we have maximised our ability to attend events and festivals. Our children services continue to deliver quality children's services and this is evidenced by our successful accreditation outcomes.

We continued the development of our leadership team and its skills with the aim of building positive cultural change and engagement at all levels. The leadership team continued to be guided by our strategic priorities. Our specialist Human Resource position was supported through the creation of a Corporate services Manager position and we were able to build on the recommendations from our engagement survey. The activities of the 40th anniversary help to build on our engaged culture. The values champions group continued to promote our values that underpin the work of our organisation and provided innovative ideas to Human Resources such as the creation of a values log, the reward and recognition program and the implementation of resilient and team building programs. These values have been reviewed and will continue to elevate our organisation.

'Equality is enshrined in every timebanking exchange through the principle of an hour for an hour. Because an hour to every human being is equally valuable, and everybody has something to give, timebanking can help some of the most marginalised people feel a sense of self worth and belonging. Timebanking helps to bridge previously unbridgeable divides: race, class, gender, national origin — because it defines people by what they are prepared to do for others' Timebanking UK.

Our performance and development framework continues to inform us on organisational training needs. Whole of organisation and program specific training was delivered on Trauma informed practice, manual handling, privacy and confidentiality, child protection, DV response, Trauma focus psychological therapy, working with child sexual assault, first aid and Early Childhood Management.

A key focus of the CEO role was the continued development of key partnerships. I continued my role on the Board of Homelessness NSW, Chair of NSW Financial Inclusion Network and a member of the Lismore Communities for Children Advisory committee. A key partnership has been the developmental work we are doing with Beacon Strategies to improve the outcomes for the unborn child. Our Community Support Branch will continue to work with Beacon Strategies to develop programs in 2017/2018.

Thank you to the Board for supporting my role in developing partnerships and my ongoing professional development to inform our organisational practices. My study tour to UK and Spain enabled me to build on partnerships worldwide. This together with the acceptance of my paper to present at the IV International Conference on Complementary Currencies in Spain in May 2017 highlighted the uniqueness of the work that we do at Northern Rivers Community Gateway and built on our organisational knowledge.

The Financial Inclusion Network's key project this year was to develop a financial inclusion position paper for NSW. As Chair I worked with community sector, government and NSW peak bodies for the purpose of working towards a financially included NSW.

As we move into the 2017/18 financial year all staff and management are involved in the development of an operational plan to support our new strategic direction. We are currently undertaking a redesign of our Client Relationship Management System and developing and implementing an organisational wide practice framework. We have engaged Quality Innovation Performance (QIP) with the intention of completing an accreditation process under the Quality Improvement Council (QIC) Health and Community Service Standards by June 2018 and have also begun a process for full review of our policies and procedures.

Thank you to the Board for your continued support of me in my role as CEO. Thank you to the leadership team for your commitment to grow together. Thank you to the staff, who continues to extend themselves to deliver innovative services. Thank you to our volunteers for your commitment. We look forward to continuing the rebuild of our ground floor at our Community Hub and head office in Lismore.

Jenni Beetson-Mortimer



Many tracks, one road, sustaining community

NORTHERN RIVERS COMMUNITY GATEWAY

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Wollongbar	Simpson Ave, Wollongbar
Casino	84 Hotham Street, Casino West
Kyogle	192-196 Summerland Way, Kyogle
Alstonville	11 Perry Street, Alstonville
Corndale	647 Corndale Road, Corndale
Coorabell	21 Mango Lane, Coorabell

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