

ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY NSW STRATEGIC PLAN 2020–2022



St Vincent de Paul Society
NSW

good works



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OUR 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.

OUR 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.

OUR ASPIRATION

An Australia transformed by compassion and built on justice.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, as the Traditional Custodians of this land, with deep respect. May Elders, past and present, be blessed and honoured. May we join together and build a future based on compassion, justice, hope, faith and reconciliation.



ONE SOCIETY

In 1881, the St Vincent de Paul Society began operating in New South Wales as a member and volunteer-based lay Catholic movement that served people experiencing poverty or disadvantage and developed the faith of its members.

Our heritage shapes and inspires a living and contemporary tradition. It is a heritage of which we are proud – it is faith in action at a local level to address poverty and inequality. We are inspired by the basic tenets of our mission and vision: to work ‘to shape a more just and compassionate society’ and to offer a ‘hand up’ to people experiencing disadvantage. We believe that we must respect the dignity of those we assist, share our hope, and encourage them to take control of their own destiny.

We hold the past yet build for the future. We are dynamic, agile and adapt to respond to new needs as they arise. The work of our members accompanying those in need continues in local communities and we have also grown into a large provider of social services.

We support people who are experiencing homelessness; people with disability; women and their children escaping domestic violence; people experiencing drug and alcohol addiction; people facing financial hardship; former prisoners seeking to reintegrate into the community; people experiencing mental health conditions; people seeking asylum and refugees.

We are spiritual and connected. Our spirituality espouses the ministry of Jesus – radical inclusivity, restoration and accompaniment. We see in the life of Jesus the values we aspire to live today – commitment, compassion, respect, empathy, advocacy and courage. Our values are underpinned by concern for all people – especially for those who live on the margins of our community. We advocate a contemporary spirit of faith in action for a more just and compassionate society.

We are One Society – all of our people contribute to the common purpose of serving the most disadvantaged in our community, providing a ‘hand up’ and helping them to rebuild their lives.

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT, ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY NSW

This Strategic Plan marks the beginning of a new period of transformation for the St Vincent de Paul Society in New South Wales. We build on the work of the 2013-2018 Strategic Plan and prepare ourselves for the future. The 2020-2022 Strategic Plan is for a three-year period from financial year 2020 to financial year 2022.

This plan equips us to continue to accompany people experiencing poverty or disadvantage, providing them with a 'hand up'. It also equips us to adapt to the change that is coming in our organisation and in our sector.

The people we serve are at the centre of all of our endeavour. In this Strategic Plan they remain firmly at the centre of our organisation. The implementation of this plan will require us to consider the needs of the people we serve, as well as our mission, vision and tradition, in every decision that we make.

Our members, volunteers and staff are the people who together work towards our common purpose.

They are our people. Some of our members work in local groups (Conferences) helping people in their communities. Others work in regional and urban areas, supporting the provision of professional social services. Our volunteers work directly with people experiencing disadvantage, as well as in our retail business. Our staff contribute to all areas of our work.

In this Strategic Plan we celebrate our heritage and recognise that both our organisation and our sector are in a period of transformation. We see this transformation as a challenge and as an opportunity to assist people experiencing poverty or disadvantage in more efficient, authentic and innovative ways.

I invite all of our people, all of our members, volunteers and staff, to join us in this process of transformation. Together we will build on our heritage and adapt for the future. Together we will continue to strive to assist people experiencing poverty or disadvantage and to build a more just society.

Denis Walsh



MESSAGE FROM THE CEO, ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY NSW

This Strategic Plan has been developed during a significant period of transformation for the St Vincent de Paul Society NSW. As well as celebrating our tradition, we acknowledge that we operate in a period of disruption and challenge.

We have grown as our people saw the needs at the frontline – over time we have become a major social service provider in NSW, particularly in the areas of homelessness and supported accommodation, community development, disability services and health services.

Our growth has broadened the scope of our work and our reach. It has also required that we transform into a modern social service agency with robust infrastructure and strong governance.

Our growth will be sustainable and we will respond to new and unmet needs. We will expand on initiatives that give renewal and hope to those in need. We will also respond to the spiritual and community expectation of sustainability.

We intend to drive excellence in service provision for people experiencing poverty or disadvantage. We will harness technology to gather evidence about the quality of our services and their impact. We will remain a people-centred organisation that accompanies those that we serve so that they become agents of their own change.

Jack de Groot

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

This plan builds on the 2013-2018 Strategic Plan, which set goals to strengthen our spirituality, service, Society and partnerships, as well as to develop our membership and raise our voice.

During the life of the 2013-2018 plan we achieved a significant amount. However, when that plan commenced we could not have foreseen some of the opportunities with which we were presented.



DURING THE PERIOD 2013–2018 WE HAVE:

- provided professional social services to many thousands of people experiencing poverty or disadvantage – we assisted over 64,000 people in the last 12-month period
- supported our members to visit many thousands of people giving them a ‘hand up’ to live with dignity – they assisted over 61,000 people and undertook more than 166,000 home visits in the last 12-month period
- developed new models of service provision, including ‘hubs’ that bring together a number of agencies to meet the needs of people experiencing poverty or disadvantage
- provided Local Area Coordination services to facilitate access to the National Disability Insurance Scheme for many thousands of people with disability – by June 2018 we were managing more than 30,000 participants in the scheme
- received funding under the Supported Accommodation Housing Fund and raised over \$200 million of capital for the construction of over 500 social and affordable dwellings
- rebuilt our information technology infrastructure to provide a reliable platform that supports our future growth
- grown our public profile and government advocacy capacity in order to influence public policy around structural issues which impact the people we serve, for example affordable housing and the cost of living
- diversified and grown our fundraising revenue to support our work
- embarked on a process of retail transformation in order to strengthen our income generation to support our mission
- generated over \$330 million through our retail outlets
- established several facilities as part of the Container Deposit Scheme, a new enterprise to provide income for our work
- grown the Vinnies CEO Sleepout, through which we raised over \$12 million between 2013 and 2018
- implemented a Reconciliation Action Plan
- reformed our constitution and established increasingly robust governance practices.

We have much of which to be proud. However, we also face significant challenges.

OUR CHALLENGES

We face a number of significant challenges, which will require us to adapt and change as an organisation:

- Changing approaches to social service provision, with governments seeking to partner with the community sector. This is a source of opportunity as well as challenge. Additional funding means that we can broaden our reach, and provide services to many more people. However, as we expand, we must ensure we provide funded services in a manner that is aligned to our mission and vision.
- The transformation of approaches to the provision of services for people with disability in Australia such as the introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme has required us to re-imagine the way in which we provide services to people with disability. We have also embedded a large and complex framework for the delivery of Local Area Coordination services across much of the state.
- The challenges of effectively assessing our performance and reporting to our members and funding bodies on the outcomes and impact of our services for the people we serve.
- The need to make further investments in technology to support all of our work.
- The challenges of ensuring long-term financial sustainability, so that we can continue to invest in providing excellent services to people experiencing poverty or disadvantage.
- Increasing pressures facing the retail and fundraising sectors, from which we source income to fund our social services and the crucial work of our members. Challenges are present across the sectors – we must be agile and adaptive, developing new sources of income in a dynamic environment.
- Increased expectations of community sector organisations to have robust governance practices and sound infrastructure to support service delivery. These expectations include increased regulation as well as oversight by funding bodies including governments. We must continue to enhance our governance practices.
- A decreasing Conference membership base, requiring us to consider how we might develop new forms of membership and association with our organisation to provide opportunities for our people to support those experiencing poverty or disadvantage.



OUR PLAN

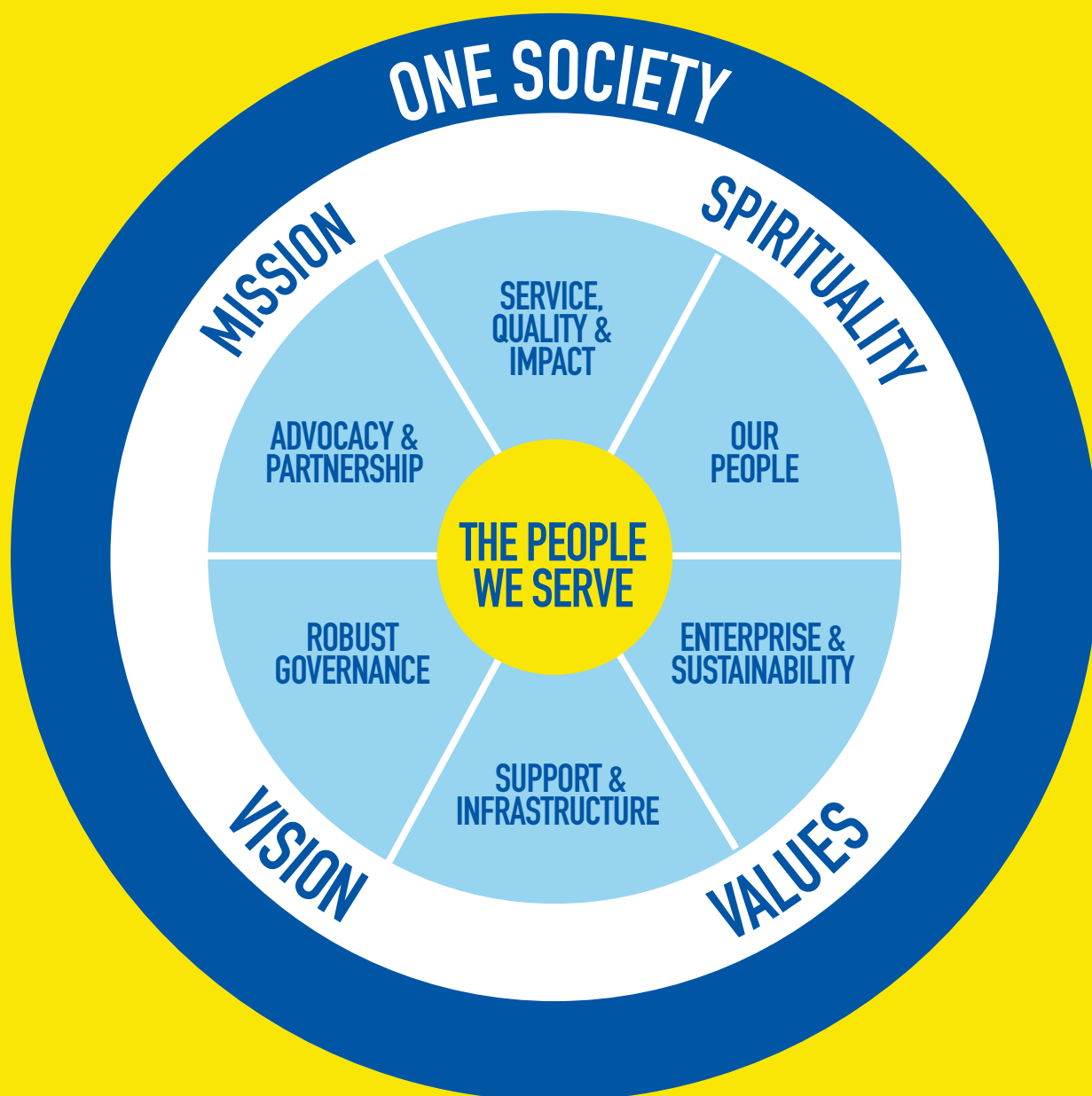
**This plan is aspirational and ambitious.
It understands that our heritage will drive us
to our new destination.**

At the centre of our work, and the centre of this plan, are the people we serve.

Every aspect of our work is surrounded by our mission, vision, values and spirituality.

This plan reflects the voice of our people: members, volunteers and staff, as well as the people we serve.

This is our strategic framework.



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

We have identified six strategic priorities:

SERVICE, QUALITY AND IMPACT

We will provide excellent social services to people experiencing poverty or disadvantage, and measure the quality and safety of our service and its impact.

We will:

- place the needs of the people we serve at the core of all of our decision-making about our social service provision
- drive excellence in our social service provision so that all of our social services effectively reduce the impact of poverty and address injustice in our communities
- apply leading practice and evidence-based approaches to our social service planning, development and provision
- measure the outcomes of our social service provision and understand the impact of our services so that we can drive continuous improvement in all of our services
- conduct a review of our social services based on an approved decision-making framework.

