



St Vincent de Paul Society  
CANBERRA/GOULBURN  
*good works*

# Strategic plan

2024–2028



## You may know us as Vinnies.

We are the St Vincent de Paul Society Canberra/Goulburn.

We provide a hand up to people who experience hardship and homelessness, and we do this without judgement.

We also advocate for change, to make lives better and strengthen our communities.

## We have one aspiration:

An Australia transformed by compassion and built on justice.

## We champion our Companions.

We're here to help, by providing everyday essentials, a listening ear, disaster relief, health and wellbeing, emergency accommodation, support programs for those at risk, or a voice to reach decision makers.



## ***Companions***

Companions are people in our community who are experiencing hardship and come to us for help.

## ***Members***

We are a member-based organisation. Our members work in local conferences (branches). We value our people and enable them to support our Companions.

## ***Conferences***

Society members are passionate about helping those in need in their local community and work together in conferences, bringing together a great depth of understanding, expertise and compassion to their service and involvement in the society.





## Message from the President and CEO

### Message from the President, Brian Stacey

Since taking up my role as President of the Society in early 2024 I have been inspired by the diversity and impact of our work across the region. All of our people, our members, volunteers and employees do incredible work serving our communities and though each location is unique, what unites us as Vincentians is a commitment to our values and to our mission.

In October this year we will mark 100 years since the first conference formed in Canberra, a legacy of service we can all be very proud of. We have been able to exist as a charity for so many years through our deep connections to our communities who see the value of our good works and trust us with their generous donations and support.

This Strategic Plan is relevant to all of us as we look to the future and find new ways to ensure we remain relevant and impactful.

A key part of this is by working with our partners and community supporters we are able to better advocate for those experiencing hardship and help build a more just society.

As always, we will focus on our people to ensure they are supported and our membership is vibrant and growing. Our members and volunteers are the heart of the Society and continue to support thousands of people who find themselves in the most challenging of circumstances.

We all have an important part to play in ensuring this plan is fulfilled and by working together will better serve those most in need by helping them to make positive, lasting change in their lives.



**Brian Stacey**  
Territory Council President  
St Vincent de Paul Society,  
Canberra/Goulburn

### Message from the CEO, Lucy Hohnen

As CEO of the Society, I'm pleased to introduce this Strategic Plan which outlines the key areas of our focus and objectives for the next four years. This Strategic Plan has been developed over several months in a collaborative way and comes at a time when we are seeing unprecedented numbers of families and individuals finding it impossible to find affordable accommodation and meet the ongoing increases in the cost of living. It sets out the framework for our growth and delivery of our mission so that we have the greatest impact for those enduring significant disadvantage in our communities.

This plan builds on the hard work across the Society in recent years to grow our capacity and capability to meet the increasing needs in our community. This plan recognises that the current housing crisis and cost of living crisis have led to a significant increase in the number of people requiring assistance across our region. We also recognise the importance of ensuring our own organisation's sustainability so that we can create lasting and meaningful change.

We all have a role to play in realising our vision and delivering the five strategic priorities. In our daily work it can be all too easy to lose sight of the bigger picture and this plan will help us to keep an eye to our 'true north' while adapting to serve more people being pushed to the margins.

I look forward to working with our teams as well as with our government, community and corporate stakeholders to deliver this plan to strengthen our support for and amplify the voice of those we serve.



**Lucy Hohnen**  
CEO  
St Vincent de Paul Society,  
Canberra/Goulburn



## Framework for success

### Vision

The St Vincent de Paul Society aspires to be recognised as a caring Catholic charity offering a hand up to people in need. We do this by respecting their dignity, sharing our hope, and encouraging them to take control of their own destiny.

### Mission

The St Vincent de Paul Society is a lay Catholic organisation that aspires to live the gospel message by serving Christ in the poor with love, respect, justice, hope and joy, and by working to shape a more just and compassionate society.

### Virtues

Bringing our vision to life and fulfilling our mission begins with an affirmation of the five essential virtues for Vincentians:

#### Simplicity

Frankness, integrity, genuineness

#### Humility

Accepting the truth about our frailties, gifts, talents and charisms, yet knowing that all that God gives us is for others, and that we can achieve nothing of eternal value without His grace

#### Gentleness

Friendly assurance and invincible goodwill, which mean kindness, sweetness and patience in our relationship with others

#### Selflessness

Dying to their ego with a life of self-sacrifice; members share their time, their possessions, their talents and themselves in a spirit of generosity

#### Zeal

A passion for the full flourishing and eternal happiness of every person

### Values

Our values bind us together and guide our behaviours, our decision making and how we work with each other and our stakeholders.

#### Commitment

Loyalty in service to our mission, vision and values

#### Compassion

Welcoming and serving all with understanding and without judgement

#### Respect

Service to all regardless of creed, ethnic or social background, health, gender or political opinions

#### Integrity

Promoting, maintaining and adhering to our mission, vision and values

#### Empathy

Establishing relationships based on respect, trust, friendship and perception

#### Advocacy

Working to transform the causes of poverty and challenging the causes of human injustice

#### Courage

Encouraging spiritual growth, welcoming innovation and giving hope for the future

### Focus areas

Our focus areas outline the things that matter to us and provides the road map for our growth.

