

Bi-Annual Report – December 2023



Annual Report 2022-23

Image by Stella Evans, full report design work – a gift from Paper Monkey.

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From the CEO

December was my first experience of the festive season at Karinya House. The team had warned me it “gets a bit nuts”, but it has to be seen to be believed. By December, the halls, offices and common areas Karinya House were lined with Christmas trees, festive decorations, hampers, presents, wrapping paper and food items. All generously donated by you – our village of government partners, businesses, community groups, schools and individuals – who, collectively, ensured that every woman, baby and child we support was provided with thoughtfully tailored gifts and care during the festive season. For many in our community, the festive season can be a difficult time financially and personally. Your donations are more than material or financial, they show women they are seen and respected.



Several long-term residents have been allocated housing and are set to move out of Karinya House over the coming months. This always comes with mixed feelings for women and staff. Both nerves and excitement as women gain greater independence and begin their next chapter in their journey. However, Karinya House is never far away – with staff maintaining support for as long as a woman and her children/ babies need while settling into community living. **Since 1 July 2023, the care team have walked alongside 94 women and their 120 babies and children.**

Karinya House has had the privilege of hosting Federal and Territory politicians over recent months, including Ms Elizabeth Lee, the Hon Katy Gallagher, Minister Davidson, Minister Vassarotti, Minister Stephen-Smith, Dr Marisa Paterson, Ms Alicia Payne and Greens party representatives. These visits have allowed us to highlight domestic and family violence, homelessness and poverty – issues which all require a concerted effort by State and Federal actors to overcome. Ministers were also moved by hearing individual stories of strength, and seeing the incredible changes which can come when women are appropriately supported during the perinatal period. Ms Alicia Payne (pictured) made a touching statement to Federal Parliament on 31 July 2023, recounting her visit to Karinya House.



31 July 2023 - visit to Karinya House

Karinya House has also made good progress against its strategic priorities over the past six months, notably improving how we collect and use data and our commitment to Reconciliation. With analytic support from **Iceni** and **Strategic Development Group (SDG)**, we have been able to identify expanded community housing options for women exiting Karinya House, as well as begin mapping the unmet demand for our services. SDG's analysis confirmed that demand for our services is likely to at least remain or increase, including amongst new migrant and Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander communities. Karinya House is also proud to be developing its next ("Innovate") Reconciliation Action Plan in 2024, following conclusion of our first ("Reflect") Action Plan in 2023.

Looking forward, we welcome Ms Margaret O'Donovan into the role of Committee President, following the retirement of Ms Sarah Kelly in late 2023. Building upon this strong legacy, our focus for 2024 is on quality case work support for women, and their babies and children, continuing to build and retain our workforce, and growing our village of supporters to ensure that we can meet all demand for our services – now and into the future.

Lavinia Tyrrel
Chief Executive Officer



Image: Karinya House outgoing President, Sarah Kelly, making her farewell address at the 2023 Gala. Karinya House staff meeting with the outgoing and incoming CEOs for long-term supporters, Canberra Southern Cross Club (Mr Ian Mackay and Mr Matt Walshe). Karinya House staff celebrating NAIDOC week with home-cooked delights using native Indigenous ingredients.

A spotlight on our Community Supporters

Canberra's community spirit is strong, and we see this every day at Karinya House. In addition to our Government, philanthropic and corporate partners, we receive support from schools, community groups, and sporting clubs. From **Rotary** to **St Clare's College**, the **Ionian Club**, **Kangara Waters Retirement Village** and the **Tuggeranong Bushrangers** – the list is long and illustrious.

Community support comes in many forms, including handmade quilts, financial donations, gift cards, fundraising events, food hampers, Christmas gifts and spreading the word about Karinya House.



Every time we receive a donation, we are touched by the generosity of Canberrans and our neighbouring towns. For many women in our service, it is also the first time they have seen their community acknowledge, respect and give back to them. For one woman we are supporting, these experiences have now led her to volunteer at another local charity – a true example of what can happen when we lift one another up in the community.



Alongside other non-government funding, community donations amount to 30-35% of our annual funding. This support allows us to reach more women in the community and provide a deeper quality of service to them. Recently, for example, we were able to pay for several women to receive driving lessons – a critical step in building their independence. We thank the Canberra community for your generosity and support.

Images: Karinya House caseworkers unpacking beautiful hand-made quilts from the Thursday Quilters group. Ms Sarah Kirkpatrick from Karinya House recognising St Clare's College students for their fundraising efforts.

Services for July 2023 to December 2023



Since July 2023, Karinya House has walked alongside 94 women and 120 babies and children in their care.