OUR PEOPLE

We will nurture and support all of our people so that they are fully engaged and empowered to work together towards addressing poverty and disadvantage.

We will:

- create opportunities for all of our people to engage with our tradition, mission and vision
- develop a membership strategy that ensures membership engagement and care
- develop a volunteer strategy that ensures effective support for our volunteers
- create an organisational culture that supports 'One Society'
- implement, monitor and evaluate our Reconciliation Action Plan
- create a safety culture for all of our people in every site and every activity.

ENTERPRISE AND SUSTAINABILITY

We will build a financial approach that makes us sustainable and able to invest to do more for the people we serve. We will be entrepreneurial in our approach to raising funds to support our service delivery.

We will:

- ensure that we have a sustainable financial base to support and sustain our mission
- create an innovative social, retail and commercial strategy which promotes environmental sustainability and strengthens income generation to support our mission
- develop a united and innovative fundraising culture that generates significant revenue to support our mission.

SUPPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

We will build and maintain the infrastructure needed to support and sustain a leading social service delivery agency.

We will:

- build efficient and effective workplace systems, processes and structures that enable productivity and connection and support the provision of excellent social services
- implement major technology projects to improve productivity, effectiveness and quality
- effectively manage our property assets.

ROBUST GOVERNANCE

We will strengthen our approaches to governance, developing principled decision-making frameworks and guidelines at every level of our organisation. We will harness compliance and regulatory frameworks to enhance our service provision.

We will:

- strengthen our governance culture
- effectively manage and respond to the risks we face
- review and consolidate all of our organisational policies.

ADVOCACY AND PARTNERSHIP

We will build our public profile and advocate for reform of the structural causes of poverty and disadvantage. We will partner with the public, not-for-profit and private sectors in relation to both service provision and advocacy.

We will:

- develop clear policy positions underpinned by evidence and consultation
- influence the actions of funders and decision-makers through constructive and targeted advocacy to reduce inequality and improve the wellbeing of the people we serve
- develop a strong public profile to shape public debate on issues related to people experiencing poverty or disadvantage.



OUR DESTINATION

By 2022, success in achieving the goals set out in this plan will be evident because we:

1

PLACE THE PEOPLE WE SERVE AT THE CENTRE

of our endeavour, through actively listening to their voice as we undertake social service planning, development and provision. The people we serve inform our research and policy development. Our advocacy for social justice is informed by the views of people experiencing poverty or disadvantage.

2

OPERATE AS 'ONE SOCIETY', in which

our members, staff and volunteers work together in pursuit of a common purpose – the reduction of poverty and disadvantage in our community. Formation and training in relation to our tradition, spirituality, mission, values, service excellence and work for justice builds this sense of common purpose. Our members tell us that their membership experience is enhanced by better support and systems. All of our people feel supported, skilled and confident in fulfilling their roles.

3

UTILISE OUTCOMES AND IMPACT MEASURES

to inform our work and our decision-making in all areas. We understand better the impact of our social services. We also understand better the outcomes of all of our enabling activities, including our retail and commercial enterprises and our fundraising. In all areas our people understand the importance of outcomes and impact measurement. We use a variety of methodologies for outcomes measurement, supported by enhanced data collection capabilities. Our effective articulation of our impact attracts new supporters and partnerships, increasing our capacity for impact.



4

SHOW INNOVATION IN OUR WORK

, not only in our social service provision, but also

in our retail and commercial operations and our fundraising. We have explored integrated and technological opportunities for retail and commercial expansion. We are innovative in the area of sustainability – reducing our landfill through implementing various recycling initiatives. We have invested in our fundraising people and programs, and have developed new approaches to our relationship with donors and created new fundraising initiatives and campaigns. The result of innovation in both of these areas is increased revenue to support our services for people experiencing poverty or disadvantage.

5

STRIVE FOR SUSTAINABILITY

, through wise stewardship of our resources. Financial

sustainability is central to our endeavour meaning we both help those people in immediate need and make provision for meeting future needs. Our business practices are efficient and cost effective, so that the greatest possible proportion of our revenue is used to support people experiencing poverty or disadvantage. Streamlined finance, procurement, property, administrative and technology services have produced cost reductions as well as productivity gains – enabling us to do more for the people we serve.



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