

Bayside Community Information & Support Service



Strategic Plan 2023-2028



We acknowledge the Bunurong and Wurundjeri peoples of the Kulin Nation, the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which our offices are located. We pay our respects to their elders, past, present, and emerging, and uphold their relationship to this land.



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About Us

Bayside Community Information and Support Service (BayCISS) is a registered not-for-profit community charity providing an extensive range of services for community members living in the Bayside and parts of Kingston (bounded by South, Warrigal and Centre Dandenong Roads) local government areas.

As of May 2023, BayCISS operates a Community Information Service in Hampton East and the Castlefield Community Centre in Hampton. Our services are free or low cost to enable access for all individuals and families in our community to the resources and supports that they need.

Our community programs bring people together through a variety of activities and events for all ages. Casework services provide individualised support to those who need it most and we also offer children's programs and activities to help kids learn, grow, and have fun. In times of crisis, we offer emergency relief to those who are struggling. BayCISS relies on volunteers to help us carry out our mission and make a difference in the lives of others, complemented by our student placement program that helps students gain valuable experience in our field.

Our family counselling services provide support and guidance to families dealing with challenges. We also offer legal advice, utility relief assistance and a no-interest loan scheme to help people access financial support, while a budget and bills assistance program helps people manage their finances and get back on track. BayCISS also provides a range of support programs and activities to promote mental health and well-being, and our educational support services help vulnerable school children to reach their academic goals.

*At BayCISS, we are committed to community engagement
and working together to create a better future for everyone.*

1 Our Philosophy

1.1 Our Mission

To help our local community and its people.

1.2 Our Purpose

To provide services and programs that offer opportunity for assistance, participation, development, learning and enjoyment.

1.3 Our Values

At all times and in all aspects of our work, we strive to be:

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| <i>Impartial</i> | <i>We are non-judgemental, flexible, and supportive.</i> |
| <i>Respectful</i> | <i>We are respectful and listen to others.</i> |
| <i>Accessible</i> | <i>We make ourselves available and offer support.</i> |
| <i>Collaborative</i> | <i>We work with and develop local partnerships.</i> |
| <i>Empathetic</i> | <i>We are caring and compassionate.</i> |

1.4 Our Business

| | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Information and Advocacy | Community Programs |
| Casework | Children's Programs and Activities |
| Emergency Relief | Volunteerism |
| Family Counselling | Legal Advice |
| No Interest Loan Scheme | Budget and Bills Assistance |
| Student Placement Program | Utility Relief Assistance |
| Support Programs and Activities | Community Engagement |
| Educational Support | |

2 Our Community

Our agency and services provide assistance for community members living within the Bayside and northern part of the Kingston LG's, covering an approximate population of 125,000 people.

Bayside City Council has a population of 110,000 with more residents aged >50 years than the Greater Melbourne average. Of these residents, 25% were born overseas; over 34% report that they do not play an active part in the community; just over 13% feel isolated; almost 30% volunteer; social housing availability constitutes just 2.5%. The City of Kingston has 167,000 residents.



Photo: Supplied

Overall, this area is predominantly viewed as affluent, however, there are pockets of disadvantage. And while the area is asset rich with increased housing values in past years, in many instances people remain income poor.

Over 3000 residents are Health Care and low-income card holders, and there are over 20,000 people receiving Aged or Disability pensions, with chronic illness and long-term health conditions.

Due to the affluence of the area serviced, clients seeking support from our agency are often disconnected from the local community and experience isolation and social exclusion. A feature impacting this is that 3.7% residents in Bayside live on the Public Housing estates. In 2023 a major redevelopment of one of our public housing estates is expected to place additional pressures on residents and our service delivery.

Many clients requesting assistance through BayCISS identify as having complex issues including low income particularly single parents, mental health, domestic violence, homeless or at risk of homelessness and drug and alcohol abuse.

Over 50% of service users receive Disability Support payments with another large proportion of clients receiving sole parent payments. Following the changes to the Education Maintenance Allowance in 2015, we have also experienced an increase in requests to assist with education costs, particularly with extracurricular activities such as camps, excursions, and swimming.

Demands for family counselling, casework, emergency relief, advocacy, referrals, support programs and childcare are continuing to increase with a larger number of service users requiring more complex support.