We have provided 3,566 bed nights to 16 women in residence so far across the year and have been very pleased to see six of these women transition out of Karinya House into their own long-term accommodation, either in community or affordable housing or into Housing ACT properties.

We continue to work closely with our colleagues at Housing ACT to secure safe, sustainable, and affordable housing for women and their children. Building on the pro-bono research conducted on our behalf by local consulting firm, **Iceni** we have already had some productive conversations

with Housing ACT about the specific needs of women we walk alongside in relation to housing allocations. We thank Housing ACT for their interest in this work and look forward to our continued collaboration to facilitate access to safe and affordable housing for women and their children. We also continue to work closely with a range of non-government partners to strengthen the pathways available for women transitioning out of Karinya House.

Karinya House 2022-23 Annual Report

The Annual Report for the 2022-2023 financial period is now available on the Karinya House website and can be accessed using the QR code below. The Annual Report summarises the immense work undertaken by the committed team of staff and volunteers and is an expression of thanks for the significant support provided by individuals, community groups and corporate partners across the Canberra region across the year.

As always, our sincere thanks go to our corporate partners who each provide significant in-kind contributions to prepare and print the report. Special thanks to Liam Camilleri from **Paper Monkey** for design and typesetting, Stella Evans of **Stella Evans Art and Design** for the cover artwork, and support from **Elect Printing** for the timely and high-quality printing. Hard copies are available of the report upon request.



Reconciliation Action Plan

We are pleased to have formally completed the inaugural Karinya House Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). The implementation of the RAP has been a significant step forward in our individual and collective contribution to reconciliation. Most significantly, during the implementation of the RAP, we have increased the representation of Aboriginal staff, increased cultural awareness and competency of staff, and deepened our knowledge of and engagement with a range of external services supporting women and children who identify as Aboriginal and / or Torres Strait Islander. The [Implementation Report](#) is available on our website.



As a part of our reconciliation efforts, in October 2023, we welcomed local Ngunnawal elder **Selina Walker (ACT 2023 Local Hero)** and Aunty **Annette O'Shea** to Karinya House to conduct a smoking cleansing ceremony. The ceremony had been suggested by Aboriginal women in our service as a way of cleansing the facility. It was well attended by staff, volunteers and women and children in residence at the time, with many expressing gratitude for the opportunity to participate in this important cultural event. Thank you to both Selina and Aunty Annette for so generously sharing their knowledge and wisdom. It was a wonderful opportunity for shared learning.

The 2023 Gala Dinner

On 8 September 2023, the annual Karinya House Gala Dinner, was a gathering of over 350 guests. The **Canberra Southern Cross Club** were excellent event hosts and event partners. Everything was superb, professional, warm and welcoming. We were also proud to recognise **Region Media** as the inaugural media partner for the Gala, and we thank them for their support leading into the event and with photography services at the event.

The event was supported by the wonderful **Sean Trenoweth**, who is a professional DJ as well as a wine merchant, and brings gifts in both areas for this event every year, at no cost. We also called on his auctioneer skills as **Capital Chemist Group**, kindly donated at the event, a Hot Air Balloon ride for auction. The bidding was intense and finally secured by the partner of one of the Karinya Committee members. **Hit Parade** also provided great entertainment and kept the dance floor full and energised.

The team from **Missing Bits Productions** again worked their filming magic and produced a wonderful Karinya video to be shared at this event. You can view it here: [Karinya House – Beyond 25 Years.](#)

The evening was again a wonderful celebration of the Karinya Village, our partners, our team and our good friends, particularly recognising the women we are privileged to walk alongside.

Women 4 Women – The First Circle



On 12 December 2023, there was a gathering of around 30 women, in the Howard Lounge at the Hyatt Hotel (with our gratitude to the Hyatt for the central and gifted venue).

Hosted by CEO Lavinia Tyrrel, and facilitated by our good Friend, Shelley Thomson (Patient Experience Agency), the women were invited to share their professional insights and expertise in support of the continued strategic development of the financial sustainability of Karinya House, to ensure continued provision of services for women who are pregnant or parenting a baby.

One might say, we gathered a Brains Trust for new insight. Committee President Margaret O'Donovan, and Committee Member, Sehida Frawley also attended. This session focused on network and partner building events, as one part of our non-government funding framework.

All women who attended are connected to Karinya House in some way, either directly in partnership, in a financial and/or pro-bono basis, or through their respective networks. We remain grateful for the gift of their time, knowledge and expertise, particularly given the timing.