#### 1. Good Works

Providing services and support to Companions to ensure financial, social and housing security.

#### 2. Our people

Ensuring members, volunteers and employees are enabled to work together to best serve our Companions.

#### 3. Advocacy

Shaping policy that affects our Companions and advocate on their behalf at a national and local level.

#### 4. Sustainability, leadership and governance

Securing our long-term sustainability and supporting Companions in an environmentally responsible manner.

#### 5. Faith in action

Putting our Vincentian spirituality to work by giving a hand up to Companions.



## Focus areas

1



## Good Works

Providing services and support to Companions experiencing hardship and homelessness to ensure financial, social and housing security.

### OUR GOALS

We will:

- deliver programs and services to meet the needs of people experiencing hardship and homelessness in our community
- build strong relationships with partners and stakeholders to sustain the Good Works that support our Companions
- grow our support and services in our regional areas
- evaluate the impact of our work to inform our service design.

### HOW WE'LL DO IT

- identify and understand the marginalised in our community
- measure the impact of the services we provide so we can continue to improve our support
- partner with specialist housing providers and funders to reduce homelessness
- grow partnerships between conferences, regional hubs and key stakeholders within our regions to deliver the best outcomes for the people we assist
- establish a regional hub on the Far South Coast and expand our Good Works programs in the Western Region.





## 2 Our people

Ensuring our members, volunteers and employees are enabled to work together to best serve our Companions.

### OUR GOALS

We will:

- grow a sustainable, resilient, skilled and inclusive workforce; one that reflects the cultures and voices of the communities we serve
- build a collaborative 'One Vinnies' culture and combine the capabilities of our members, volunteers and employees to best serve our Companions
- embed safeguarding practices across our organisation
- harness technology to communicate efficiently, openly and respectfully.

### HOW WE'LL DO IT

- free up our people to do their more important work by using technology and feedback systems to retain corporate knowledge
- attract and retain high-quality talent through implementing our workforce strategy
- grow volunteer numbers and skill base through creating and implementing our volunteer strategy
- align roles and workforce structures to changing Companion and sector needs
- develop, communicate and implement safeguarding practices across all member, volunteer and employee teams.



## 3 Advocacy

Shaping policy that affects our Companions through advocacy on their behalf at a national and local level.

### OUR GOALS

We will:

- inform local and national decision makers who develop policies that address social disadvantages for First Nations People, refugees, asylum seekers, people escaping family violence or experiencing homelessness or economic disadvantage
- deliver our social justice strategy
- improve our brand awareness as a culturally safe and informed organisation that plays an integral part in social policy development
- grow our advocacy activity in regional areas.

### HOW WE'LL DO IT

- to collect and amplify the voices of those unheard in policy discussions
- leverage stakeholder relationships to highlight the needs of those we serve
- increase engagements with policymakers and politicians on our advocacy priorities
- provide resources and capability to support our advocacy goals
- utilise our data, insights and experiences to inform our advocacy work
- create and implement an internal and external communication and engagement plan and communicate advocacy activity and outcomes.





## 4 Sustainability, leadership and governance

Securing our long-term sustainability and supporting Companions in an environmentally responsible manner.

### OUR GOALS

We will:

- ensure governance best practice to support future growth
- revitalise our membership by welcoming new blood and growing diverse, flexible conference models
- integrate sustainability principles into all aspects of our operations and consider the impact of decisions on future generations and the health of our planet
- embed a continuous improvement approach in our ways of working
- seek opportunities for new funding streams while maintaining existing streams.

### HOW WE'LL DO IT

- ensure strategic and financial governance policies and processes are maintained and followed by member, volunteer and employee teams
- implement the national membership strategy in our region
- grow government funding for Good Works programs and services by engaging with ACT and NSW Government agencies
- manage the profitability and growth of our Vinnies stores in accordance with our retail strategy
- develop a fundraising strategy that diversifies revenue streams and includes new public and private partnerships for financial and material aid
- consider the environmental impact of our decisions
- use the Quality Innovation Performance certification process to ensure quality driven systems and processes
- use evidence to inform our decisions.

## 5 Faith in action

Putting our Vincentian spirituality to work by providing a hand up to Companions experiencing hardship and homelessness.

### OUR GOALS

We will:

- Respond to the needs of anyone experiencing hardship, treating them with dignity and respect
- ensure our vision, mission, virtues and values remain at the core of all our work
- contribute to a more just and compassionate society
- work towards an end-state where our Companions no longer rely on us for support.

### HOW WE'LL DO IT

- embed Catholic Social Teachings at all levels of the organisation
- share our faith in action through our programs
- grow the Overseas Development Program in partnership with conferences and National Council.





## Be a part of our online community



[vinnies.org.au/act-surrounds](http://vinnies.org.au/act-surrounds)



[instagram.com/vinniescanberraregion/](https://www.instagram.com/vinniescanberraregion/)



[facebook.com/VinniesACT](https://www.facebook.com/VinniesACT)



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