3 Our Goals

3.1 Our Organisation

- To provide quality systems which advocate, enable, and mediate for our community
- To operate the Castlefield Community Centre and Neighbourhood House in Hampton
- To provide efficient reporting systems to funding bodies
- To grow options for partnering with other organisations including educational, community and the private sector

3.2 Our Services

- To advocate, enable and mediate with the community for our community members and agencies within the sector
- To continue to provide community activities for all members of the community through our Neighbourhood House
- To advocate on behalf of our members with government, not-for-profit and local agencies
- To enable members to take control of their lives through access to information, life skills and opportunities to make choices which determine their well being
- To mediate on behalf of members between different sectors: educational, economic and welfare; in our community to achieve access to basic needs
- To place the service users at the centre of our service planning, composition and delivery

3.3 Our Communications

- To strengthen our digital, print and media presence to reach the wider community
- To strengthen the BayCISS and Castlefield brands, image, and organisational profile
- To build organisational capacity, assist connectivity, networks, and community awareness

3.4 Our People

- To be an employer of choice for both staff and volunteers, providing a fair, safe, positive, supportive, and rewarding work environment
- To promote a culture of trust and respect to ensure that the organisation attracts and retains people to deliver our mission
- To develop Best Practice systems which support staff, volunteers, and members

3.5 Our Governance

- To continue as a well governed, effective, and sustainable Not-For-Profit community organisation accountable to all stakeholders
- To strengthen the capacity of the Committee of Management so they can guide the organisation now and into the future

4 Our Supports

4.1 Our Influences

BayCISS service delivery is predominantly guided by two local government areas, The City of Kingston and the Bayside City Council. Each council has identified the need to support community growth with an emphasis on the health and wellbeing of its community members as outlined in their own strategic plans.

Bayside City Council has identified 11 main themes in its Council Plan 2021-25, of which BayCISS can respond as follows:

Theme 4 Community and Direction

Bayside will be a city that is greener and has more open space and creates a community that is inclusive, respectful, and accessible.

Theme 5 Nurturing Creativity

Bayside will nurture creativity.

Theme 6 Promoting Innovation

Bayside will nurture innovation to encourage a thriving and vibrant community.

Theme 8 Access and Inclusion

Bayside values all individuals. Bayside wishes to demonstrate that they value the lived experiences of all culture and that they want to be inclusive of people of all abilities in the community.

Bayside City Council commits to nurture healthy people and resilient communities ensuring services and programs are adaptable to meet diverse and changing needs.

At BayCISS, this will be achieved by the following:

- Partnering with community, agencies, and other levels of government to deliver fit-for-purpose services so all people in Bayside can feel safe and live healthy, resilient, active lives at all ages and stages of their life.
- Facilitate opportunities for people to participate in community life, through volunteering, civic leadership, sport, artistic, cultural, and social programs, to enable inclusion, social connection, creative expression, and wellbeing.
- Respect and care for our First Nation's cultural heritage to build inclusion, celebrate diversity and enhance connection to place.
- In partnership, facilitate an appropriate mix of inclusive, sustainable, and affordable housing, including social housing, to meet the changing needs of the people of Bayside.
- Build social policy and strategy to improve equity, inclusion and diversity in our community

The City of Kingston's *Council Plan 2021-25* highlights their vision for an inclusive, resilient community with a thriving economy, where we all share a safe, sustainable environment. The Council also identifies their main purpose to be working with our community to protect and enhance wellbeing for current and future generations.

Guiding Principles, as they relate to our work include:

- Creating an inclusive place for all to live, learn and work
- Working to improve our community wellbeing.
- Acting with kindness, compassion, and integrity
- Accountability and transparency

Strategic Directives:

- | | |
|--------------|-----------------------|
| ● Liveable | ● Sustainable |
| ● Prosperous | ● Healthy & Inclusive |
| ● Safe | ● Well governed |

4.2 Our Funding

BayCISS, incorporating Castlefield Community Centre, Family Counselling Program, and the Casework program, has secured a number of funding streams to support and finance our operations, however, we are also very reliant on community funds to provide our services. Official funding bodies include all levels of government, government departments, governing bodies, community banks and local organisations and Community Service Groups.

BayCISS in its entirety is also governed and monitored by the funding and/or service agreements, Memorandum of Understandings, contracts, and verbal agreements through each one of our funding bodies, donors, and supporters.

The future development of our Community Engagement strategy will assist in managing and recognising our partnerships, relationships and valued community networks and promoting philanthropy.

We would like to acknowledge and thank the following partners, supporters and donors for their generous support:

Major Partners

Bayside City Council, City of Kingston, Department of Fairness, Families & Housing, Department of Social Security, Neighbourhood Houses Victoria and CisVIC.

Major Supporters

Rotary Club of Brighton, Rotary Club of Sandringham, All Souls Opportunity Shop & Anglican Church, Woodlands Golf Club, Royal Melbourne Golf Club, Bakers Delight Hampton, Aldi Supermarkets, Moorabbin Fresh Food Market, Pets of the Homeless, Freemasons Community Relief and The Fresh Connection.

Donors & Partners

Beaumaris/Mordialloc Baptist Church, Cheltenham/Mentone Uniting Church, Leighmoor Uniting Church, Holy Trinity Anglican Church, Sandringham Uniting Church, Laminex Australia, Bayside Community Emergency Relief, Highett Community Bank, Kiwanas, KOGO, Women's International Group (WIG's), Soroptimist International Group Brighton, St Leonard's Secondary College, Share the Dignity, MTO Shahmaghsoudi, Rotary Club of Hampton, Rotary Club of Beaumaris, Centrelink (Moorabbin & Cheltenham), Simplot Australia, Uniting Church Cheltenham, Trinity Unity Church Brighton, and many others.



Photo: Supplied

5 STRATEGIC IMPERATIVES

5.1 Major Strategic Priorities:

1. **Expanding the services we offer**

We will continue to review community needs and add new services to meet these needs. An example is the potential to expand assistance in the Mental Health area. We will also continue to promote and expand our Neighbourhood offerings at our Castlefield campus.

2. **Premises**

The Katoomba Street premises are inadequate, too small, not designed for our Operations, and would not meet current access building requirements (accessible access for *all* BayCISS staff and service users, fully accessible toilets, etc). They are not “fit for purpose” and fall well short of Community demands.

A strategic priority is to engage with our Local Government Bodies to explore building options to relocate Katoomba Street Office to a purpose-built office by 2024. A draft redevelopment plan was handed to Bayside City Council Senior Officers in July 2021 and we will continue to work towards achieving a conclusive and positive response.

3. **Leverage and Consolidation**

There are similar organisations to BayCISS in and around the Bayside and Kingston local Government areas. This includes both the “CISS” and the Neighbourhood House Operations. Whilst there is a level of communications between the various organisations, there are opportunities for greater cooperation and leveraging off each other.

This can be achieved through various means including:

- Sharing of documents (policies etc), systems
- Rationalisation of services – not all Agencies need to be all things to all people, specialisation of some activities
- Secondment of staff to assist with sharing best practice, as well as staff training and development
- Partnerships with other Agencies
- Consolidation of Agencies

5.2 Major ‘business as usual’ actions & activities

- Introduce and encourage more community involvement.
 - Continue to improve, expand, and develop appropriate policies and procedures; and
 - Continue to identify gaps in our agency operations to promote best practice.
 - Review and update our recruitment, training, development, and opportunities within the agency.
 - Explore new opportunities for funding and ongoing financial support.
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6 Conclusion

Strategic planning is a critical component for effective governance and management of our agency. The goals identified within this plan set the direction and culture for our work environment.

The strategic plan is imperative to the continuation of service delivery under the BayCISS banner to support the Bayside and Kingston community. BayCISS is an agency within the local area providing emergency relief and other essential services and support to its people, by its people.

Our commitment to all individuals who need and use our services, our adherence to our values, our strong leadership and our strong governance are mandatory.

We continue to be challenged in the areas of emergency relief and support, delivery of services, resource restrictions, funding, changes in need and environmental factors, as well as human resources. We strive for continuous improvement with continual review, revision, procedural and policy formulation, and updates.

This plan is part of a long-term process with the development of a formal system for periodic review, feedback, response, and updates to ensure the effectiveness of the agency and its management.

To assist with the development of this plan, we have consulted with local government representatives, LGA Census data, funding body representatives, staff and volunteer representations, community members and governing bodies.

June 2023

6.1 Our Overview

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| Our Mission To help our local community and its people. | Our Purpose To provide services and programs designed for assistance, participation, development, learning and enjoyment. | Our Values We are: Impartial - flexible, supportive, non-judgemental Respectful - listen to others. Accessible - available to offer support. Collaborative - working with and developing local partnerships. Empathetic - we are caring and compassionate. | Our Business Information & Advocacy Family Counselling Community Activities & Programs Emergency Relief Volunteerism Legal Advice No Interest Loan Scheme Educational support | |
| Our Goals | | | | |
| Our Organisation To provide quality systems which advocate, enable and mediate. To provide efficient reporting system to funding bodies. To explore options for partnering with other organisations. | Our Services To advocate, enable and mediate with the community for our community members and agencies within the sector. To advocate on behalf of our members with government, not-for-profit and local agencies. To enable members to take control of their lives. To mediate on behalf of members between different sectors in our community to achieve access to basic needs. To place the service users at the centre of our service planning, composition, and delivery. | Our Communications To strengthen the BayCISS brand, image, and organisational profile. To strengthen our digital, print and media presence to reach wide sections of the community. To build organisational capacity, assist connectiveness, networks and community awareness. | Our People To be an employer of choice for both staff and volunteers, providing a fair, safe, positive, supportive, and rewarding work environment. To promote a culture of trust and respect to ensure that the organisation attracts and retains people to deliver our mission. To develop best practice systems which support staff, volunteers, and members. | Our Governance To continue as a well governed and sustainable Not-For-Profit community organisation accountable to all stakeholders. To strengthen the capacity of our Committee so they can guide the organisation now and into the future. |