

ANNUAL REPORT



illawarra *forum*

Voice, Influence, Leadership



19 Policy
Submissions

Provided
13 skills sessions
to **153**
tenants through the
Tenant Participation
Resource Service

369 social housing
tenants
benefited from **17**
events or
activities

We
produced **23**
Newsletters
and **8** special
bulletins

We produced
3 Fact Sheets
to support better
industry practices

9741 Visits
to the Forum web site

117 training, information
and capacity building
sessions for
1748 people

Facilitated **11**
planning
sessions
with
114 people

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Acknowledgements

The Illawarra Forum gratefully acknowledges the valuable work of our colleagues in community services organisations, making it an industry of which we are proud to be a voice, an influence and a leader.

We thank our members for their support and acknowledge that we wouldn't be able to continue the important work we do without the valued contribution of our funding partners, NSW Department of Health, NSW Department of Family and Community Services and Australian Government Department of Health.

Thank you to all of the individuals and organisations who have helped make this a dynamic and successful year for the Illawarra Forum.

About the Illawarra Forum

The Illawarra Forum is the peak body working for community services and organisations in the Illawarra and the Shoalhaven. It supports community organisations, promotes expertise and innovation, fosters industry development and pursues social justice in the region. Its membership consists of organisations and individuals who provide community services.

As a broad based regional peak organisation, the Illawarra Forum takes up issues across program areas that impact on the region's communities.



The Forum's roles include:

- Building expertise in community services
- Resourcing and supporting community service organisations
- Pursuing policy that supports social justice
- Representing the community services industry
- Promoting the wellbeing of communities

Our Vision

We have an equal place at the table where decisions which impact on community service organisations and communities are made.

Our Mission

- Support community organisations
- Promote expertise and innovation
- Foster industry development
- Pursue social justice in the region

We are the
illawarra*forum*

A Message from the Chair

In a period of change and upheaval for the community services industry, and of increased pressure on many local communities living with disadvantage, it is with considerable pride that I reflect on the work of the Illawarra Forum over the past year.

Policy decisions across all three levels of government have challenged the viability of many local organisations, and have impacted their ability to service and support their clients. Cuts to funding, changes to service delivery models, and the increased focus on competition and contestability in the human services sector have certainly kept the Forum busy, and have once again demonstrated the value of having a local voice for community service organisations, and for local communities.

On behalf of the entire Board, I am proud of the leadership the Illawarra Forum has been able to provide in advocating across a diverse range of policy issues including the paucity of funding for vital services to support people living with disadvantage, the impact of changes to vocational education and training, proposed changes to tenancy laws and the provision of public housing, and the reform of the Targeted Earlier Intervention Program.

As a Board, we have also examined the sustainability of the organisation into the future. We are proud of our heritage as a grass-roots, community driven peak body; indeed one of the few regional peaks which has not had to embrace service provision to maintain its viability. The Board remains committed to the ideal that we will not compete with members for funding,



or undertake activities which are best performed by our membership. While this is a source of pride and strength, it also exposes us to threat as funding for sector support and leadership activities diminishes.

With this in mind, the Board have undertaken a rigorous planning process to develop a Strategic Plan which will take us forward to 2020. As part of this comprehensive process, the CEO and executive have benefited from the generous mentorship of a group of innovators and leaders from outside of the community services industry who have come together to form a Brains Trust which acts as advisors and critical friends. On behalf of the Board, I would like to extend my thanks for the valuable insights this group has provided as we look to the future.

Our new vision propels us to work towards a goal of having an equal place at the table when decisions which impact on community service organisations, and on communities,

are made. This bold vision is firmly rooted in the belief which the Board, CEO and all of the team at the Forum hold dear – that the community services sector must take its place as an equal partner with both business and government sectors in order for local communities to thrive and survive.

A significant achievement for the organisation this year has been the recognition of our work in the relief of poverty or distress. This year the Australian Tax Office conferred Public Benevolent Institution status on the Illawarra Forum, recognising that our work contributes to the creation of better lives for people in need. I would like to thank my fellow board

members for their collegiality, expertise and dedication to the Illawarra Forum. This year we also farewelled long-standing Board member, Martin Millgate, and I offer my grateful appreciation for his many years of service to the organisation.

I commend the team at the Illawarra Forum for their hard work and commitment in the face of challenge and change, and look forward to continuing our work of *Voice, Influence, and Leadership*.

Eleonore Johansson
Chair

A significant achievement for the organisation this year has been the recognition of our work in the relief of poverty or distress. This year the Australian Tax Office conferred Public Benevolent Institution status on the Illawarra Forum, recognising that our work contributes to the creation of better lives for people in need.

CEO Report

In a year of change and challenge, the work of the Illawarra Forum grows ever more relevant and important as we strive to secure a better future for community service organisations, and for local communities.

We have continued to ensure that the *Voice* of the community services industry is heard at all levels of government and that decision makers are aware of the needs of our sector and of our region. The team at the Forum hold strongly to the belief that this is one of our most vital roles, and we have been particularly active this year in ensuring strong responses to policy reforms and reviews. The value of our input on behalf of our membership is reflected in the growing number of opportunities we have been afforded to provide evidence at various NSW and Australian government Inquiries and Committees.

Equally important is our role of ensuring our members are informed about changes in policy, and their potential impact on service delivery and on clients.

Demand for services such as facilitation and planning is growing, which is a clear indication of the value of our work in helping organisations prepare for change.

Another key part of our work is to other *Influence* sectors and organisations which impact on our members and communities. The team at the Forum have been very active representatives on a wide range of boards, groups, and committees; and at an astonishing number of networks, forums and interagencies. We also seek to empower our members and communities, and to this



end have been very proud to provide 117 training, information and capacity building sessions over the past 12 months. We have also developed new and exciting resources and fact sheets, and are in the process of developing e-learning tools to offer our members better flexibility and broader access to learning opportunities. Some highlights of the year include:

‘Own It - the Future is Now’ Conference.

Featuring a range of speakers and break-out sessions, a highpoint was certainly Dr Keith Suter’s reflections on the challenges facing the community service industry in the current geopolitical context, and the ‘Conversation’ session between leaders from the community services, business, and policy sectors which focussed on Dr Suter’s statement that “a flourishing economy cannot be built on top of a social graveyard”.

The Affordable Housing Breakfast, which developed from a new collaboration with the Property Council, and brought together delegates from community services and from the property industry to discuss one of the most pressing issues for people on low incomes living in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven – the right to a home.

The Innovation Sandpit. As a member of IWAG (Illawarra Workforce Action Group), Illawarra Forum partnered with iAccelerate to host a sandpit to showcase some innovations that are happening in our industry, to record some of the great initiatives that organisations are doing in partnerships with other businesses, and to explore opportunities which could lead to new innovations.

The Illawarra Forum remains committed to provide *Leadership* in the region. As a servant leader, we strive to ensure we understand the needs of our members and translate these into actions which sustain our sector and inspire community organisations to thrive in the face of constant change.

Our own organisation has been subjected to funding insecurity and change over the past year, and I am incredibly grateful to the staff who have had the fortitude and commitment to continue to work with and for our members despite our own uncertain future. Our members and the community industry generally should be so proud and grateful to have such a talented, knowledgeable and dedicated team working for and with them. No one is more proud or grateful than me to have the opportunity to work with such inspiring colleagues. Your hard work, dedication and commitment to your work and to the communities we support is a constant source of motivation to me. I learn from you all every day.

This dedication has endured within a difficult and precarious time for the organisation. Policy and funding reforms prompted not only a review of our strategic direction, but also an internal restructure. Such change is never easy, and I am thankful to the leadership team who drove the process, and the staff who embraced it. Particularly exciting has been the creation

of policy and project positions which focus on key issues areas, and we look forward to seeing how these roles grow our knowledge and expertise into the future.

Of course, change is inevitable, and over the past twelve months, some members of our team have moved on to new and exciting roles. I thank the wonderful Lance Thomas, Debbie Littlehales, Jane Crowe, Joni Braham and Natalie Brajkovic for their service, support and dedication. Of course as one door closes, another opens, and we have also had the opportunity to welcome some new talented individuals to the Forum family.

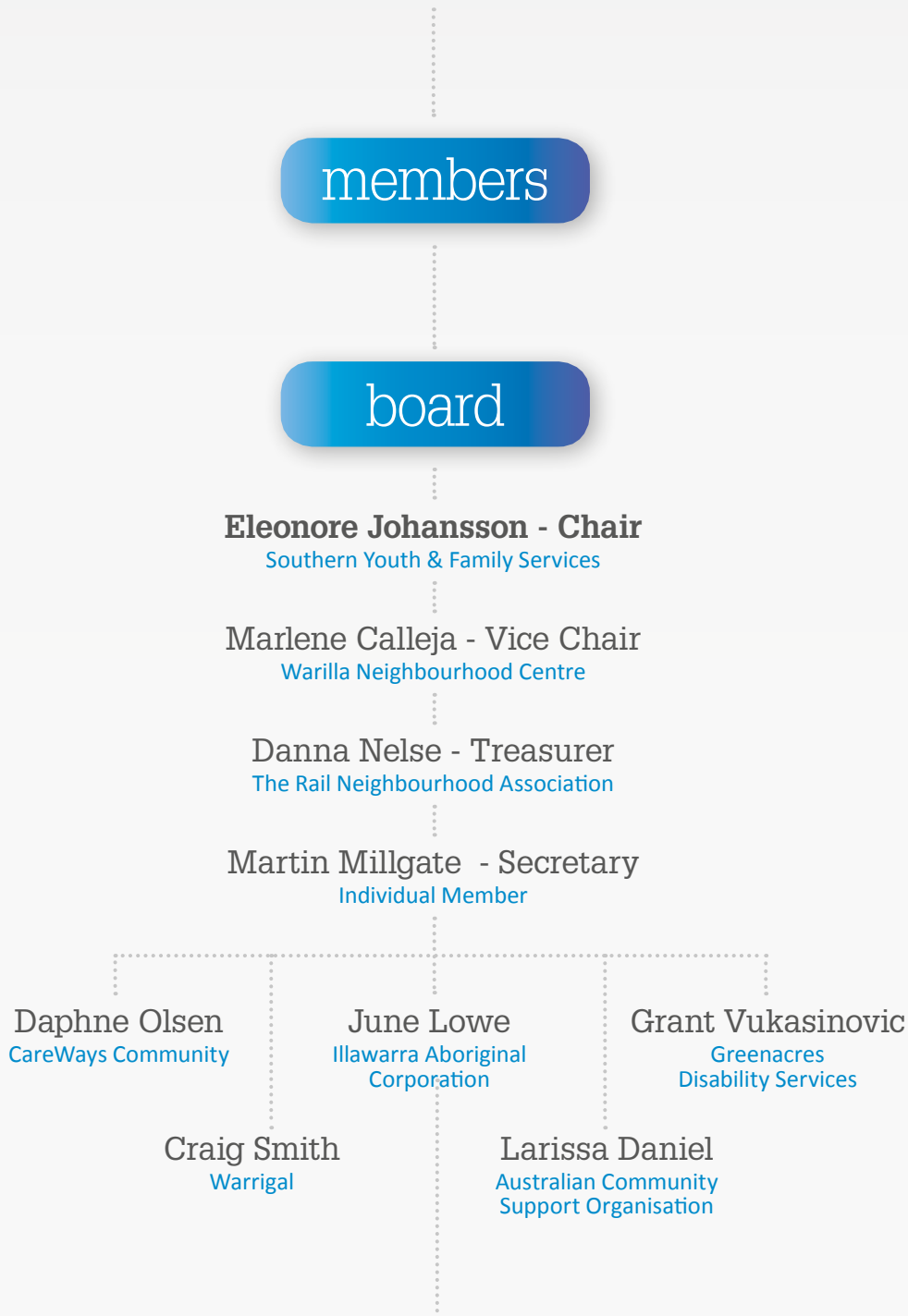
To the Board, I offer my thanks for your support, wisdom and guidance. Your willingness to embrace change and invest in the future of the organisation is inspirational, and the new strategic plan offers exciting new challenges and opportunities as we move towards the next three years. Particular thanks to our wonderful Chair, Eleonore Johansson, for your leadership and support, tireless energy and generosity of spirit.

Finally, and most importantly, I would like to express my sincere thanks to our members. You are the reason we continue to strive and survive. You are the inspiration and the motivation for all of our work. The service you provide for the communities and individuals of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven is inestimable, and while at times you might feel undervalued by the leaders of this country, state and region; you are highly esteemed by myself and the entire team at the Illawarra Forum.

Nicky Sloan
CEO

Illawarra Forum

Organisational Structure





Nicky Sloan - CEO

Operations
Managers



Debbie
Littlehailes



Sarah
Wilson

Office Manager



Patricia
Cachia

Community
Sector
Development



Sarah Gadd
Resource &
Development
Officer



Katie Fox
Communication &
Development Officer

Sector Support
Aged & Disability
Service System
Development



Jane Crowe
Development
Officer



Natalie
Brajkovic
Training &
Development Officer



Lance Thomas
Development Officer
(Southern Highlands)



Joni Braham
Aboriginal Access
Officer



Dave
Robinson
Multicultural Access
Project Officer



Amadis
Lacheta
Policy & Project
Officer
(Regional Issues)

Tenant
Participation
Resource Service



Donna
Brotherson
Coordinator

Special
Projects



Tessa
Parsons
Project Officer



Christine Racar
Happen Coordinator
and Training &
Development Officer

Illawarra Forum Projects

Representation

Illawarra Forum's commitment to social justice underpins all our work.

As a representative for the community services industry, social policy analysis and representation remain a core activity of the organisation. We have continued to work hard to keep our members up to date with relevant information, and provide mechanisms to feedback to government on social policy, government process and programs.

This year some of our key work has focussed on the Targeted Earlier Intervention and Aged Care Reforms, the roll out of the National Disability Insurance Scheme, changes to social and affordable housing, and the Neighbourhood Youth Work Program.

Community Sector Development

Community Sector Development activities are funded by NSW Family and Community Services through the Community Builders program.

The Illawarra Forum develops and implements strategies as part of this program to resource and support community organisations in order to build capacity and capability through;

- Training and professional development activities for board members, staff and volunteers.
- Organisational capacity building activities including the facilitation of strategic planning and partnership development.

- Sector planning activities including industry breakfasts, communities of practice and cross-sector planning.
- Development of resources including fact sheets, training videos and toolkits.

Sector Support and Development - Aged and Disability (SSD)

Illawarra Forum continues to support Commonwealth Home Support Program providers and Community Care Support Program providers to provide high quality services throughout the Illawarra, Shoalhaven and Southern NSW regions.

Illawarra Forum is fortunate to host several specialist positions within this program including specific positions to build the capacity of services to support multicultural and Aboriginal clients. Other positions provide workforce development and professional development activities, and improve information flow between government departments and service providers.

By conveying expertise to the region from across Australia, Illawarra Forum is able to support providers locally. Training sessions and events are always a highlight for local services as they provide access to knowledge, tools and resources that would otherwise be out of reach.

Other highlights for the year involved cultural awareness activities including Mosque tours, Refugee Awareness and Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Training; and the roll out of My Aged Care booths across the region to support consumers accessing aged care services.

Illawarra South East Tenant Participation Resource Service (TPRS)

The Illawarra South East Tenant Participation Resource Service (TPRS) is funded through FACS Housing Services Community Initiatives Program to deliver an information, referral and advocacy service to social housing tenants and applicants in the Illawarra and Southern Regions.

TPRS continued to deliver a wide variety of initiatives to support and engage tenants in the past twelve months. The pop-up maintenance workshops delivered in partnership with Land & Housing Corporation (LAHC) and Spotless were a tremendous success, with tenants able to get long-standing maintenance issues resolved. Other highlights included the Good Neighbour Day events, Mental Health First Aid workshops, and the regional tenant forums.

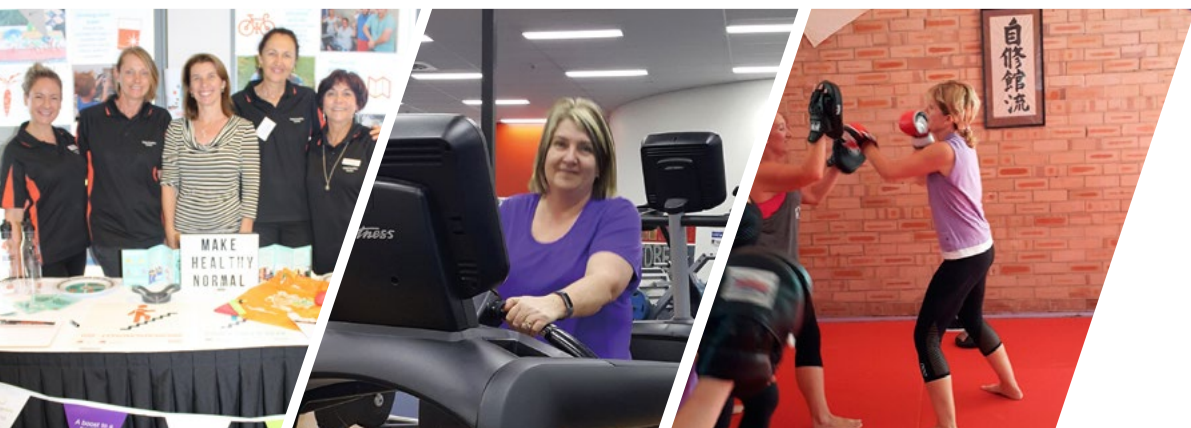
SPECIAL PROJECTS

Mental Health Referrals Project

Illawarra Forum was commissioned by Illawarra Shoalhaven Partners in Recovery (ISPIR) to conduct a mapping project of services within the Illawarra and Shoalhaven to support people experiencing mental illness. The project, conducted over a six-month period, worked with service providers, consumers and carers to ensure the information collected was useful, accessible and up to date. Illawarra Forum and ISPIR worked with WayAhead Mental Health Association NSW as their preferred information portal, and will continue to implement the communications strategy over the coming year.

Make Healthy Normal

For the second year in a row, Illawarra Forum has worked with Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District to administer the Make Healthy Normal grants to community services in the region. These small grants support community service organisations to introduce initiatives in their workplace that support a healthy way of life.



2017 Conference

The 2017 Conference - *Own It - the future is now* in March featured a brilliant array of both local and international speakers with the aim of inspiring and equipping the community services industry to be robust, innovative and customer focused. As always the conference featured keynote speakers, break out workshops and plenty of time for networking.

Our keynote speaker, Dr Keith Suter, touched on many of the challenges facing the community service industry in the current geopolitical context, particularly around our three themes of future business models, future workforce and future customers.

Other speakers included Ruth Lawrence from KPMG who tackled social impact investing, and Natalie Lang, President of the ASU who spoke about the challenges of the gig economy, and its impact on the people who work in the community services industry. Our closing keynote was the ever popular Richard Denniss, who brought all the themes together in an entertaining and informative way.

The new 'conversations' section of the program was very well received and people commented that they really enjoyed the hearing the panel member's knowledge and passion whilst debating the topics of profit versus purpose, and exploring Dr Suter's assertion that 'An economy cannot be built on top of a social graveyard.'

Breakout workshop sessions gave participants time to delve deeper into our theme areas using local examples of innovation and practice from the region.

The 'Our Future Customers' workshops looked at how services could develop a deeper understanding of their clients through a variety of techniques.



Kate Senior, Associate Professor at the University of Wollongong showcased her innovative body mapping tool to engage with young people around sexual health, whilst Felicity Reynolds, CEO of the Mercy Foundation, spoke about their Registry Weeks as a way to get to know every individual who is homeless within a community. Carly Pascoe highlighted the local ASK Illawarra Shoalhaven initiative which utilises elements of the Harwood methodology to consult and engage with communities.

The workshops that concentrated on Your Future Workforce looked at creating and valuing diversity within your staff team, with speakers focussing on recruiting people with disabilities, employing former refugees and Indigenous employment as well as harnessing the hidden talents of community members through the recognition of informal skills and experience.

And finally, the Your Future Business Model workshops looked at how organisations could take advantage of technology within their work, as well as challenging the current service delivery paradigm, and developing key principles for success within your organisation.

The feedback was exceptionally positive with many valuing the fact that the Illawarra Forum is able to provide such a high quality conference for the local region.



Innovation Sandpit

In October 2016, Illawarra Forum, as a member of IWAG (Illawarra Workforce Action Group), partnered with iAccelerate to host an Innovation Sandpit. The sandpit was an opportunity to showcase some innovations that are happening in our industry, to record some of the great initiatives that organisations are doing in partnerships with other businesses, and to explore opportunities which could lead to new innovations.

The Innovation Sandpit was an opportunity for innovators, disruptors and future thinkers to come together to with great service providers to share, inspire and collaborate on ideas and projects that suit the ever changing needs of our communities. It was a chance to demonstrate that the community services industry in the region is forward thinking, creative and investing in innovation. It was also an opportunity to showcase how community organisations are collaborating with creative people working in emerging technology to develop innovations which not only benefit clients and customers, but will also enable other businesses to grow alongside our industry.

While the Sandpit aimed to draw information and ideas from participants, attendees also enjoyed the opportunity to see, hear about and share the many exciting technologies and service improvements from local disruptors who are leading the way in the industry.

Several projects have evolved from the Sandpit, and we continue to explore new partnerships which will lead to great outcomes for our members and their client groups.





Neighbourhood Youth Work Program

In December 2016, the Illawarra Forum was approached by several of our member organisations who were greatly concerned about a reform paper which was to be considered at the next Wollongong City Council meeting.

The paper recommended the centralisation of all youth services, which would effectively de-fund services delivering Neighbourhood Youth Work Program (NYWP) in Port Kembla, Berkeley, Cringila, Helensburgh and Dapto, and see all services delivered as outreach from the Council Youth Service in Wollongong.

The Illawarra Forum swiftly reviewed the 'Future Directions for Wollongong City Council's Youth Services' paper and report, and began an advocacy campaign on the basis that the paper did not provide enough evidence to support a complete dismantling of the current system. We highlighted that many NYWP providers are doing an excellent job and are fulfilling the requirements of their current contracts. We pointed out the devastating impact on the young people who rely on these services, should they be withdrawn, and the impact on the social capital and social cohesion within vulnerable communities. The withdrawal of the current funding may jeopardise the future of the provider organisation, resulting in the loss not only of the current program, but also of a valuable community asset.

The result was a decision by Councillors to continue the NYWP for another year, and to work with providers to co-design programs which meet the needs of individual communities. The commitment of Council resources in terms of staff hours and Councillor input was significant, particularly given the small size of the contracts. We also acknowledge the time and effort contributed to the process by both staff and boards of our member organisations in developing plans which comply with Council's requirements.

The Forum was proud that our advocacy and support resulted in the continuation of The Neighbourhood Youth Work Program, and the recognition of local, place-based community organisations as valuable partners in the provision of services which augment the work of Wollongong Youth Services.



Pop-up Maintenance Session

Through the Tenant Participation Resource Service (TPRS) the Illawarra Forum has partnered with Spotless Services and Land & Housing Corporation (LAHC) to deliver a number of Pop-Up Maintenance Sessions to tenants living in Housing NSW properties across the Illawarra and Shoalhaven.

Pop-Up Maintenance Sessions allow tenants to report maintenance issues directly to staff from Spotless Services and have remedial work completed by a plumber, electrician and handyman in attendance. Whilst minor jobs can be resolved on the day, many more inspections and reports of major jobs are also completed.

These events create an opportunity for tenants to meet maintenance staff as well as managers from Spotless and explain some of the issues they face regarding maintenance. NSW Police also attend these events, providing a barbeque. The event allows for a casual opportunity for the officers to connect with residents on anti-social or potential illegal behaviour. Other services such as Vinnies, also attend to see how they can provide support to tenants in the complex.

Maintenance Pop-Up Sessions have also occurred in partnership with Southern Cross Housing at properties across the Shoalhaven and Illawarra. Again, tenants can make reports on maintenance as well as social issues or other problems they may be experiencing.

TPRS attend as an advocate and an independent voice between tenants and their housing provider. We encourage tenants to report maintenance issues and concerns. We also provide tenants with avenues for further information and encourage them to self-advocate.

These events are highly successful with over 50 maintenance issues reported and addressed. Tenants are extremely surprised and grateful for how easy the process can be which contributes to increased levels of satisfaction with their maintenance providers. The social aspect of these events also allow tenants an opportunity to interact with their neighbours in a casual environment assisting to develop an increased sense of community and togetherness.





Promoting Mental Health

Once again in 2016, Illawarra Forum was able to work with the NSW Local Health District to bring the Make Healthy Normal Grants Program to local service providers.



Flourish Australia (previously known as Richmond PRA) supports people with a mental illness in the Nowra area. As a means of promoting the benefits of exercise and healthy eating on mental health, Flourish ran a 6-week pedometer challenge for staff and clients.

The goal was to combine their steps so that together they walked the equivalent distance from Nowra to Ulladulla. Pedometers, incentive prizes (fruit and vegetable vouchers) and completion vouchers (for new walking shoes) were provided for this team challenge and a different group walk was undertaken each week.

The program resulted in significant outcomes with a group total of 66kms

walked between clients and staff members. Participants who undertook the step challenge were mostly males aged between 24 and 65 years with one client reporting a weight loss of over 70kgs.

A regular walking group was formed and is ongoing, meeting one morning a week to walk along the Shoalhaven River or other scenic routes. The staff members involved were encouraged by the positive results and formed stronger connections with their clients, and with the Shoalhaven-based Health Promotion Officer.

Benefits of the project included improved social connectivity, improvements in mental health and confidence, and a greater awareness of the importance and benefits of an active lifestyle.

Meet & Eat

Following on from the success of the Make Health Happen project which aimed to promote health initiatives and primary health care services to at-risk groups who live in social housing communities, the Meet and Eat program commenced in November 2015 hosted by CareSouth and supported by Illawarra Forum.

The highly successful Meet and Eat initiative involves CareSouth staff cooking a meal for the community members of Berkeley. All residents are welcome to attend and share a meal with their neighbours, encouraging new social connections and improving mental health. The Illawarra Forum Happen Project supplied all the cooking equipment for the program.

CareSouth later partnered with students from the Illawarra Sports High School's

Work Related Alternative Program (WRAP) to cook and serve the meal each Thursday evening. WRAP is an alternative HSC pattern of study with a vocational education focus designed to engage at risk students and enhance their job readiness skills.

The Meet and Eat program continues to attract a large number of Berkeley residents, building community connections and highlighting the benefits of healthy eating.



Navigating Housing Options Seminars

The Navigation Housing Options Seminar run through Illawarra Forum's Tenant Participation Resource Service was targeted at community workers who, while not working in a housing support role, have clients who are homeless or where the risk of homelessness is a presenting or contributing issue.

55 workers attended, including Council rangers, and workers from health, education, community centres and family support services. Presenters included: FACS Housing Services, IRT and Illawarra and South Coast Tenants Advocacy and Advice Service (TAAS).

FACS Housing Services informed attendees about the products available to support people into the private rental market including: Start Safely, Rent Start, and Tenancy Guarantees. The Housing Pathways process was also explained, including the online and phone options.

Participants were advised how to assist a client in making an application through Housing Pathways and the additional information that may be required to complete the application. Particular attention was paid to vulnerable and complex clients and how they can be assisted through the process.

IRT Assistance with Care and Housing program discussed housing options for older people and how vulnerable seniors can be supported into care. They also explained the additional supports that can be utilised during the process.

The presentation from the Illawarra and South Coast TAAS was very well received as attendees were advised how to assist people at risk of losing a tenancy. Information was provided on how to intervene at early stages by being aware of supports available, how to dispute a termination of tenancy notice and the Residential Tenancy Act.

Saving a tenancy before it is terminated is the most effective way to prevent homelessness occurring and many of the workers in attendance are the first point of contact for clients seeking support for issues, including financial and health concerns. Often stress from an insecure tenancy was a contributing factor for further issues.



NDIS - the way forward

With the roll out of the NDIS in the Illawarra/Shoalhaven from July 2017, Illawarra Forum hosted the *NDIS - the way forward* conference for disability service providers in the region in September 2016.



The purpose of the conference was to support organisations with their transition to the NDIS by bring high level expertise to the region. Facilitated by Roland Naufal, one of Australia's leading disability professionals, the conference covered the steps to transition, CALD and Aboriginal perspectives, and stories and learnings from other areas that had previously completed the roll out (including ACT and Victoria). The day provided services with a deeper understanding of the NDIS, how to prepare and future opportunities.

Feedback from participants was positive. As one attendee noted, 'The day gave me extensive info to reflect on how this could impact on community development NGO's and our client's access to services.'



Social Procurement - Can you buy better?

For the past two years, Illawarra Forum has been working with a number of local organisations and services to promote social purchasing and procurement within the region.

This culminated in the launch at Wollongong City Council of the social procurement policy template and fact sheet aimed at supporting community service organisations to make “better” purchasing decisions. Speakers highlighted the enormous social impact that can be gained by adopting social procurement practices within an organisation, and it was heartening to see Wollongong City Council’s commitment to social procurement whilst planning their future tenders.



My Aged Care Booths

With the move to MyAgedCare, some CALD community members are missing out on services as they do not understand the new system or how to access it.

Illawarra Forum teamed up with the Multicultural Access Project Network to provide information and awareness sessions to local CALD communities.

The first of these sessions was delivered at a Maltese social support group with over 50 people attending. This involved a presentation briefly explaining the Australian Aged Care system as a whole, and also a more in-depth look at the processes of using MyAgedCare.

This information was supported by multilingual resources on the Australian aged care system and was followed by a practical session using ipads with the group to show them some of the basic features of MyAgedCare. The project has now been rolled out to many local CALD groups.



Tools and Resources

Illawarra Forum develops a range of resources and publications to assist our members with building capacity and improving outcomes. Fact sheets, newsletters, proforma policies and other resources are available through our website.

Fact Sheets

Fact Sheets are produced on topical issues or new and emerging themes in the community services industry. Illawarra Forum produced several new fact sheets this year including;

- Social Procurement
- Crowd Funding
- Integrating Apps into Client work



Tenant Participation Resource Services

We provided 13 skills sessions to 153 tenants through the Tenant Participation Resource Service.

This included;

- Mental Health First Aid
- Food Cents workshops
- Rent It Keep It
- First Aid



Training Courses

Several new training courses were developed and offered during the 2016/17 financial year including;

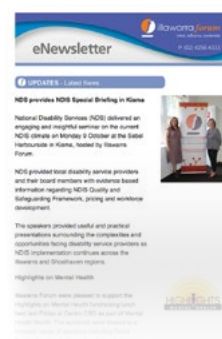
- Marketing Matters: Meaningful Messages
- Coaching Staff
- Fundamentals of Facilitation
- Picking Perfect People: The Fundamentals of Recruitment
- Fabulous Finances: Finances for Board Members



A training calendar detailing all of the scheduled courses and the on demand training available was produced and distributed to our members.

Newsletters

Our free, subscription based newsletter details the latest work by Illawarra Forum including appearances at inquiries, submissions written in consultation with our members as well as challenges faced in our industry, general news, positions vacant and other relevant information. We also include member's news and events as well as highlighting funding opportunities that are available.



This year 23 newsletters were distributed to our mailing list of over 800 subscribers. They are also available after publication on our website.

Tools and Resources

Illawarra Forum can tailor training to your needs. We offer a variety of in-house training opportunities and can upskill your staff onsite, saving time and money. Contact us to discuss your requirements.

Consumer Directed Care

\$990 for up to 15 participants

The Consumer Directed Care (CDC) training session has been designed to promote understanding of how CDC is currently applied to the Home Care Package Program. The session covers key areas such as the consumer's choice and control, organisational cultural change, financial considerations, system implications and communication strategies.

Mental Health First Aid

\$2500 for up to 15 participants

This accredited course runs for 12 hours and can be facilitated in a range of flexible options to suit your organisation. This workshop enables the participant to assist a person with a mental illness prior to professional help and is suitable for frontline workers, volunteers, managers, receptionist and administration staff.

Governance, Finance & Risk Management for Boards

From \$400 for up to 15 participants

Effective governance is the cornerstone for every organisation, and an ever increasing burden is being put onto not for profit boards. Illawarra Forum can provide sessions for not for profit boards members covering a variety of essential topics tailored to your organisation.

Facilitation Skills

From \$990 for up to 15 participants

For people involved in running team meetings, groups or project planning sessions. Save time and increase productivity in your organisation. The skills your team will learn in this training will enable effective and efficient facilitation of meetings, groups and/or project planning sessions. This training will give your team a chance to reflect on their own facilitation style and give them practical tools to become dynamic facilitators.



Year in Brief

Collaborations and Partnerships



ACOSS ACSO Access
Care Network Australia ACSA Aged
Care Assessment Team Albion Park
Rail Neighbourhood Centre Anglicare
Anglicare Moruya Argyle Housing
Australian Services Union Australian Unity
Banksia Villages Barnardos South Coast
Bega Shire Council Bega Valley Meals on
Wheels Bellambi Neighbourhood Centre
Berkeley Community Centre BlueScope
Consultative Committee Careways
Community Care Collective Communities
for Children Consultative Committee
Coordinaire Community Advisory Committee
Dementia Australia Ethnic Communities Council
Ethnic Community Services Cooperative
Eurobodalla Meals on Wheels Eurobodalla Shire
Council EWON FACS Housing Online Services FACS
Housing Services Fair Trading NSW Family Services
Illawarra Financial Rights Legal Centre Flagstaff
Group FONGA Grand Pacific Health Greenacres
HammondCare Healthy Cities Housing Trust
iAccelerate Illawarra and South Coast Tenants
Service Illawarra Disability Alliance Illawarra
Interagency Illawarra Regional Development
Consortium Illawarra Shoalhaven Local
Health District Illawarra Shoalhaven Social
Investment Trust Illawarra Workforce
Action Group Integrated Living Just
Better Care Katungul Kiama Council
Kiama Dementia Friendly Alliance
Koorimunication Land and
Housing Corporation Legal
Aid Macarthur Disability
Services Mercy
Foundation

Multicultural Access
Program Network
Multicultural Communities
Council Illawarra
NCOSS NDS NSW
Dept of Family and
Community Services
NSW Dept of Health NSW Dept of
Premier and Cabinet Opal Denhams
Beach People With Disability PICAC
NSW Property Council of Australia-
Illawarra Branch Queanbeyan-Palareng
Council Red Cross Regional Assessment
Services Regional Development Australia
Illawarra RoundSquared Sector Support
and Development Network Scope Home
Access Seniors Rights Service Shellharbour
City Council Shelter NSW Shoalhaven City
Council Shoalhaven Neighbourhood Services
Snowy Monaro Regional Council Social
Procurement Working Group Southern
Cross Housing Southern Highlands
Community Transport Southern Youth
and Family Services State Training
Services Sydney Water Customer
Council TAFE Illawarra Targeted Earlier
Intervention Consultative Committee
Tenants Union Uniting University
of Wollongong Warrigal Warrilla
Neighbourhood Centre Wayahead
Wollongong City Council

The Illawarra Forum continues to be the voice of the community services industry in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven. We help to connect industry sectors in order to meet mutual goals and keep services up to date with issues that could affect them. We ensure the voice of the community services industry is heard at all levels of Government, and that decision makers are aware of the needs of our region.

Connecting

- Two day Illawarra Forum Conference Own it - your future is now, focussed on future business models, future workforce and future customers.
- Exploration of cross sector innovation to address “wicked” social problems through an Innovation Sandpit event and discussion groups.
- Completion of mapping project to support people with enduring mental health issues find appropriate services.
- Tour of Wollongong Mosques with a seminar on Islamic Faith to build connections and understanding across faiths.
- Coordination of Communities of Practice including the Community Care Collective and Digital Engagement.
- Establishment of the CALD Disability Working Group.
- Use of technology to deliver refugee awareness training.
- Illawarra Shoalhaven Social Investment Trust Advisory Board and Working Group
- Illawarra Workforce Action Group (IWAG)
- NCOSS Regional Forum
- Regional Development Australia Illawarra (Board)
- Sector Support and Development Network
- Social Procurement Working Group
- Sydney Water Customer Council
- TAFE Regional Advisory Council
- Targeted Earlier Intervention Consultative Committee
- Tenants Union Board
- UOW Community Reference Group.

Member of:

- BlueScope Consultative Committee
- Communities for Children Consultative Committee
- Community Care Collective
- Coordinaire Community Advisory Committee
- Forum of non-government Organisations (FONGA)

Informing

- 15 bilingual workers trained on My Aged Care in order to better support their community access aged care services.
- Ten community education sessions on My Aged Care.
- Five Regional Forums, bringing national expertise to the Illawarra/Shoalhaven and Southern region.
- Navigating Housing Options seminar, which informed 78 community sector workers how to better secure housing for their clients.
- Five tenant conferences which built capacity and informed social and community housing tenants about pertinent issues.

Media

- ABC Illawarra - Housing Affordability.
- Illawarra Mercury - Housing Affordability.
- ABC Illawarra - Affordable Housing Breakfast.
- WIN Illawarra - Affordable Housing.
- ABC Illawarra - NSW Budget.
- Illawarra Mercury - Comment on NSW Budget.
- ABC Illawarra - Affordable Housing.
- ABC Illawarra - Federal Budget.
- ABC Illawarra - Importance of not for profit organisations in the retirement village sector.
- ABC Illawarra - Causes and impacts of youth unemployment in the Shoalhaven.

Marketing

- 23 newsletters reaching over 800 subscribers.
- 8 special bulletins.
- 12 Information updates on disability and aged care updates to 300 subscribers.
- 9741 website hits.



Influence

Illawarra Forum aims to represent, empower and build the community service industry in the region. We do this by representing to policy makers the views of our members and the communities they serve; providing professional development to community service industry workers, and building the capacity of services and networks to enhance delivery.

Representing

The Illawarra Forum continues to represent the community services industry in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven on key groups and develops submissions and papers on a range of issues.

Submissions and Appearances:

- Submission - Productivity Commission Inquiry into Human Services.
- Submission - the public consultation draft Associations Incorporation Regulation under the Associations Incorporation Act 2009.
- Submission - Draft NSW Human Services Agreement Standard Terms.
- Submission - Foundations for change - Homelessness in NSW.
- Position Paper - Residential Tenancies Act and Stock Transfer.
- Submission - Productivity Commission Inquiry - Human Services identifying sectors for reform.
- Advocacy for Neighbourhood Youth Work Program.
- Submission - Disability Employment Services Review.
- Submission - Aged Care Legislated Review.
- Submission - Delivering an integrated carer support service.
- Submission - Review of Rent Models for Social and Affordable Housing.
- Submission - Inquiry into Access to transport for seniors and disadvantaged people in rural and regional NSW.
- Submission - Response to Productivity Commission Reforms to Human Services Issues Paper.
- Submission - The Future of Australia's Aged Care Sector Workforce.
- Submission - NDIS Price Review.
- Submission - Single Aged Care Quality Framework.
- Submission - CALD Aged Care Strategy Review.
- Submission - LGBTI Aged Care Strategy Review.
- Submission - IPART on Review of rent models for social and affordable housing.
- Participation in IPART tribunal hearing on review of rent models for social and affordable housing. Also submitted a response to the draft recommendations report.
- Appearance at Australian Government Senate Inquiry Hearing into the Future of the Aged Care Workforce.
- Appearance before NSW Legislative Inquiry into Regional Growth and Global Sydney.
- Appearance before NSW Legislative Assembly Committee in Community Services Inquiry into Access to Transport for Seniors and Disadvantaged People in Rural and Regional NSW.

Representation at:

- ACSA Regional Meetings
- ASU Community Sector Leaders Network
- Barrack Heights Roundtable
- Bega Valley Housing and Homelessness Forum
- Community Care Issues Forum
- Cooma Monaro Housing and Homelessness Forum
- Eurobodalla Aged Care Interagency
- Eurobodalla Housing and Homelessness Forum
- EWON Consultative Committee
- Goulburn & Southern Slopes Housing and Homelessness Forum
- Illawarra Disability Alliance
- Illawarra Interagency
- Illawarra Refugee Issues Forum
- Illawarra Social Housing Forum
- Kiama Dementia Friendly Alliance
- Multicultural Access Project Network
- QUANG - Queanbeyan Interagency
- Queanbeyan & Palerang Housing and Homelessness Forum
- Shoalhaven Aboriginal Community Alliance Interagency
- Shoalhaven Anti-poverty committee
- Shoalhaven Homelessness Interagency

Empowering

The Illawarra Forum provides capacity building for community organisations, establishment and coordination of peer support groups, and the provision of professional staff development for individuals and organisations.

- Delivery of 48 professional development sessions to 756 community service workers.
- Research and report on project mapping services to assist people with enduring

mental health issues find appropriate service supports.

- Development of factsheets on social procurement, crowdfunding and integrating apps into client work.
- Delivery of 13 skills sessions for over 150 social and community housing tenants.
- Collaboration to deliver 5 pop-up housing maintenance sessions at social housing estates.
- Support for local events including NAIDOC Awards.
- Collaboration with University of Wollongong (Australian Health Services Research Institute) on a project for Multicultural Carers.

Building

The Illawarra Forum builds the community services sector in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven region through one to one mentoring with managers, strategic planning, support and training for Boards as well as assistance in the development of policies and procedures.

- Facilitation of strategic planning sessions for organisations and networks.
- Support for partnership planning and merger discussions for groups and organisations.
- 'Can you buy better?' - social procurement event in partnership with Social Procurement Working Group, launching social procurement policy and fact sheet.
- Provision of management support and mentoring to current and future leaders.
- Provision of governance support to boards and management committees.
- Provision of secretariat for Illawarra Disability Alliance.

Leadership

Illawarra Forum provides leadership to the community services industry by supporting community services to deliver high-quality innovative services to meet the ever-changing demands of both consumers and policy makers.

Inspiring

- Two day Illawarra Forum Conference - 'Own it - your future is now', focussing on future business models, future workforce and future customers.
- Participation in NCOSS Women's Housing Working Group. Developing policy and strategy for advocating for more affordable, appropriate housing for women in NSW.
- Exploring cross sector innovation to address 'wicked' social problems through an Innovation Sandpit event and inspiring discussion groups.
- Utilisation of technology to deliver refugee awareness training across the region and into South East NSW.
- Presentations to TAFE community service students.
- Organising for 242 social housing tenants to participate in 11 community connectivity building activities.
- Ignite speech on Illawarra Forum and social justice in the Illawarra for Year 9 students from across the Illawarra.
- Presentation on systemic advocacy for TAFE Diploma students.

Sustaining

- Support for collective impact initiatives through the 'Our Place' initiative.
- Provision of secretariat support to the Illawarra Disability Alliance.
- Launch of *Can you Buy Better?* tools and information to support social procurement.
- Support for development of partnerships and collaborations between organisations.

Changing

- *NDIS - The Way Forward* forum held to support providers on issues surrounding the NDIS roll out.
- *My Aged Care* sessions with workers and communities to support people to access the new system.
- Roll out of Illawarra Forum training packages on Consumer Directed Care, and Person Centred Practice.

Looking Forward

The 2017/18 year will see a restructure of positions to ensure that roles are more focused on specific outcomes and targeted areas.