From this gathering, we collated many thought-provoking insights, and several women have committed to further sessions to develop other aspects of our non-government funding framework in support of the continued development of financial sustainability. The seeds planted will begin to take form, so do keep your eye out.

Key Events for 2024

There will be a number of opportunities for new partnerships to be formed and for existing partners and friends to participate in events planned to bring the Karinya Village together and to extend our network of support. Please mark your diaries with the following details:

- **6-7 March 2024 – Hands Across Canberra – Canberra Day Appeal** – [Hands Across Canberra](#) have launched the Canberra Day Appeal, a collaborative appeal seeking to raise \$1m to support local community services across the Region. Karinya House is part of this appeal. We acknowledge and thank [SOLVit Network Support](#) who have partnered with us as Karinya's Corporate Champion. Other Corporate Champions are welcome. Alternatively, if you prefer to make your donation to this appeal, you can support Karinya House specifically. We will be providing the donation link as soon as it becomes available.

Key Events for 2024 continued...

- **8 March 2024** – For International Women’s Day, **QT Canberra** are hosting “Uncorked – a Celebration of Canberra Women in Wine. Proceeds from the event will support Karinya House. Tickets are available [here](#).
- **2 May 2024 – Home. Hope. Horizon. A Charity Luncheon celebrating Mothers, Women and Children in our Canberra Region.** Our 2023 inaugural event was a sell- out, and this year will be no different. With an audience of over 250, including prominent businesses, media commentators, celebrities, politicians and eminent local and regional guests – all guests are united in their desire to make a difference in their community. Partnership opportunities for this event are now open. You can find more information [here](#). As part of the event, our community will be invited to support the corresponding May Appeal, which has traditionally been a month where many of our Friends choose to donate. As appeal information is disseminated across our digital communications, we welcome your support in sharing the appeal as widely as possible across your own networks.
- **6 September 2024** - The **Karinya House Gala dinner** will occur on Friday 6 September 2024 at the Canberra Southern Cross Club. This is always a great night and a chance to get together with friends, new and old.
- **2024 Mercy Walk for Women** is yet to be confirmed.

We look forward to welcoming you all to participate in these events over the coming months, with more details available on our website as they come to hand.



2 May 2024– Home. Hope. Horizon. A Charity Luncheon celebrating Mothers, Women and Children in our Canberra Region

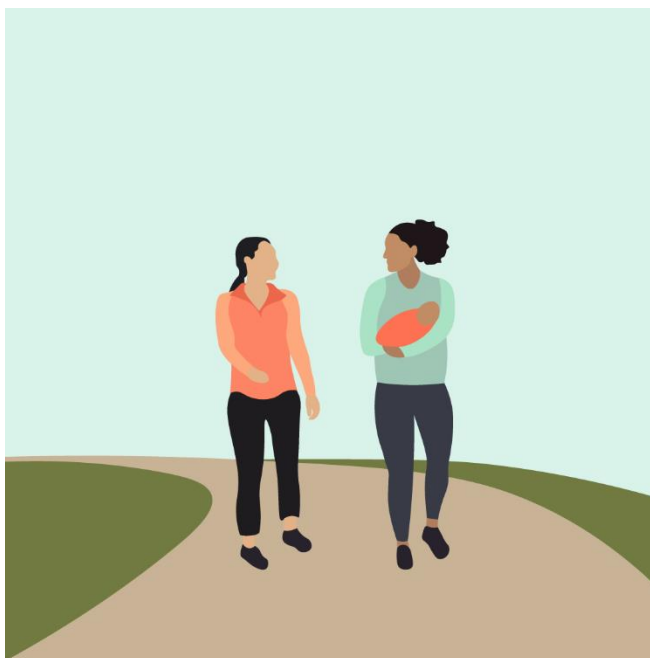
#humansofkarinya – the last word.

"Thank you for everything you've done to help us get here, you're all angels 🤍. It was lovely being there, a breath of fresh air I didn't know I needed until I had it. Getting to know all the staff and seeing beautiful little bubs everyday helped us tremendously. First time in over a year I felt safe and supported, everything that's done to keep it that way is amazing and I'm forever grateful."

"You have made this place a paradise for me and my son with your kindness and love."

"Since coming to Karinya I have my confidence back, I feel like the old me again. I feel happy. I am so grateful for everyone who has been so kind here."

"Hello! I hope you and the team are well! I just wanted to give you a much-needed update! We just bought a house!!! Officially a homeowner! And I also finished my diploma of community services. I truly don't think I would be the woman and mother that I am today without the help and incredible support I received while living at Karinya House. I have such an incredible little family and I'm so happy! All the best."



Karinya across digital communications:

