



Cinnamon Faith Action Audit

ILLAWARRA
NSW, AUSTRALIA

NOVEMBER 2020



TOGETHER FOR
THE ILLAWARRA

Key Results

101

Survey responses

(over half of all faith-based organisations in the Illawarra)

143

Community service activities

(addressing 15 of the greatest social needs)



141,676

Interactions with people in need

(equivalent to half the population of Wollongong & Shellharbour combined)

\$9,710,210

Social impact value

(to the Illawarra region every year)

"I believe the Cinnamon Faith Action Audit is one of the most powerful tools through which churches and faith-based organisations can positively impact their communities. I thank all those across the Illawarra who participated in this inaugural Australian CFAA and commend your outstanding work to love and serve others."

REV. TIM COSTELLO AO, Patron, Cinnamon Network Australia

Introduction

It's with the greatest pleasure that we present the results of the Cinnamon Faith Action Audit for Illawarra – the first of its kind in Australia.

Embarking on this initiative was a step of faith for all involved - not least, our wonderful local partner, Together for the Illawarra - and the figures speak for themselves:

- **101 survey responses, representing over half of all faith-based organisations in the region**
- **143 community service activities addressing 15 of the greatest social needs**
- **140,000+ beneficiary interactions annually - equivalent to half the population of Wollongong & Shellharbour combined**
- **\$9.7 million in social impact value to the Illawarra community every year**

Behind the numbers is the story of a region where people genuinely care about one another, where the least are not forgotten, and where faith organisations play an active role in the community. It is a testament to the efforts of local churches and faith-based organisations, as well as the willingness of local authorities, businesses and others to come together for the benefit of those across the Illawarra.

Cinnamon Network Australia exists to help churches transform communities.

One of the ways we do this is through the Cinnamon Faith Action Audit (CFAA), which enables the faith community in a local region to measure their collective social impact. More specifically, the CFAA puts a monetary value on the time given by churches and other faith organisations to serve those experiencing vulnerability, isolation or injustice.

The desire for every CFAA is that it might help increase collaboration within and between faith traditions, open doors to government and other sectors, and demonstrate that faith really can be a force for good.

In the case of the Illawarra CFAA, our hope and prayer is that the impact will go well beyond this report...

That it will spark new conversations that lead to tangible benefits for those in need in Wollongong and Shellharbour. That it will inspire regions across the nation to engage in their own Cinnamon Faith Action Audit. That it will encourage people of faith to continue serving others, as we seek to be a beacon of hope for our communities and our country.



NIC MACKAY
National Director
Cinnamon Network Australia

Local Partner



TOGETHER FOR
THE ILLAWARRA

Together for the Illawarra is a collaboration of Christians from across the Illawarra region.

For generations, the Illawarra Christian community has sought to serve and positively impact the wider community.

Together for the Illawarra was formed as a result of the collaborative efforts and deep relationship built between churches and Christian leaders over many years. It seeks to bring together the Christian community of the region around three areas of common interest: Community Engagement, Evangelism & Prayer.

In line with its Community Engagement strategy, Together for the Illawarra committed to becoming the local partner for this Cinnamon Faith Action Audit.

Over the past few months, Together for the Illawarra has seen the CFAA provide a unique vehicle for churches and faith based organisations across the Illawarra to better understand the extent and value of the community service activity taking place.

Together for the Illawarra hopes that the results of this CFAA will continue to build connections, increase unity, and highlight opportunities for the faith community to be an even greater blessing to those in need.

"At first consideration, a Cinnamon Faith Action Audit may simply be seen as a powerful way to highlight the value of the faith-based contributions to our city. This is a worthwhile pursuit in itself but there is more to it... The process of organising, surveying, reporting and celebrating has seen many conversations between churches and faith groups about community involvement. I truly believe that this process is a catalyst that will lead to greater levels of collaboration and effectiveness in our city."

PHIL INGLIS

Corps Officer, Salvation Army Wollongong

Co-Lead, Community Engagement, Together for the Illawarra

"I have been involved with community engagement for 25 years. Cinnamon's ability to coordinate the diversity of denominations and faiths behind a singular goal of measuring social action in the community is, to me, one of the most significant moves forward for the Church I've ever experienced. I'm so pleased that Together for the Illawarra has seized the opportunity to be part of this CFAA."

