



northern suburbs
community
legal centre

Northern Suburbs
Community Legal Centre
2024-2025
Annual Report



**Northern Suburbs
Community Legal Centre**

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www.nsclegal.org.au

Acknowledgement of Country



We acknowledge that we work on the lands of the Whadjuk people of the Noongar Nation.

In the spirit of reconciliation, we acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Western Australia and their continuing connections to land, waters and community.

We pay full respect to all First Nations people and their cultures, as well as their Elders past, present and emerging.

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About Us



Northern Suburbs Community Legal Centre (NSCLC) is a nationally accredited, not-for-profit legal centre, established in 1996. We aim to provide person centred services that are offered primarily across the northern metropolitan area, with some programs extending further across the State. We have offices in Mirrabooka, Wanneroo, Joondalup and Yanchep. We prioritise collaborations with other community focused organisations to deliver diverse services in a range of locations.

We provide a unique approach to delivering legal and non-legal support services, as we understand that complex issues require more holistic and integrated services.

Our support is assured through our multidisciplinary team, comprising of solicitors, tenancy advocates, social workers, financial counsellors, financial advocates, older people's rights advocates, community legal education staff, program support staff and a valuable contingent of volunteers.

We also believe in the benefit of information and knowledge as a form of prevention and early intervention. As such, we also have a comprehensive and extensive community legal education and professional legal education program.

Our Vision

- Leading in community social justice.

Our Mission

- To provide innovative and dynamic services to enable justice for clients and the community.

Our Values

- Person-centred and holistic activities
- Safe and open communication
- Compassion and appreciation for all
- Respect for each other
- Inclusive support
- Excellence always

Message from CEO and Chair

Northern Suburbs Community Legal Centre (NSCLC) has had a solid year! We continue to deliver multi-faceted, person-centred services across our multiple office locations and outreach locations.

NSCLC continues to maintain and build collaborative relationships to ensure better access to our services by clients and more holistic service delivery offerings to them. Our partners in the community sector include Naala Djookan Healing Centre, Ebenezer Aboriginal Corporation and Wungening Aboriginal Corporation.

We also continue to provide outreach at Osborne Park Hospital, Joondalup Health Campus and Ishar Multicultural Women's Health Service. This enables us to address, on site, legal concerns by providing legal assistance and education and training to workers assisting them to develop their skills to identify and respond to the legal needs of their patients and clients.

Our community legal education (CLE) continues to go from strength to strength with the increasing demand for our extensive suite of workshops and

education opportunities. We value our partnership with the Equal Opportunity Commission to deliver education sessions on rights and discrimination, as well as other community legal centres. Our CLE team have proactively sought out collaborative relationships in the pursuit of a higher impact CLE program with 2024/25 seeing a sharp increase in the number of CLE partnerships established.

The Purple Road continues to be a flagship community strategy, raising awareness of Elder Abuse, with a growing number of community groups across WA contributing to an ever-lengthening purple road of flowers. These hand-made flowers each represent an older person's unique story, with purple representing age and wisdom. The flowers and the Purple Road open up an opportunity for conversation with people who are at risk of elder abuse to better inform and empower.

We are grateful for the support of our work by our philanthropic partners, such as Ecstra Foundation and Klimek and Wijay Lawyers and we cannot forget our long-standing partnership with Edith Cowan University Joondalup, as well as the invaluable support of our many other pro bono partners.

We also would like to acknowledge our Government funders, WA Department of Justice, WA Department of Communities, WA Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety, the Commonwealth Department of Home Affairs, and the Commonwealth Department of Social Services, without whom many of our services could not be delivered.

Finally, we both would like to thank the Board for their time, dedication and unwavering support of NSCLC, and absolutely acknowledge our staff and volunteers for their passion, commitment and hard work in making the year so successful.



Board Chair
Jennifer Hannan AM



CEO
Su-Hsien Lee

Our Board

We value each and every member of our NSCLC Board and benefit from their expertise, leadership, compassion and generosity. Our Board Members support us strategically in what we do and in our quest to enable justice for our clients and community.

Chairperson

Jennifer Hannan AM

Deputy Chairperson

Diana MacTiernan

Secretary

Toby Nisbet

Treasurer

Allison Leonard

Member

Dr Rupert Johnson

Member

Richard Klimek

Member

Kathy Blitz-Cokis

Who Do We Support?



Families & Children



Women



Men



Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islanders



Culturally & Linguistically Diverse



Financially Disadvantaged



LGBTIQA+



Migrants and Refugees



Older People



People with Disabilities



People with Mental Illness



Tenants



Young People



Other Vulnerable People

Our Services



General Legal

With over 9,500 occasions of service delivered, our solicitors provided in-person, telephone and videocall appointments for family law, civil law (including debt, criminal injuries compensation), as well as advice on traffic and minor criminal matters. The five most common types of presenting legal matters related to parenting arrangements; other civil and credit debt; housing; family or domestic violence; and family property. General legal advice appointments continued to be offered across our various offices, five days per week.

Tenancy Advocacy and Education Service

This year saw our tenancy advocates providing nearly 1647 occasions of service to 482 clients. Negotiation was a key component of the work and as always, staff attention to addressing disadvantage was a priority. Of particular difficulty was the demand for housing for people in crisis and at risk of homelessness, with around 76% of all tenancy clients experiencing financial disadvantage and 39% of all tenancy clients living with disability or mental illness.

Women's Resource and Engagement Network (WREN)

In its tenth year of operation WREN delivered more than 2,100 occasions of service, an increase in complexity and multi-layered nature of presenting issues. Despite increased staffing, the demand for assistance in the north metropolitan area of Perth for family violence victim/survivors is greater than we have the capacity to meet.

The program partnership with Legal Aid WA concluded in early 2025 having successfully accomplished the outcomes of the partnership in establishing WREN. NSCLC appreciated Legal Aid WA's support and looks forward to our ongoing relationship with them despite the end of this formal partnership. WREN maintains two health justice partnerships with Joondalup Health Service and Ishaar Multicultural Women's Health Centre. The team is made up of lawyers, social workers, paralegals and a financial counsellor, enabling us to deliver our multidisciplinary support to women. Access to and costs of mental health services and housing for women continues to be an area of growing concern.



Shuttle Conferencing and the Restraining Orders and Respondents (ROAR) Duty Lawyer Service

Operating at Joondalup Magistrates Court these programs are invaluable in assisting victims recognise the benefit of early resolution and minimise the risk of breaches and further acts of family violence. Our solicitors provided a range of support to clients in an attempt to resolve matters earlier. These efforts resulted in a significant number that did not require going to trial, such as agreed consent orders, undertakings or conduct agreement orders.

Older People's Rights Service (OPRS)

(Including Peer Educators, Purple Road)

The OPRS team provided around 500 occasions of legal and advocacy support, as well as 65 financial education sessions with funding support from the Ecstra Foundation. Our volunteer-led Purple Road Program champions prevention through raising awareness, talking with hundreds of people in the community about elder abuse and positive ageing. We are especially thankful to the volunteer peer educators who delivered 45 sessions. The OPRS service is funded through the Department of Communities to provide legal advice, information and support to older adults who are at risk of or are experiencing elder abuse. OPRS also addresses matters such as enduring powers of attorney/guardianship orders and state administrative tribunal matters.

Community Legal Education Program

With early intervention and prevention a strong focus of NSCLC, our team delivered 468 sessions across the community on a variety of legal topics, reaching around 7715 participants. Most common session topics were elder abuse, EPAs/EPGs/AHDs/wills, cyber security and avoiding scams, tenancy law, financial education, family law FVROs and child protection, and minor crimes. Our education work continues to grow and evolve as we build a better understanding of community needs and address specific issues as they arise.

Additional Partner Programs

Naala Djookan Healing Centre:

The Centre's focus is on early intervention and healing for women and children who have experienced, are experiencing or are at risk of experiencing family and domestic violence. NSCLC is one of 10 dedicated partner agencies supporting the centre, led by the City of Stirling, with NSCLC offering legal services, support groups and financial counselling.

Aboriginal Outreach Programs:

NSCLC partner with Ebenezer Aboriginal Corporation and Wungening Aboriginal Corporation (Mirrabooka) to provide regular legal outreach and education services for clients and staff. These partnerships have seen a direct benefit in an increasing number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients accessing our services.

Regional Community Legal Centres:

This year our Older People's Rights Service was lucky enough to travel to three regional locations again, to support education and services related to elder abuse. We were able to partner with the local community legal centres during our visits, so thank you to Great Southern Community Legal Centre, Kimberly Community Legal Services and Goldfields Community Legal Centre.

Women on temporary visas experiencing family violence:

This program supports women experiencing family and domestic violence while on temporary visas. It is delivered in partnership with Red Cross and Circle Green to provide legal and migration advice and support to women in this situation.

Health Justice Partnerships (HJPs):

As part of our HJPs we provide outreach to Ishaar Multicultural Women's Health Service, Joondalup Health Campus and Osborne Park Hospital. We deliver legal services and financial counselling for women and support for older people.

Equal Opportunity Commission:

Our partnership has continued with the Equal Opportunity Commission in delivering much needed education sessions on rights and discrimination to vulnerable members of the community.

Consumer Credit Legal Service WA:

Our community legal education program highlights the importance of partnering with other CLCs to make sure we have the right information for the right audience. We have continued partnering with Consumer Credit Legal Service WA to deliver scam awareness education sessions.

Edith Cowan University School of Law:

Our partnership continued with Edith Cowan University Joondalup and we again hosted the Community Legal Practice unit for students of the School of Business and Law.

Pro Bono Partners:

We extend our thanks to all our pro bono partners who provided their services to our community. (More details included under Our Pro Bono Partners.)

Our Impact

Our Clients and Services



Total occasions of service

9,525

(including referrals)



Total number of clients assisted

2881

Most common issues



Parenting Arrangements



Other Civil and Credit Debt



Housing



Family or Domestic Violence



Family Property

Gender breakdown



69% Female



30% Male



1% Non-Binary



Languages spoken in total

78

Most common languages

- English
- Arabic
- Vietnamese
- Persian
- Mandarin



Clients with financial disadvantage

75%



Clients with history of FDV

38%



Number of turnaways

3,213

Turnaways are defined as any potential client who is turned away for one of the following reasons: conflict of interest; not eligible (eg income too high, out of area); we don't provide required service (eg wills); required service does not have capacity.)

“ I am extremely grateful for the help and resources I received while navigating a criminal charge and the legal system. ”

Our Community Education



Total number of sessions delivered
468



Total number of attendees
7115

- Most common topics
- Elder abuse and EPAs/EPGs/AHDs/wills
 - Cyber security and avoiding scams
 - Tenancy law
 - Financial education
 - Family law, FVROs and child protection
 - Minor crimes

“ Thanks for taking the time to breakdown and explain the steps needed. ”



Client Satisfaction

“ Every aspect of the visit from reception to consultation was friendly and of a high standard. ”



98%

Listened to in a friendly and respectful way



96%

Helped me to understand my legal problem



95%

Options were clearly explained



95%

Know where to get help if I have another legal problem



97%

Would recommend us to other people

Our Year in Review

Staff and Volunteer Highlights

Season 4 of Law Talk WA

Season 4 kicked off with Episode 1: "Violence, Abuse, Control: Understanding Family Violence", where our Principal Solicitor, Nicholas, shares key insights and information about family violence.



Paralegal admitted

Congratulations to our paralegal, Mia, who was admitted to the roll of legal practitioner at the Supreme Court of Western Australia and successfully obtained a practicing certificate from the Legal Practice Board of Western Australia in August. It has been great to have her as part of our legal team and see her knowledge and expertise grow during her time with us.



Activity and Event Highlights

Law Week: Free Professional Clothing and Legal Resources

Northern Suburbs Community Legal Centre and Thread Together joined forces for Law Week, providing access to free professional outfits for work or court, as well as access to legal resources and community support. The day was a powerful reminder of how access to justice and dignity go hand in hand.



PrideFEST Fairday

In November we joined the 2024 PrideFEST Fairday at Supreme Court Gardens in Perth with Midlas Community Legal Centre and loads of other amazing stalls, services, activities and information.

