

ANNUAL REPORT

20
24

SAWTELL CATHOLIC CARE



2024 Contents



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Our Board



Fr Joe DSouza
Parish Administrator



David Robson
Chair

SCC BOARD Chair Report

I am pleased to present the 2024 Annual Report on behalf of the Board of Sawtell Catholic Care.

As we prepare for the introduction of the new Aged Care Act, scheduled to commence in 2025, our Board has prioritised the quality of care and the well-being of our residents in all decision-making processes. This commitment aligns with recent reforms in the Australian aged care sector, which emphasise person-centred care, transparency, and continuous improvement. While staying true to our Vision, Mission and Values, the Board continues to provide clear direction and purpose to achieve the best possible outcomes for those we serve.

This year, the Board worked closely with the Mary Help of Christians Parish Finance Council to review and refine roles, allowing the Board to dedicate more time to care-related outcomes. As a result, project management responsibilities will now be overseen by the Parish Finance Council, giving the Board greater capacity to focus on enhancing the lives of our residents across Mater Christi, Marian Grove, and Sawtell Home Care.

We are also committed to building a diverse, skills-based Board, and are delighted to welcome Dr. Bruce Watts as our newest member. With his extensive experience as a local GP and his deep knowledge of Mater Christi, Dr. Watts strengthens the Board's clinical expertise. At the same time, we bid farewell to long-serving members Trish Plunkett and Pat Magann, whose dedication and insight over many years have been invaluable.

A significant development this year has been the Board's increased engagement with care governance through the establishment of a Quality Care Body. This body

ensures that best practice and resident feedback, which provide insights into the quality of care, are regularly gathered and formally presented to the Board for consideration. Additionally, we launched a Consumer Advisory Body, ensuring that feedback from residents and their families directly informs our decisions on care services. In keeping with sector reforms, the Board now provides written responses detailing how this feedback has influenced our actions

The past year has seen growth not only in staff and resident numbers but also in the range and quality of services offered. Plans are underway for a new, innovative palliative care service set to launch in 2025, further enhancing our commitment to delivering comprehensive, compassionate care.

Our continuous improvement program has already begun to yield positive outcomes, reflected in a 4-star rating from our residents, a testament to the ongoing dedication of our staff. Sawtell Catholic Care remains a leading provider of aged care and retirement living on the Mid North Coast, a distinction made possible by the hard work and commitment of our incredible team. The Board extends its heartfelt thanks for their unwavering efforts to improve the quality of life for those in our care.

We look forward to another year of growth, innovation, and, most importantly, continued excellence in care.

David Robson - Board Chair, Sawtell Catholic Care



Cate Clark



Bruce Watts



Rob de Groot



Paul Crane



Gwen Nyhan



Michael Darragh
Chief Executive Officer

CEO Report

Embracing Changes

As we reflect on the past twelve months, it is clear that our community—and the world—has faced unprecedented change and challenges. Yet, in the midst of this chaos, we have uncovered significant opportunities for growth and celebration.

This year marks a milestone: the 25th anniversary of Mater Christi. We honour the visionary leadership of our founders, including Fr. John Kelly, Pat Littler, John Plunkett, and John Moran, whose compassionate dedication laid the foundation for our community. Celebrating this legacy was a highlight, particularly the reunion of former staff members like Robyn Barnett and Christine Farrell, whose contributions continue to inspire us.

Our commitment to growth is evident through several key developments. The expansion of our village with new units, the enhancement of our community engagement through The Link community gardens, and the continual growth of Sawtell Home Care services reflect our dedication to meeting evolving community needs. Notably, we are refurbishing our palliative care services, aiming to establish a centre of excellence for the most vulnerable elders in our care.

In January 2024, we launched “Embrace,” an initiative designed to acknowledge and reward our exceptional staff. Their daily commitment to our residents is the backbone of our organisation, and recognising their efforts is essential to our mission.

Pursuing excellence in care remains our priority.