PAUL BARTLETT

Senior Leader, Lighthouse

Co-Lead, Community Engagement, Together for the Illawarra



Statements of Support



LORD MAYOR GORDON BRADBERRY AM | Wollongong City Council

"The support provided by faith based organisations and churches in Wollongong is felt daily by our most vulnerable - from food and housing assistance, to family support.

I know the people of Wollongong benefit greatly from the churches and faith groups who base their values on serving their God through serving others.

I am grateful to the many organisations that continually provide these services through their staff, volunteers and donations."



MAYOR MARIANNE SALIBA | Shellharbour City Council

"Shellharbour City is very fortunate and thankful for the contribution of faith-based organisations and churches in our city.

Many of these organisations provide physical and emotional support to the most vulnerable when they need it most.

I have witnessed organisations coming together and working co-operatively for the benefit of the city at large. I am also grateful for the moral support they provide for our decision makers in steering our city forward."



MARK SEWELL | Councillor, Illawarra Business Chamber

"Never before has the collective work of such a large number of people of faith in an Australian region been quantified and collated as it is in this report. It is done not to show off, but to encourage these good people to keep serving those in need and to encourage others to join in!

The social and economic life of the Illawarra has been significantly impacted over many years by the practical and spiritual commitment of the thousands of people of faith who call this region home. They have contributed selflessly for the benefit of others, and now we see just how much it is worth, both in dollars and lives.

Thank you to the Together for the Illawarra team, who helped make this seminal report possible. May it mark the start of a new recognition of the value of the work done by people of faith across the Illawarra."



Methodology

The Cinnamon Faith Action Audit (CFAA) seeks to measure the collective social impact of local churches and faith-based organisations in a geographic region.

The CFAA for Illawarra was designed to include the two Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Wollongong and Shellharbour.

Before commencing the formal audit, Cinnamon Network Australia and our local partner, Together for the Illawarra, engaged in significant outreach and relationship building to develop a comprehensive database of the faith-based organisations operating in Wollongong and Shellharbour. The final list totalled 190 and included churches, places of worship, agencies, and other entities funded or operated by faith groups (e.g. Salvation Army stores, Christian schools).

All 190 organisations were invited to take part in the CFAA by completing an online survey. The survey took approximately 15 minutes and was open for the entire month of October. Follow up messages, calls, and visits were made to ensure contacts had received the survey link and understood the purpose of the CFAA. In the case of Catholic parishes and entities, key members of the Catholic Diocese of Wollongong met personally with church/organisational leaders to conduct the survey and then submitted responses on their behalf.

The survey asked respondents to outline their three largest forms of community service over the past 12 months, guided by a list of 15 areas of social need. In determining whether an activity should be classified as community service, respondents were given the following criteria:

1. The activity/service is available to people of any faith or no faith (i.e. it is faith-based but not faith-biased); and
2. The activity is best characterised as a form of service, rather than a religious activity; and
3. The activity/service is primarily aimed at those experiencing vulnerability, isolation or injustice.

As an example, the work of some Christian denominations in delivering Special Religious Education (SRE) in schools was not included in the results of the survey, however, efforts by Christian schools to provide special financial and/or pastoral support for students from disadvantaged backgrounds was included.



Methodology

Thereafter, respondents were asked to detail the beneficiaries for each form of community service, as well as the number of paid and volunteer hours required to deliver the activities. The weekly hours for both staff and volunteers were averaged over the year, then multiplied by \$19.49 (the national minimum hourly wage as of 1 July 2019) to determine the value of social impact to the community.

While respondents were asked to distinguish between beneficiaries served weekly as compared with annually, it's possible that some of the annual figures provided include duplicates. It's also likely there is at least some overlap of beneficiaries between the various community service activities (i.e. individuals who were served by more than one program or faith-based organisation).

Where organisations delivered services in both Wollongong and Shellharbour, 75% of the beneficiaries and value was assigned to Wollongong and the remaining 25% to Shellharbour. This was guided by the difference in population as per the 2016 Census, with Wollongong being approximately three times the size of Shellharbour (203,630 vs. 68,460).