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) Regional Grants Program 2025

In 2011, the United Nations designated 15 June each year as World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD). The Department of Communities (Communities) provides support to community events and activities throughout WA on World Elder Abuse Awareness Day each year. In 2025, Communities partnered with Northern Suburbs Community Legal Centre to fund WEAAD initiatives delivered in regional areas. Grants of up to \$5,000 were made available for eligible organisations to deliver a range of events and activities that raise awareness of elder abuse.

16 Days in WA supporting the Elimination of Violence Against Women

We joined the 2024 16 Days in WA event in the City of Joondalup. The 16 Days in WA campaign runs from 25 November (International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women) through to 10 December (Human Rights Day) each year. The campaign takes its inspiration from the global 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence.

University of Western Australia Law Careers Expo

We attended the University of Western Australia Law Careers Expo for students. So many great options for careers in the community legal sector!

Program Highlights



Introducing the Purple Pod Squad!

Our Older People's Rights Service (OPRS) volunteer peer educators were excited to deliver the first of our intergenerational sessions at MercyCare Early Learning Centre to a group of enthusiastic 3-5 year olds. The pilot program was developed to start the conversation about the importance of older people and the positive contributions they make to our families and communities. It's never too early to start talking about and promoting positive messages of ageing.



2025 Community Services Excellence Awards Finalists

The Northern Suburbs Community Legal Centre and Ebenezer Aboriginal Corporation program partnership for Family Dispute Resolution was selected as a finalist in the 2025 Community Services Excellence Awards for the category of "Inspiring Partnership between an Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisation and a Community Services Organisation". Amazing work by the team.

Free In-House Community Legal Education Sessions Start

Did you know we provide free community legal education? Our free in-house sessions started in 2024 and have continued in 2025. Sessions are delivered at our Mirrabooka office and open to both community members and workers who support the community.

Purple Road Celebrations

The Older People's Rights (OPRS) team from NSCLC and peer volunteers celebrated Seniors Week 2024 by joining the many sections of the Purple Road together to create this epic display to raise awareness of elder abuse. Each section of the Purple Road was hand-made by various seniors' groups across WA with members making individual flowers that represent unique stories of older people and the journey of ageing. Amazing creations! Thank you to all our Purple Road supporters.



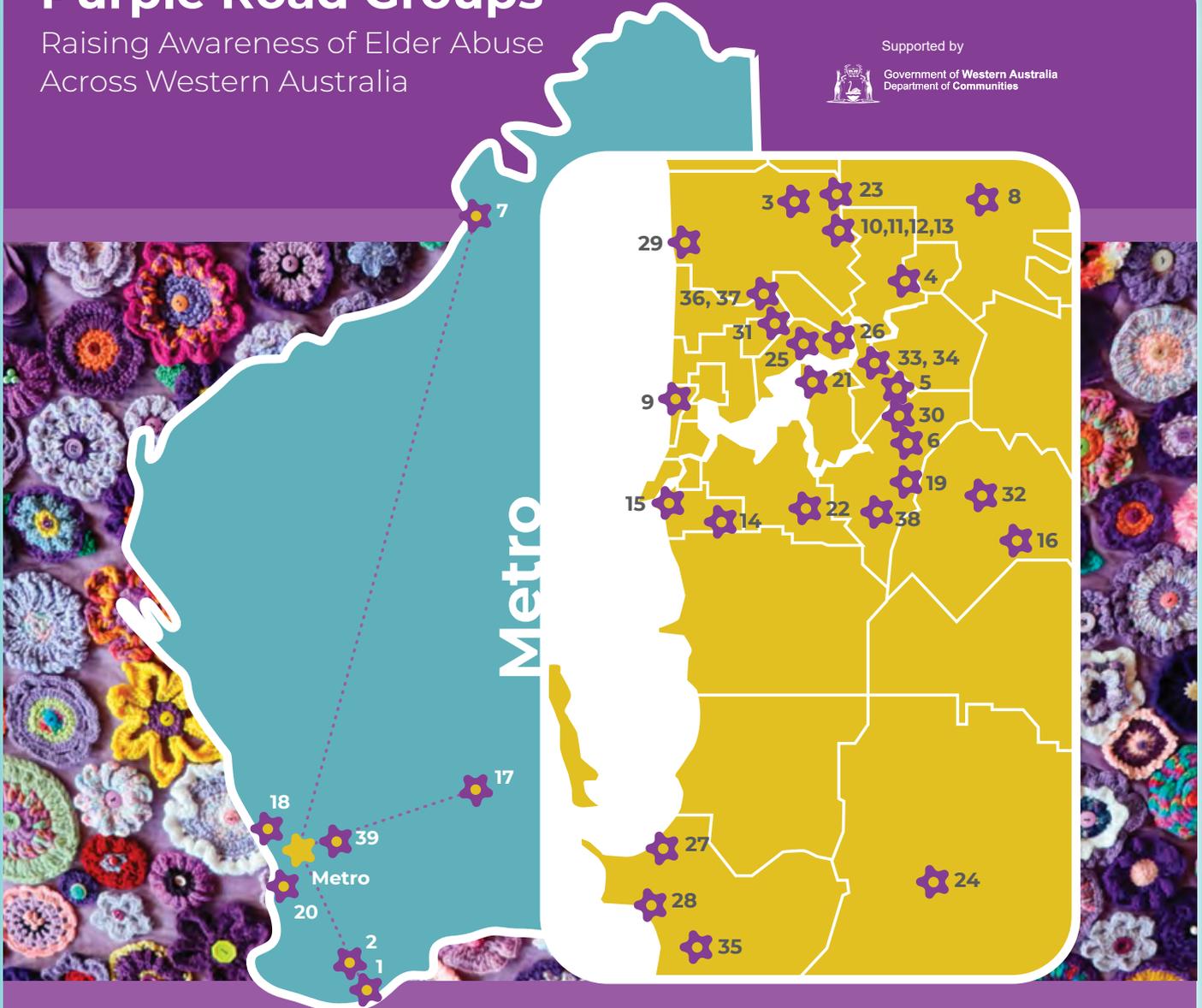
Purple Road Groups

Raising Awareness of Elder Abuse
Across Western Australia

Supported by



Government of Western Australia
Department of Communities



Legend

1. Albany Library Loop to Loop	Albany	21. City of South Perth – Senior Services	Manning
2. Albany Empty Bobbin Group	Albany	22. City of Melville - Senior Services	Melville
3. MYVista	Balcatta	23. MYVista	Mirrabooka
4. City of Bayswater - Seniors Craft Group	Bayswater	24. Mundijong Arts and Crafts	Mundijong
5. Harold Hawthorne Community Centre	Bentley	25. Citiplace	Perth CBD
6. Silver Chain - Pendana Social Centre	Bentley	26. Uniting Church	Perth CBD
7. Broome Library Craft Group	Broome	27. City of Rockingham - Seniors Craft Group	Rockingham
8. Country Women's Association	Kaversham	28. City of Rockingham - Seniors Craft Group	Safety Bay
9. Shine Community Services	Cottesloe	29. City of Stirling - Senior Services	Scarborough
10. Dianella Autumn Centre - Road 1	Dianella	30. Beanangng Kwuurt Institute (BKl)	St James
11. Dianella Autumn Centre - Road 2	Dianella	31. City of Subiaco - Seniors Craft group	Subiaco
12. Dianella Autumn Centre - Road 3	Dianella	32. Sit N Knit	Thornlie
13. Dianella Autumn Centre - Road 4	Dianella	33. Town of Vic Park - Connect Vic Park	Victoria Park
14. Silver Chain - Fremantle Social Centre	Fremantle	34. Country Women's Association	Victoria Park
15. City of Fremantle - Senior Craft Group	Fremantle	35. City of Rockingham - Create for a Cause	Warnbro
16. Older Women's Network	Gosnells	36. Town of Cambridge - Senior Services	Wembley
17. Dizzy Fingers Craft Group	Kalgoorlie	37. Town of Cambridge - Western Doll Makers	Wembley
18. Emerald Park Craft Group	Kallaroo	38. Silver Chain - Everglades Social Centre	Willetton
19. City of Canning - Library Seniors group	Kewdale	39. Country Women's Association	York
20. Silver Chain - Mandurah Social Centre	Mandurah	40. Collective Flower Donations – over 12 metres	Statewide

Client Stories

Supporting Ava* to escape family violence

Women's Resource and Engagement Network Team

Ava* was referred to WREN by a local family violence service. She was seeking assistance to leave her husband, Frank, who was using coercive control and financial abuse to keep Ava from leaving their relationship.

- The local family violence team assisted her to get an interim Family Violence Restraining Order (FVRO) and referred her to WREN for legal, social work and financial support.
- Ava was living with her elderly parents as she did not feel comfortable moving back to her own home, despite the FVRO saying Frank could not be there.
- Our WREN social worker's risk assessment determined that Ava was at an elevated risk due to a number of safety concerns that she raised.
- The social worker undertook the following to support Ava:
 - Completed a comprehensive Safety Plan
 - Supported Ava with referrals to other services that could assist.
 - Liaised with other agencies to support Ava.
 - Provided general counselling.
 - Helped Ava with a safety plan to move back to her home.
 - Linked Ava with a women's support group where she has made friends with other women who with similar experiences.
- Ava's legal matters with Frank are now resolved and an agreement being negotiated that has meant Ava is able to retain full ownership of her home.
- Ava no longer sees Frank and is focused on going back to her studies.
- Ava is now very confident and excited about her future and expressed her gratitude to the WREN team for their combined support.

*Names changed for privacy reasons.



Ronaldo* at risk of homelessness

Tenancy

Tenant, Ronaldo*, is a young man from a culturally diverse background who had been diagnosed with a significant mental health condition as a teenager.

- He was homeless prior to a housing allocation in 2023 and was initially referred to our tenancy service from another community legal centre.
- When referred to us, Ronaldo was on remand in prison (unrelated charges) and the housing provider was seeking to terminate his lease under the three strikes rules.
- Our tenant advocate arranged regular contact with Ronaldo while he was on remand, providing him with information and guidance on his options.
- As a result, the tenant advocate was able to arrange payment by Ronaldo's family of his outstanding rent, plus write a submission on his behalf to the housing provider outlining his situation, the impact of his mental health challenges on his tenancy and requesting alternative action.
- The submission was accepted and Ronaldo was able to maintain his tenancy as a result.

Assisting Floyd with his safety

Shuttle Conference

Our shuttle conference service assisted Floyd* who was a restraining order applicant.

- He had been in a relationship with Kira for about eight years, married for around four years of these. Both had children from previous relationships, but no children together. The only child under 18 years of age was a child of Floyd's.
- Kira was alleged to have committed significant family violence against Floyd including verbal, physical and sexual abuse, as well as financial abuse and coercive control.
- Much of the alleged abuse occurred in front of the child so child protection services had previously been involved, but they weren't involved by the time of the shuttle conference.
- Floyd had reported at least one physical assault committed by Kira to the police.
- He had communication evidence of Kira admitting family violence and further evidence she had accessed his private online accounts while she was restrained by an interim Family Violence Restraining Order (FVRO).
- NSCLC advised the client at shuttle conferencing of the main options available and provided detailed advice on what each option would mean for him, how much protection he would have and what he could do if the agreement was breached by Kira.
- In this instance, we advised that a Conduct Agreement Order (CAO) would be Floyd's best outcome because it would give him full legal protection.
- On that basis, it was agreed at the shuttle conference that there would be no need for a trial, which could be quite traumatic for Floyd despite the large volume of his supporting evidence.
- Kira was initially not receptive to this approach but NSCLC stood our ground on behalf of Floyd and responded that we were confident we had enough evidence to substantiate his legal position.
- Kira was ultimately persuaded by our position and agreed to a CAO.
- Floyd was incredibly relieved and very grateful for our assistance.

A very special thank you to our funding bodies, donors and pro bono partners who help make our work possible.

Our Funders

Dept of Justice



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Justice**

Dept of Communities



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Communities**

Dept of Energy, Mines, Industry
Regulation and Safety



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety**

Ecstra Foundation



City of Stirling



Department of Social Services

Department of Home Affairs



Our Pro Bono Partners

We extend our thanks to all our pro bono partners who provided a total of 345 occasions of service to our community.