This year, we conducted multiple internal and external reviews, leading to valuable feedback from our residents, who rated our care highly at 4 stars. The commendations from the Aged Care Quality & Safety Commission reaffirm the dedication of our staff. While we celebrate these achievements, we recognise that the journey toward excellence is ongoing, and we are grateful for the unwavering commitment of our talented leaders and compassionate team.

Digital transformation and cybersecurity initiatives are also well underway. We have implemented new technologies and programs designed to enhance service efficiency and quality. Our Executive team has sharpened its focus on risk management and care governance, ensuring we are well-positioned to navigate the emerging reforms and compliance standards in the aged care sector.



MICHAEL DARRAGH
Chief Executive Officer

In alignment with our strategic vision, the Board is undergoing a significant restructure to enhance care governance and to integrate new skills and expertise that will help us tackle the challenges ahead. We are actively advancing strategic growth projects, including innovative designs for the redevelopment of Villa Maria Village, which will increase our capacity for affordable and social housing, including serviced apartments.

We welcome Fr. Joe DSouza as our new Parish Administrator. His leadership promises to strengthen our pastoral ministries, ensuring our community remains spiritually nourished.

As we move forward, we do so with a profound appreciation for our staff, whose dedication and resilience have been our greatest asset. Together, we will continue to embrace change and seize opportunities, committed to providing the highest quality care for our residents. Thank you for your ongoing support as we embark on this exciting journey ahead, and please enjoy this report which highlights our mission in action.

Michael Darragh - Chief Executive Officer



Executive Leadership Team



Matt Digges
Director of Mission



Melanie Lucock
Director of People Services



Brendan Biddle
Chief Finance Officer

Senior Leadership Team



Graham Oliver
The Link Operations Manager



Karen Martin
Village Manager



Mercy Kurinyepa
Director of Nursing



Rob Wilson
Home Care Manager



Steve Laidley
Projects & Property Manager

Strategic Focus

- ▶ SCC places our people at the centre of our focus, both our residents and clients that we serve, and, just as important, our staff workforce that ensures the care and kindness expected from our organisation.
- ▶ In relation to our mission of compassionate care into our community we will continue to embrace innovation and new technology to provide best practice care and services, and support growth and development.
- ▶ The Mater Christi refurbishment and development of state-of-the-art palliative care suites will elevate our approach to end-of-life care. These suites will be designed with family engagement in mind, whilst ensuring our residents receive the dignity and comfort they deserve in a spiritual environment of excellence.
- ▶ The redevelopment of Villa Maria Village, creating modern apartments to support a comfortable seniors lifestyle in affordable housing, will serve as a model for highly engaged community living close to shops, transport, services and amenities.
- ▶ Revitalising the Marian Grove Recreation and Lifestyle Centre will enhance resident recreational opportunities, encouraging active and engaged lifestyles.
- ▶ To meet the evolving challenges in a dynamic aged care sector we will continue to adapt our organisational structure and leadership roles, including our Board, so we can better serve the changing needs of our community.
- ▶ Special focus and resource will be given to growing and developing our workforce, ensuring we sustain, retain and upskill the talented individuals who are the hearts and hands of our mission.
- ▶ Financial growth and sustainability remain a central part of our strategy, to ensure the organisation is able to sustain and resource our services and missional activity, including benevolent support to those most vulnerable and in highest need. This will involve increasing efficiencies in operations and investigating new opportunities for income by extension or diversification of services.

Together, these opportunities will empower us to create a brighter future for our residents and the broader community in the years immediately ahead.

Mission in Action

OUR Vision

An Inclusive Community of Christian Care.

Forty years ago, a wise group of faith filled community minded people dared to dream of a community of care. Enlivened and encouraged by this solid base in Mary Help of Christians Parish, we seek to affirm the dignity and lives of all people in the Coffs Region. We continue to scan the horizon for opportunities to serve.

OUR Mission

We Care by Actively Serving Our Community with Christian Compassion.

Excellence in spiritual, clinical, mental, social, and emotional care is driven by our commitment to each person in relationship with our community.