It is worth noting that, while every effort was made to capture the social contributions of faith-based organisations in the region, there were many who were unable or chose not to participate. Moreover, the dollar value of the efforts is based on human capital only (i.e. hours worked or volunteered) and does not include the buildings, goods, and other resources required to deliver the activities/services. In other words, this report is an intentionally conservative, if highly impressive, snapshot of all that is being done to serve those in need across the Illawarra.

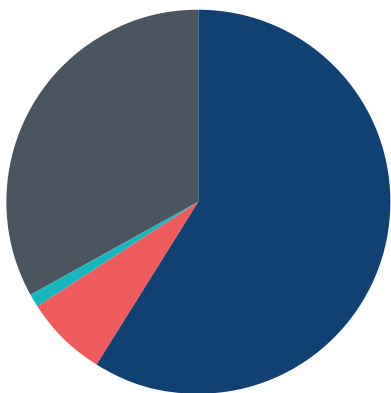


Respondents

101

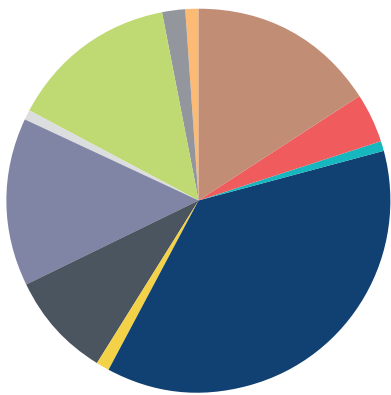
Total respondents

(53% of all faith-based organisations in the region)



RESPONDENTS BY ORGANISATION TYPE

- 59% Local Churches/Places of Worship
- 7% Ministry Organisations
- 1% Agency/Umbrella Group
- 33% Other Faith-Based Entities (e.g. schools, hospices)



RESPONDENTS BY FAITH GROUP

- 16% Anglican
- 4% Baptist
- 1% Buddhist
- 37% Catholic
- 1% Eastern Orthodox
- 9% Independent Christian
- 14% Pentecostal
- 1% Presbyterian & Reformed
- 14% Salvation Army
- 2% Seventh-Day Adventist
- 1% Uniting Church



Needs

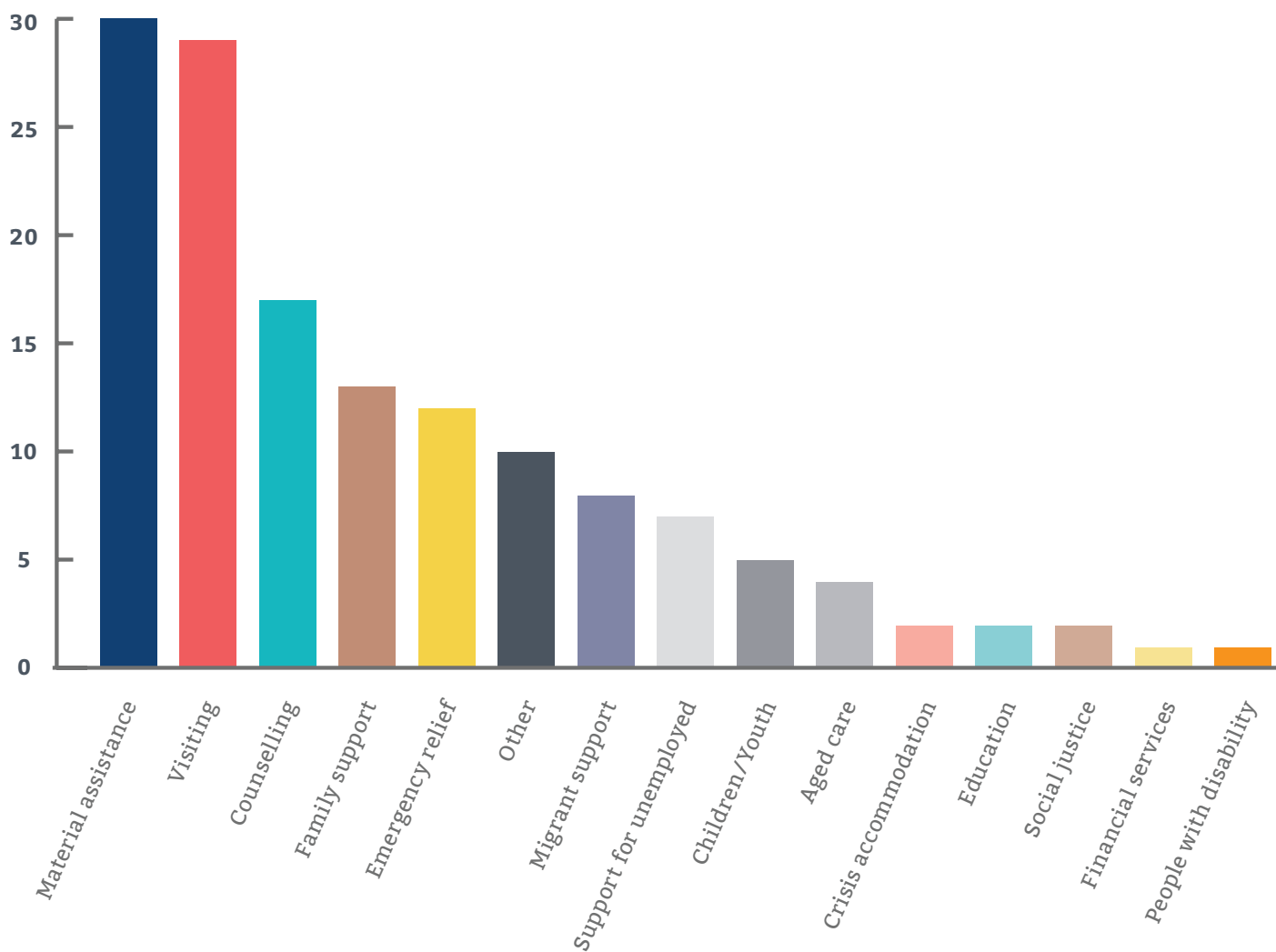
TOP 5 SOCIAL NEEDS BEING MET IN WOLLONGONG