Klimek and Wijay Family Lawyers

Hall and Wilcox

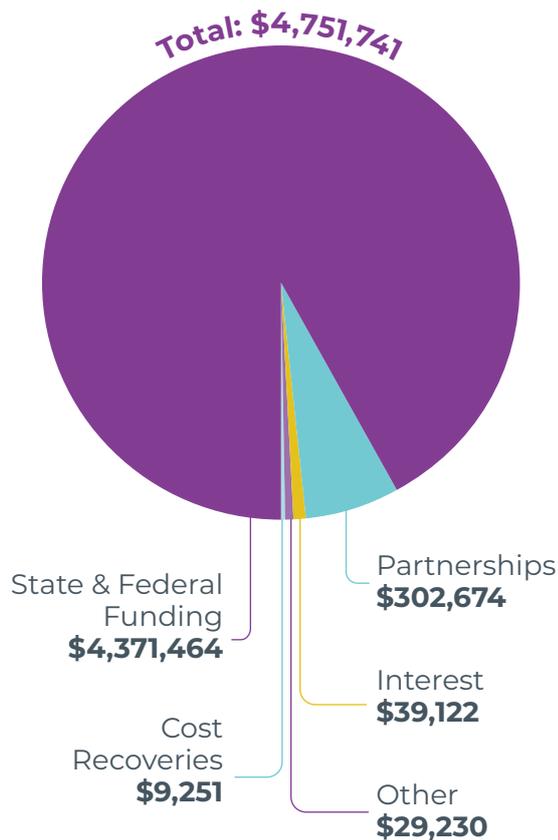
HWL Ebsworth

Tawnee Dickinson, Hoggood Ganim Lawyers

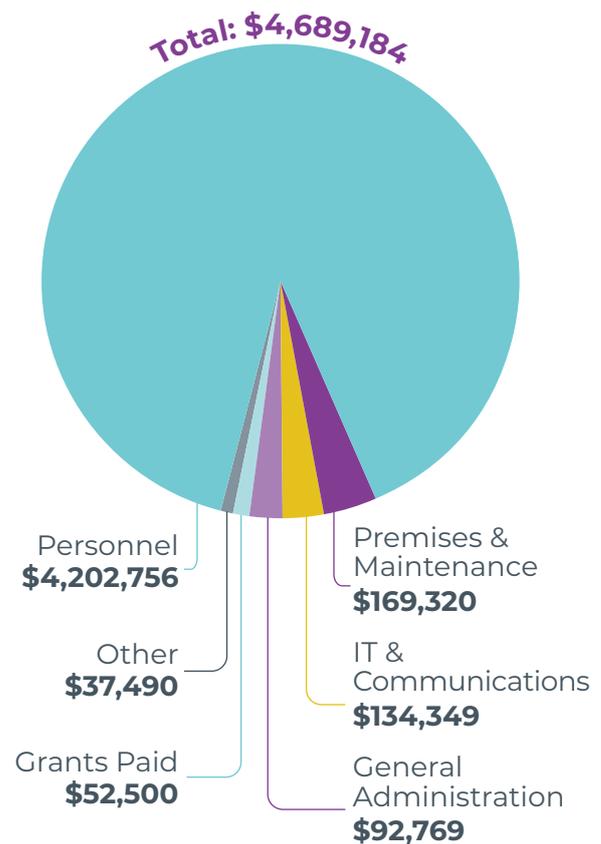
Financial Report

We finished the 2024-2025 year with a surplus of **\$62,557**

Income



Expenditure



Net surplus \$62,557

Assets

Cash and equivalents	\$1,907,469
Receivables and prepayments	\$208,408
Plant and equipment	\$8,610
Right of use	\$97,721

Total Assets \$2,222,208

Liabilities

Employee provisions	\$512,795
Grant contract liabilities	\$427,151
Trade and other payables	\$121,853
Lease liability	\$107,002

Total Liabilities \$1,168,801

Net Assets

\$1,053,407



“

Absolutely astounded by the support and assistance that was provided.

Extremely grateful for all the hard work, guidance and advocacy. ”



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