OUR Values

Love Respect Justice Courage

These values underpin the ethical base for our service, strategic planning, staff engagement and every decision we make.



The resilience of Mary Help of Christians Parish (MHoC) as well as the significant talents of both parishioners and staff have been drawn out by the absence of a resident priest and the changes this has necessitated. Since Fr Michael Alcock has moved to the north of the Diocese, pastoral care and direction of Sawtell Parish and its ministerial outreaches, including SCC, has been under the care of Fr Joe DSouza, who remains the Administrator of Coffs Harbour Parish. Under the new arrangements, CEO Michael Darragh and Director of Mission Matt Digges have exercised greater operational oversight in MHoC Parish. The increased synergy between SCC and the Parish has resulted in a deepened growth and awareness of SCC as a vital outreach of MHoC Parish, itself a part of the local church of the Lismore Diocese.

From our Toormina base our mission continues with the exceptional lifestyle enjoyed by residents of Marian Grove, the excellent care offered by Mater Christi, and Sawtell Home Care, which provides the protective mantle for residents to remain in their homes. The Link is growing into a peaceful place of connection and relaxation.

The dream is a living and growing reality!

Matt Digges - Director of Mission

Pastoral Care



As an increasing priority for SCC, Pastoral Care has seen growth and diversification over the past year. Central to our mission of We Care, the spirituality of each resident, family and staff member, defined as 'that which gives meaning to your life' is encouraged and supported by a full-time qualified Pastoral Carer.

As an Inclusive Community of Christian Care, many options for spiritual growth are offered. Weekly Masses are celebrated by our Carmelite priests, or when available by Fr Colin Reinhard, who is retired in the Village. When a priest is unavailable, liturgies are conducted by lay leaders. In addition, prayer, discussion and bible sharing groups as well as ecumenical services are conducted weekly. Individual visits are coordinated to reach those unable to leave homes or rooms.

A new initiative has been the inclusion of various school groups into the program. The vigour and enthusiasm shown by students of St John Paul College as they have begun to share faith and care with residents has been transformative. The intergenerational learning shared across the years of age and wisdom is impressive.

Vital Volunteers

The pastoral life of the Village and Mater Christi is augmented by the dedicated service of thirty volunteers. These committed community members offer their practical, pastoral, and spiritual skills to assist residents to lead meaningful lives. Through their generosity, Village residents are assisted to attend medical appointments, those at home are visited, exercise is facilitated, and residents are supported to attend activities in the Community Room, Our Lady of the Way Chapel, The Link, and Village Centre. Volunteers take Holy Communion weekly to those who cannot attend the Chapel.

We are blessed with the generosity and service of our volunteers.

1860
volunteer
hours

REAL PEOPLE, REAL STORIES: Trevor Pigot

With family in the Village, Trevor was a regular visitor to Marian Grove before becoming a volunteer four years ago. His culinary and organisational expertise have become invaluable at Resident functions. Always willing to wear a zany hat, Trevor shows great care and concern for residents whilst driving the Village bus or assisting at activities. Ever reliable and generous, Trevor is a shining example of our mission in action.



Embracing Our People



This year has been incredibly busy for our team, who continue to demonstrate unwavering compassion and dedication in every aspect of their work. In the aged care sector, kindness and courage are essential, and our staff embody these qualities every day. You may have seen them proudly wearing their 'Values' t-shirts promoting our values in action.

We are especially grateful for the skilled individuals who have joined us this year, including a new Chief Financial Officer, and a Quality, Safety, and Risk Officer to ensure organisational compliance and continuity. In Mater Christi, key appointments of the Deputy Director of Nursing, Clinical Care Coordinator, and Clinical Quality and Education Officer have strengthened our ability to deliver exceptional care.

Our commitment to supporting skilled staff has grown through our approval as a visa sponsor, allowing us to welcome talented individuals from overseas to join our clinical team. We also continue to build our capacity in our care and hotel service teams. This not only strengthens our workforce but enhances the care we provide to our residents and clients.