- 1. Ongoing material assistance
- 2. Visiting services
- 3. Counselling services
- 4. Family services
- 5. Emergency relief

TOP 5 SOCIAL NEEDS BEING MET IN SHELLHARBOUR

- 1. Ongoing material assistance
- 2. Visiting services
- 3. Other (autism support, social cohesion)
- 4. Family services
- 5. Counselling services

COMMUNITY SERVICE ACTIVITIES BY SOCIAL NEED



Case Study

Hope Church 2508

Youth suicide and drug use is common across our country - made worse by the prevalence of mental illness - and the Illawarra is not immune. So, when the local community youth centre in Helensburgh was forced to close for lack of funding, Hope Church 2508 saw an opportunity: to revamp and re-imagine a place where young people can come together to connect, have fun, learn skills, and help tackle the issue of youth mental health.

The Hope Youth Centre is a free youth drop-in centre open on school afternoons that offers a safe space for young people to hang out, while being supervised by trained youth workers. There is basketball, a skate ramp, snooker, air hockey, a coffee machine, music equipment and other activities, with plans to offer job skills and barista training in the near future.

Already, the church has seen a significant number of youth in the area respond to being in a positive community and recover from previously devastating mental illness including depression, anxiety, self harm and suicidal ideation. On one occasion, the Hope team was able to prevent a planned suicide and help the person get the help that they needed.

"We love our community and consider it a privilege to offer the Hope Youth Centre to the young people of the 2508 postcode. We have a heart to see our town drug and suicide free, working with the younger generations to help them understand their true value."

SENIOR PASTOR LIONEL RATTENBURY



People

10,761

Beneficiary interactions
per week

141,676

Beneficiary interactions
per year

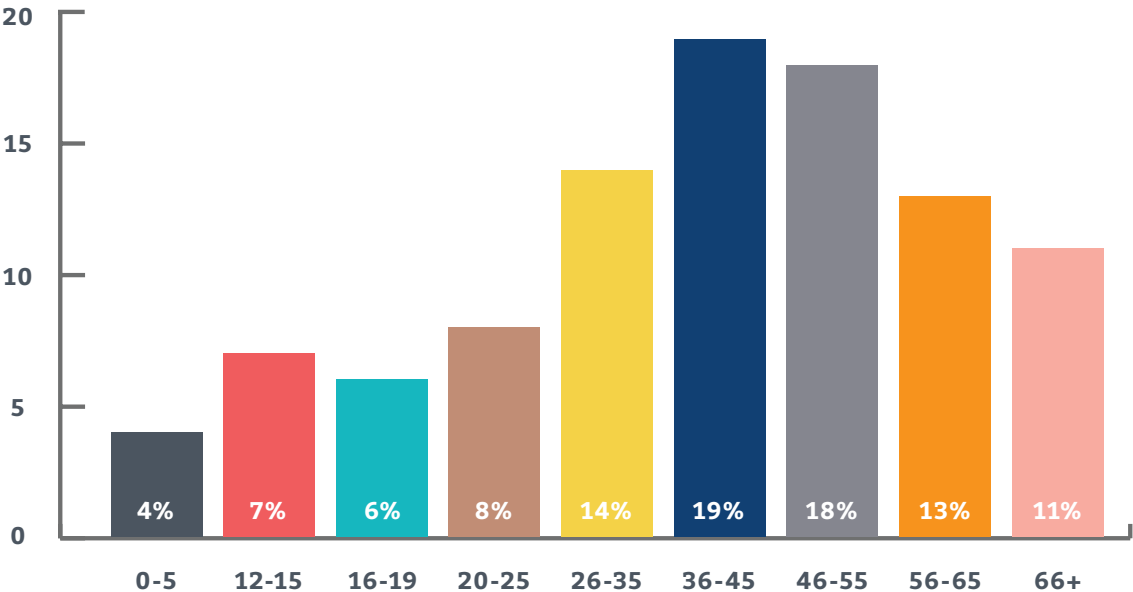
BENEFICIARIES IN WOLLONGONG:
(Population: 203,630)

- 8,132 per week
- 98,052 per year
(equivalent to 48% of total population)

BENEFICIARIES IN SHELLHARBOUR:
(Population: 68,460)

- 2,629 per week
- 43,624 per year
(equivalent to 64% of total population)

PERCENTAGE OF BENEFICIARIES BY AGE



Case Study

Central Church Port Kembla

One of the missional values of Central Church in Port Kembla is to encourage and support its members to model the unconditional love of Jesus in all elements of life, including the things about which they are most passionate. Inspired by this, five women from Central Church who care deeply about birth education and equal access to healthcare pioneered the Peaceful Birth Partnership.

In collaboration with YWAM (Youth With A Mission) Wollongong, they formed a group of committed volunteers to provide pregnant women - especially those from refugee backgrounds - with prenatal, birth and antenatal support. What began as a small initiative has grown, thanks to word-of-mouth recommendations from others in the church and new connections that have been made in the local community.

"We wanted to provide a service for women who would otherwise not have access to it, because of language, cultural background or finances. It's a beautiful thing to walk alongside women as they navigate the powerful vulnerability of pregnancy, birth and early motherhood."

PASTOR CAROLYN MEERS

The Peaceful Birth Partnership has now begun offering education about puberty for children and their parents. They recently brought together a small group of Ethiopian and Syrian girls and their mums, teaching them about the female reproductive system and the physical and emotional changes associated with puberty, while encouraging the girls to hear from their mums about the cultural specifics of the journey into womanhood. There were many questions, much laughter, and conversations that continued well after the session had ended!



Value



\$9,710,210

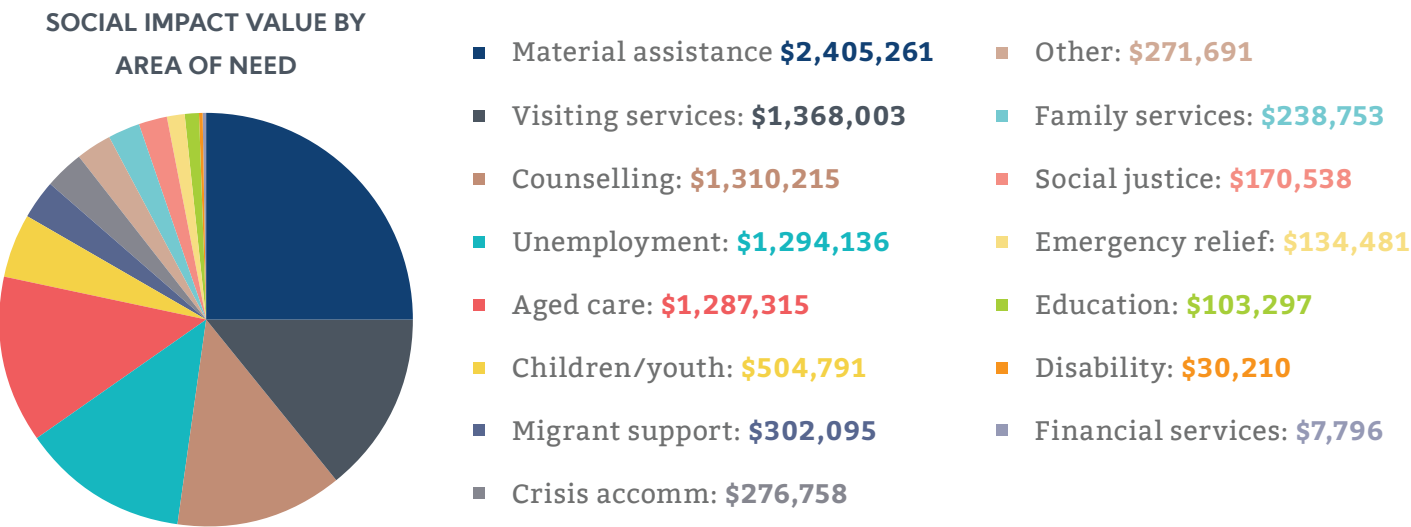
Social impact value to the Illawarra community

\$7,697,147

Social impact value to Wollongong

\$2,013,063

Social impact value to Shellharbour



Case Study

CatholicCare

The work of CatholicCare in Australia is highly regarded and with good reason. Thanks to their multi-service capabilities, they support individuals and their families during some of the most challenging times in their lives, from childhood through to ageing.

CatholicCare in the Diocese of Wollongong has significant operations across both Wollongong and Shellharbour. This includes providing direct support and social visits to 200 ageing people in their own homes and aged care facilities, with 75 staff and 65 volunteers contributing a combined total of over 1,000 hours a week.

One of those beneficiaries is Glenda, who lives alone and receives home care visits twice weekly by CatholicCare staff. The imposed isolation due to COVID-19 had a significant impact on Glenda's lifestyle, as she could no longer go into town or receive visits from her family in Sydney. In response, CatholicCare staff secured a friendly volunteer from one of the local Catholic parishes for her to connect with. Glenda and the volunteer have had many phone conversations and a lovely relationship has formed. They are both looking forward to meeting one another face-to-face soon!

"I love that we journey alongside those we serve, knowing they are the experts in their own lives with the capacity for growth. We assist anyone in need, believing that by helping one person we help everyone."

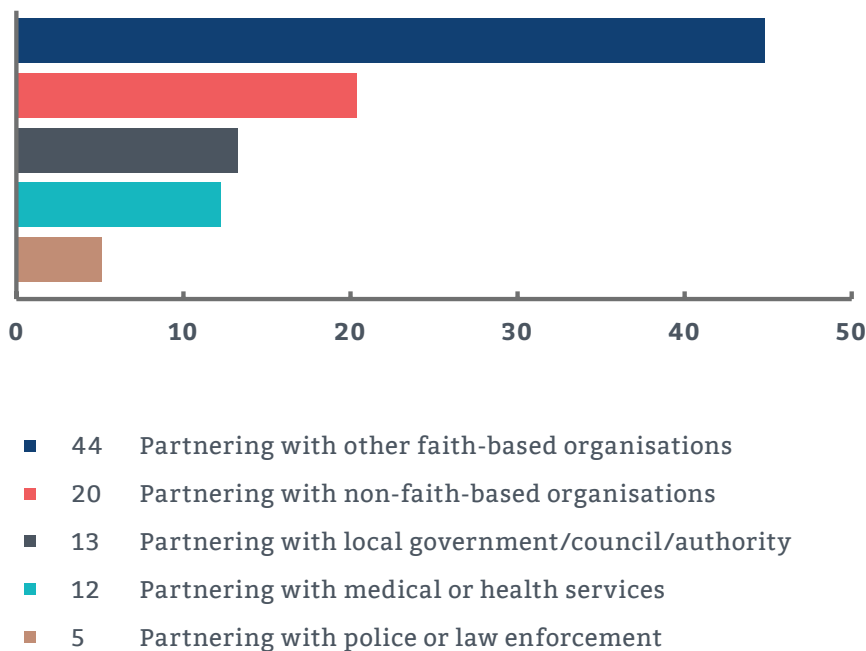
TRISH COONEY

Manager of Mission and Community Relations, CatholicCare



Partnerships

RESPONDENTS PARTNERING WITH OTHERS IN DELIVERY OF COMMUNITY SERVICE



COVID-19

31%

Respondents who have increased community service activities in response to COVID-19

55

Additional new activities/services in response to COVID-19

1,870

Additional people served per week due to impacts of COVID-19



Case Study

St Mark's Anglican Church, West Wollongong

The St Mark's "Food and Friends" program started off as a traditional soup kitchen, until the church realised that no one really liked soup!

So, thanks to the efforts of a dynamic father-daughter team, Scott & Emily Stark, they upgraded to a two course home-cooked dinner, using ingredients from the local Aldi store where Scott was the manager. Members of the community who were experiencing homelessness could come with an empty shopping bag, fill it with healthy food, then sit down for a warm meal and conversation.

By the start of 2020, the church was catering for up to 100 people on a Monday night, thanks to a team of 25 volunteers, including students from The Illawarra Grammar School. Local NGO, Orange Sky, also began bringing their free mobile washing and drying truck, so those in need could leave St Mark's with fresh food and clean clothes.

After COVID-19 hit, the church made the courageous decision to keep their doors open but with some changes: meals were made to take away and hours of operation were extended to avoid congestion. St Mark's also stepped up as a distribution partner for Anglicare's local Food and Financial Assistance team, receiving and handing out donations of food and other necessities from Anglican parishes across the Illawarra region.

Now, when Senior Minister Peter Hutchinson walks the streets of West Wollongong, residents from the local housing estate will often yell out: "Hi Pastor Pete!"

"Being recognised as part of the community is exactly what we hoped for. Sure, we serve those in need as part of our witness as Christians, but our primary purpose is just to share God's love."

SENIOR MINISTER PETER HUTCHINSON



Acknowledgements & Next Steps

Cinnamon Network Australia extends our deepest appreciation to all those who made this CFAA possible.

To the team from Together for the Illawarra for your sacrifice and perseverance over many months - in particular, Paul Bartlett, David Eldridge, Debbie Gates, Jude Hennessy, Phil Inglis, Renee Walton and Hengki Widjaja.

To the denominational leaders - including Bishop Peter Hayward and Bishop Brian Mascord - who so kindly agreed to support our efforts to measure the work of local churches across the region.

To the civic leaders who lent their name and credibility to this initiative and this report - Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery, Wayne Morris, Mayor Marianne Saliba and Mark Sewell.

And to all those who took the time to complete the survey and share your community service activities, both in numbers and in stories.

Though this report marks the conclusion of the formal CFAA process, we pray that it is also the beginning of a brand new season for the Illawarra and its people.

May it affirm the efforts of all those who seek to address the greatest social needs throughout the region.

May it inspire new partnerships and initiatives - within and between faith communities, local government, business and other sectors - as we recognise the vision we share to see our communities flourish.

And, above all, may it lead to even more activities that offer tangible love, genuine hope and new life to those who need it most.



**CINNAMON
NETWORK
AUSTRALIA**

Building on the experience and success of the Illawarra CFAA, Cinnamon Network Australia will be running Cinnamon Faith Action Audits in regions across the country in 2021 and beyond.

If you are part of a church, civic organisation or local council and would like your Local Government Area to be considered as one of upcoming CFAA locations, please get in touch at australia@cinnamonnetwork.com or visit www.cinnamonnetwork.org.au



**TOGETHER FOR
THE ILLAWARRA**

The Together for the Illawarra team will soon be hosting regional planning sessions to discuss the contents of this report in more detail and explore next steps. Civic and faith leaders from across the region are warmly invited to participate.

For more information, please contact hello@togetherfortheillawarra.org or go to www.togetherfortheillawarra.org.au





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