Policy and Project Officer positions will include:

- Policy and Project Officer - Aboriginal Initiatives
- Policy and Project Officer - Aged Services
- Policy and Project Officer - Children, Families & Young People
- Policy and Project Officer - Disability Services
- Policy and Project Officer - Housing, Homelessness & Transport
- Policy and Project Officer - Multicultural Initiatives
- Policy and Project Officer - Regional Issues
- Policy and Project Officer - Workforce Development.

Several new staff positions will bring a wide range of experience and knowledge to our already competent workforce.

These positions include:

- Manager, Innovation and Opportunities who will focus on new opportunities, strategies and funding streams.
- Marketing and Communications Officer who will be responsible for production of the newsletter and marketing material, maintaining the website and promotion of the Forum's achievements.
- A new Administration Assistant position will provide assistance to all staff with administrative tasks and be the first point of contact for visitors to the Forum.

Future Projects:

Planning and consultation sessions for Targeted Early Intervention will be conducted throughout the Illawarra and Shoalhaven to form the draft framework for targeted intervention. This is an exciting project where services get to decide how they can work collaboratively with each other to achieve positive community change.

Wellness and Reablement will be a big focus for 2017/18 with free conference sessions to be held in Gerroa and Batemans Bay to discuss the new approach, terms and expectations and encourage the use of the new methods within our member organisations.

A local partnership project will be launched in conjunction with the Tenant Participation Resource Service, enabling community groups and organisations to apply for resourcing to support initiatives that address tenants' and social housing applicant's needs, or supports them to become engaged in their community.

Examples of the types of projects that would be encouraged are mental health first aid training courses, food and budgeting education workshops, Rent It Keep It, community lunches and Clean Up Australia Day events.

We will also be piloting some new recruitment and retention initiatives in the aged care and disability sectors to support services to keep up with the ongoing demand.

Financial Report Summary 2017

Statement of Financial Position as at June 30 2017

CURRENT ASSETS	2017	2016
Bank Cheque Accounts & Term Deposits	1,094,385.00	1,047,076.00
Receivables	33,470.00	7,423.00
Cash on Hand	140.00	220.00
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	1,127,995.00	1,054,719.00

NON CURRENT ASSETS	2017	2016
Deposit	1,237.00	1,237.00
Plant & Equipment	51,372.00	68,585.00
TOTAL NON CURRENT ASSETS	52,609.00	69,822.00
TOTAL ASSETS:	1,180,604.00	1,124,541.00

CURRENT LIABILITIES	2017	2016
Creditors	60,777.00	99,801.00
Unexpended Grants & Grants in Advance	158,672.00	137,138.00
GST Net	21,276.00	7,784.00
Forum Allocations, Payroll Provisions, Income in Advance	125,115.00	137,786.00
TOTAL LIABILITIES	365,840.00	382,509.00
NET ASSETS:	814,764.00	742,032.00

Statement of Income & Expenditure for Year ended 30 June 2017

INCOME	2017	2016
Grants Received	1,088,236.00	1,222,880.00
Grants Unexpended Carried Forward	137,139.00	244,534.00
Membership Fees, Training income	102,570.00	60,426.00
Interest & Miscellaneous	46,371.00	40,950.00
TOTAL INCOME	1,374,316.00	1,568,790.00

EXPENDITURE	2017	2016
Employee Costs	828,227.00	725,964.00
Program Costs	178,075.00	432,611.00
Administration & Sundries	136,611.00	187,995.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	1,142,913.00	1,346,570.00

Excess of Income over Expenditure	231,403.00	222,220.00
Amounts transferred to Unexpended Grants	158,671.00	137,139.00
Net Surplus/(Deficiency) of Income For Year:	72,732.00	85,081.00

Are you a Member of Illawarra Forum?

Membership is open to non-profit community based social or welfare organisations that are based in, or work in, the Illawarra or Shoalhaven region, and to individuals. Associate membership (non-voting) is open to government bodies but precluding political parties. Members are required to comply with the Illawarra Forum's philosophy and aims.



Membership 2017 - 2018

The Illawarra Forum is the regional peak and resourcing body for the non-government community sector in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven. Membership is open to non-profit community based social or welfare organisations that are based in, or work in, the Illawarra or Shoalhaven region, and to individuals.

Associate membership (non-voting) is open to government bodies but precluding political parties. To see the benefits of the Illawarra Forum membership please visit illawarraforum.org.au/membership

Illawarra Forum membership is now available online through trybooking. For membership renewal visit www.trybooking.com/11701 For NEW membership visit www.trybooking.com/11701

Membership Category	
Please Tick One (Includes GST)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual/ Sole Worker	\$75
<input type="checkbox"/> Student/ Concession	\$39
<input type="checkbox"/> < 5 Staff	\$119
<input type="checkbox"/> < 10 Staff	\$229
<input type="checkbox"/> < 20 Staff	\$339
<input type="checkbox"/> < 50 Staff	\$509
<input type="checkbox"/> < 100 Staff	\$659
<input type="checkbox"/> < 150 Staff	\$809
<input type="checkbox"/> < 200 Staff	\$1,409
<input type="checkbox"/> Associate Membership	\$409

Organisation: _____

Contact name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Email: _____

Landline Phone: _____ Mobile Phone: _____

I am applying for membership to the Illawarra Forum Inc. I fully agree to abide by the philosophy and support the aims of the Illawarra Forum Inc.

Signature: _____

Please return this form with your payment either by cheque or Direct Deposit.
Email: info@illawarraforum.org.au
BSB: 012 427 Acc R: 4546 38156 illawarraforum.org.au

Membership of the Illawarra Forum will bring many benefits including:

- Discounts on all training run by the Illawarra Forum
- Discounted fees for facilitation including strategic and action planning, organisational reviews and program evaluations
- Discounted registration fees for Illawarra Forum Conferences, Industry Breakfasts and Symposiums
- 100% discount on the Enablement Kit & associated products offered on the Illawarra Forum website
- Use of Illawarra Forum training/meeting room at member-rates
- Free advertising of Positions Vacant in our fortnightly e-newsletter which includes sector news, issues and events
- Invitations to contribute to regional responses to key government inquiries, discussion papers, and policy dialogue
- Access to the Illawarra Forum's extensive sector knowledge, advice and consultation
- Voting rights at general meetings, including the Annual General Meeting at which the Board and Executive positions are decided (full members only).

For any information about membership, or about the Illawarra Forum, please contact us on info@illawarraforum.org.au or (02) 4256 4333.



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