Our Home Care team continues to thrive as client numbers increase, and our Village team has been busy with villa refurbishments and resident events. The Pastoral Care team continues to be a pillar of support, offering essential guidance not just to residents, but also to our hardworking staff.

We place great importance on continuous learning, with monthly dedicated learning days and staff participation in industry workshops and conferences. The Diocesan Aged and Community Care Services Conference provided an excellent opportunity for our team to showcase their work and collaborate with peers. We



also welcomed students from local colleges for work placements, which has fostered the next generation of aged care professionals.

Engaging our staff through events like the 'Step Into Spring' Challenge, Aged Care Employee Day, and R U OK? Day demonstrate our ongoing commitment to team spirit and wellness. Our 'Embrace' Program offers peer-to-peer recognition and provides access to discounts on everyday items, which is a testament to how we care for our people.

Our digital transformation initiatives, including new HR software are helping streamline our operations. Through these advancements and the dedication of our staff, we continue to build a strong foundation for the future.

Our people are at the heart of everything we do, and we extend our deepest gratitude for their kindness, commitment, and professionalism. Thank you!

Melanie Lucock - Director of People Services

OUR PEOPLE, THEIR JOURNEYS: Lyndal Sawarsin



Lynnie's journey of care began in 1996. After moving from Sydney to Coffs Harbour and raising her daughters, she concentrated on study again. On completion of her Bachelor of Nursing in 2022, she joined the Mater Christi team as a new graduate and is now the Deputy Director of Nursing.

"I love working at Mater Christi. I find it both challenging and rewarding, it's the best job I've ever had. My goal is to create a positive supportive work environment so that people want to come to work at Mater Christi and we retain good workers by doing so."

Lynnie is a perfect example of what hard work and commitment can achieve. Her positivity is infectious, and we love that she is a part of the Sawtell Catholic Care team.

Assets Fit for Purpose

The Projects and Property Team support new construction and asset maintenance services across our extensive property portfolio. Through their work, our residents are provided with beautiful, safe, and accessible facilities and environments.

The refurbishment of the Village Administration Centre has improved the functionality of the space, provided a base for Sawtell Home Care, and allowed for two new units to be created on the first floor, allowing more residents to be welcomed into the Village.

Asset management software has enabled effective management of maintenance, and planning for capital works and projects.

The year ahead will focus on larger capital projects including the Marian Grove Village Recreation Centre upgrade, and the Mater Christi Palliative Care refurbishments, an Early Childhood Education Centre, and Villa Maria rebuild for social and affordable housing.

Steve Laidley - Projects and Property Manager



Major Projects completed during 2023-2024:

Marian Grove Administration Building Conversion

Mater Christi Generator Installation

Villa Maria Refurbishments

Marian Grove Heat Pump installations



REAL PEOPLE, REAL STORIES:

The Workshop Men

All Australian boys need a shed, goes the song. Marian Grove has a loyal band of men who prove this true as they help one another to repair furniture as well as making gifts and furniture for the use of the Village. Morning tea is a great time to gather and chat with others who drop into the Workshop. Their latest creation has been lecterns for the Board and Training Rooms. After a lifetime of making exquisite furniture Roy says: *"I still love it and helping others to do it."*

SCC appreciates the efforts of Roy, Barry, John & Peter.



A Hard Act to Follow

Jan has always been active and valued community member! In her 19 years living in the Village she started the craft group, encouraging them with her magnificent baking. Fundraisers were supported by her trademark Lemon Butter.

Since moving into Mater Christi in 2024, Jan continues to attend village activities when possible, maintaining contact with good friends. *"I am glad that I can still crochet"*, she says, continuing her years of creating fine dollies, tablecloths, bedspreads, and many lap rugs.

Her motorised wheelchair has helped Jan stay mobile. Her faith and positivity encourage her: *"I can still get to the Chapel for Mass, and to see my girls in the Hall when I can. It's ok!"*

Coming Home

After a teaching career that led them around the state, the Egans returned to Ruth's birthplace of Urunga before moving into the Village a year ago. Immediately becoming part of the community, Ruth's mastery of the violin has filled the Chapel with music ever since, as well as playing with the Coffs Harbour City Orchestra, who have begun to visit Marian Grove regularly. A lifetime

St Vincent de Paul member, Gordon volunteers in outreach to the homebound and less mobile of SCC. Ruth adds: *"After the wrench of leaving our home of so long, the friendliness of Marian Grove has made it easy to settle in."*



Village Vitality



18,000
resident
enquiries

35
new residents

80
residents
transported
to medical
appointments

156
bus shopping
trips

2,404
Welfare
visits

We build our character by embracing challenges and adversity, and over the past two years, the Village has not just endured but flourished. The recent construction projects, while temporarily affecting residents' daily lives, have brought about remarkable improvements in the Village's aesthetics. We celebrate the beautiful new rooves that symbolise our resilience and the vibrant community spirit that defines us.

At Marian Grove, our caring community continues to thrive, welcoming each resident with warmth, respect, and courage. The strong sense of camaraderie here fosters connections that truly make this place special. Our catchphrase, 'Come home to Marian Grove' is a true reflection of our residents love for their community and home.

Karen Martin - Village Manager



REAL PEOPLE, REAL STORIES:

Fabulous Function Coordinators

The seven ladies of the Resident Function Committee work with staff and volunteers to ensure celebrations and regular gatherings are memorable times for residents to socialise and relax. The various creative strengths they bring compliment their dedication and hard work in producing well catered, innovative, and sometimes zany events and celebrations! Little touches such as hand-made table decorations underline their thoughtful care.

The initiative, hard work and community spirit of the fabulous Mary, Maureen, Carmel, Sheila, Kathy, Rosemary, and Jill are a true reflection of the love and community spirit of our Village.



Permanent Holiday

Terry and Lesley Turner met and married in Marrickville, where their families had an 80-year history as rusted on Sydneysiders. Terry became choir coordinator, and Lesley continued her prolific Easter Show winning streak for her craft. Their search for a retirement place ended with the first visit to Marian Grove: "This is the one!" Terry said. Lesley continues: "We are very happy with our choice: great village, lovely fellow residents and wonderful staff. As well as a great position it is close to everything we were looking for: good doctors, hospital, airport, train line, beach, excellent shopping and surrounded by bushland - what's not to like? Not to mention the on-site Chapel."



In Step with Sondra: Dance Fit

Sondra Donohue assures us that Dance Fit classes are both physically and psychologically beneficial for residents. Apart from improved muscle tone, lung capacity and more flexibility with joints such as shoulders and knees, the tremendous sense of friendship and care for each other that has developed in our groups has been amazing. "The coffee after at our Cafe is something that we all love, the sharing of stories and family news."

Sondra continues: "My lung specialist, whom I see every 12 months, told me that after dance classes twice a week since last year, my lung capacity has improved so much that I only need to see him every two years. Amazing!! I love the classes so much, my sense of happiness has increased tenfold in the classes."



Caring into Our Community

Sawtell Home Care began to serve Marian Grove residents in 2021. From just a single person, over the course of the last few years we've grown at a steady pace to more than 70 clients. From a team of two, to a team of over ten we deliver around 650 hours of service, and drive clients over 900 kilometers every month. We assist people to manage their wounds, access Allied Health services, and liaise with their doctors for better health outcomes.

Over the last year we've really established ourselves in the community and value the connections we have made. It remains our pleasure to provide continuity of care and a protective mantle for residents to remain active and independent in their homes.

Sawtell Home Care has completed the missing piece in our continuum of care model.

Rob Wilson - Sawtell Home Care Manager



OUR PEOPLE, THEIR JOURNEYS: Peter Baldwin

After commencing his career in a gardening position in 1998, Peter has since shared his positive approach as a Carer, Enrolled Nurse, Educator, and Registered Nurse at Mater Christi, Coffs Base Hospital, and now at Sawtell Home Care.

"Each role provided me an insight into the many facets that make up an Aged Care team. Each role is as important as the other, and each interdependent."

"I have been blessed to be involved in the rehabilitation of older people. I have celebrated one hundredth birthdays and beyond. Aged Care to me is an intimate relationship, on a professional level. It is vital, as a society, that we maintain quality person-centered care and support for older people."

Peter is a special part of our Sawtell Catholic Care family and we are very proud to have him as a leader in our team.



Mater Christi



Mater Christi staff have been unwavering in their dedication and care for our residents and their families. Through four years of pandemic and the ongoing challenges of workforce shortages across the health sector, our team has shown remarkable resilience, delivering compassionate, quality care in the face of relentless challenges. With their impressive level of professionalism, the future is filled with hope and renewal.

Innovative programs and partnership have enhanced our care services. A Consumer Advisory Council has been established to involve residents and families in service planning, design, and evaluation. A deeper understanding of needs has been gained by strengthening partnerships with consumers and safeguarding vulnerable residents. Mater Christi is well positioned to embrace the ongoing reforms in aged care.

The ELDAC program has advanced our palliative care services and fostered stronger connections with local care providers. This initiative has helped us enhance our end-of-life care, improving advance care planning and building our palliative capability.

A full review of our Learning and Development Framework was conducted as part of our strategic renewal, ensuring our staff remain equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to deliver exceptional care. The clinical management and recreational teams have been restructured, with new coordinators to oversee specific houses and expand recreational activities, including weekend and afternoon coverage. The Vera music program, which matches music to the individual needs of our residents, has brought joy and comfort to many.

The Mater Christi leadership team completed an Aged Care Leadership Program, enhancing our ability to lead with emotional intelligence, confidence, and strategic decision-making. As we celebrate these accomplishments, we look forward to continued growth, renewal, and the opportunity to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those we care for.

Thank you to our incredible team for their commitment and passion.

Mercy Kurinyepa - Director of Nursing



Hotel Services

260
specialised
environmental
cleans

5300
room
cleans

15
commercial
loads of
washing
per day



Gourmet Food

Tia Jaeger has stepped into the leadership role of catering manager while Sandy Devine, our long-time chef, enjoys her long service leave. Tia brings new energy and ideas to the kitchen.

for all texture modified diets. This ensures that every dish is not only nutritious but also visually appealing. Before implementation, new menus are enthusiastically sampled by interested residents for their feedback.

Food moulding techniques have been introduced

Tia Jaeger - Acting Catering Manager

15,700
dietician
designed meals
served

7300
salads served
this year

50
menu choices
per day





Meaningful Activities

Sharing freshly made damper, Lemon Myrtle cake, cup cakes & rocky road, has combined the joy of cooking and eating the finished product, encouraging reminiscence, deepening connection between residents.

Regular outings are a popular community connection and crucial wellness engagement, including places such as the Botanic Gardens, Boambee Bay, Coffs Jetty foreshore, and our very own Link Gardens.

Pet therapy offers a unique solution to social isolation, bringing a wave of emotional and physical benefits to the lives of residents. Regular visitors Midgie & Frankie, the pet therapy Dachshund Duo, have been a perennial favourite. These positive interactions continue to create happy memories and stimulate cognitive function in those living with dementia.



Mater Christi - 25 years of Care

Responding to the growing need for retirement living in Sawtell, a brave group of community-minded people started building a retirement village in 1989. The planning of Mater Christi followed soon after for those needing residential care. Those needing greater care would not have to leave their home community.

Mater Christi began taking residents in 1999 under the guidance of then Parish Priest Fr John Kelly, CEO John Moran, and Robyn Barnett, the inaugural Director of Nursing. These local people worked with Marian Grove Village Board members John Plunkett and Pat Littler to make the dream a reality. The initial 45 beds expanded in later years with memory support and palliative care specialties and two new houses added by 2014.

The Coffs Coast is a supportive community. Sawtell Catholic Care pioneers and their families have been joined by many others in continued support of the mission and life of this vibrant organisation. This continued support has ensured the place of Mater Christi as the preferred place of residential care on the Coffs Coast.

The 25-year celebrations were a time to remember, be thankful for the contributions of so many, and a time of looking forward with hope as new challenges are recognised and answered.



Linking our Community

The Link, community gardens offer a welcoming space for families, caregivers, mother's groups, and other community members to relax, connect, and enjoy a serene, engaging environment. Thoughtfully designed to combine nature's beauty with accessible, functional spaces, the gardens inspire connection, relaxation, reflection, and wellbeing for people of all ages and backgrounds.

Families are at the heart of The Link, with safe, inviting areas where children can play, explore, and learn about nature. The gardens feature well-maintained walking paths, playgrounds, and picnic spots where families can enjoy quality time outdoors among vibrant flowers and lush greenery. Sensory gardens provide an engaging experience through sight, smell, and touch, fostering curiosity and a lasting appreciation for the natural world.

The community gardens also offer a retreat for caregivers and mother's groups. At the centrally located Donovan's Link Eatery & Grounds, visitors can enjoy freshly brewed coffee, homemade snacks, comfortable seating, and free Wi-Fi. The welcoming atmosphere makes the café a favourite meeting spot for mother's groups, residents, and caregivers, supporting regular gatherings, connections, and a shared sense of community.

Designed with inclusivity in mind, The Link welcomes everyone across our community, from senior groups to local clubs and educational workshops. Seasonal events, celebrations and festivals strengthen ties between the gardens and the broader community, while accessibility features ensure that people of all ages and abilities can enjoy this tranquil haven.

For those seeking a unique place to meet or host a gathering, The Link offers three function areas available

for private or community rentals, perfect for gatherings that benefit from the inspiration of the garden surroundings.

With our recent addition of solar panels to offset our carbon footprint and a new car park for convenient access, The Link is a multifunctional space that nurtures community spirit, promotes well-being, and fosters social connections across diverse groups. A welcoming place to relax, restore and reconnect with nature.

All proceeds raised through The Link go to covering the costs of maintaining this wonderful community space and supporting the work of Sawtell Catholic Care, a registered charity. Anyone wishing to donate or bequest funds to support this community ministry space are acknowledged with a plaque of recognition.

Graham Oliver - The Link Operations Manager



REAL PEOPLE, REAL STORIES: Sue's Rosella Jam

Sue Siwinski, one of our resident gardeners, she had some fantastic Rosella bushes growing in the community gardens at The Link over summer, from which she was making beautiful Rosella jam.

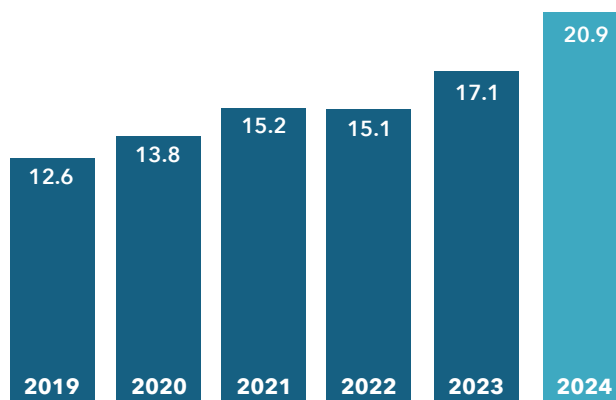
The Rosella bush produces red edible calyces that are high in vitamin C. They have a pleasant tart-sweet flavour that goes well in salads, jellies, red sauces, jams, cordials, syrups and fruit teas.



Financial Stewardship

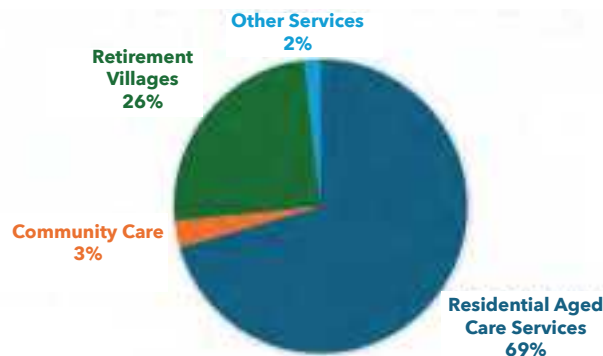
Sawtell Catholic Care (SCC) continues to be a thriving, financially sustainable mission of the Sawtell Parish community. Expanding our footprint in all care services (Residential Aged Care, Independent Retirement Living and Community Home Care) in Sawtell and the surrounding regions, we will meet current and future service demands and community expectations.

SCC Total Revenue A\$ Millions



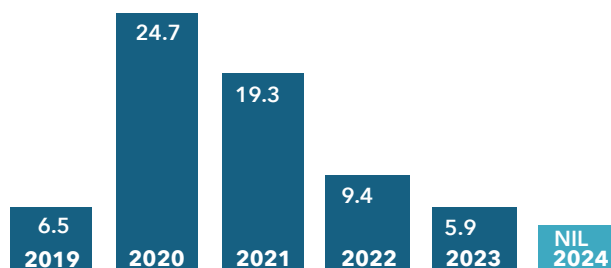
Residential Aged Care services (69%), accounted for over two-thirds of the \$20.9M total revenue generated by SCC in 2024.

SCC Revenue and Income Sources 2024



We have been diligent in managing our finances, eradicating total borrowings in 2024, reducing from \$9.3M in 2022 and \$5.9M last year.

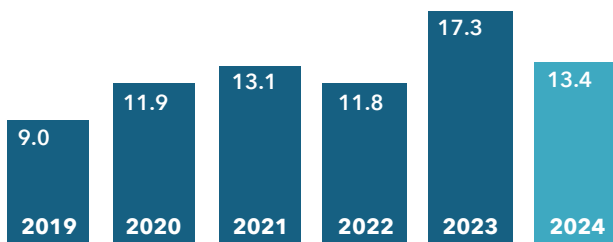
SCC Total Borrowings A\$ Millions





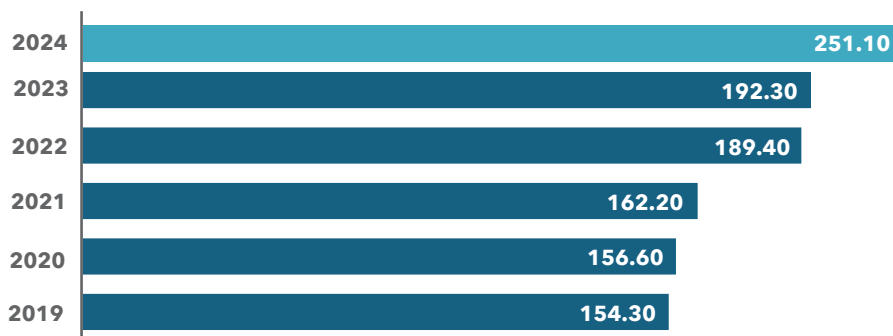
In addition, SCC maintained a healthy cash and cash equivalent reserve, above \$13.4M. This positions us well to ensure future development and management of our assets to support the organisation's strategic objectives, related to the service-driven nature of our Vision, Mission and Values.

SCC Total Cash and Cash Equivalents A\$ Millions

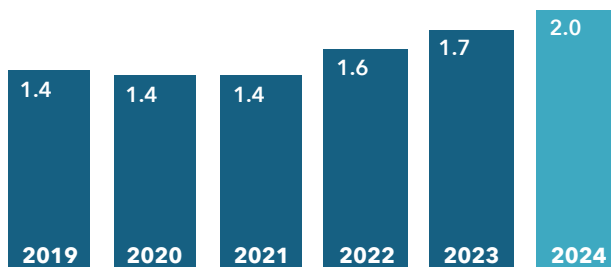


SCC continues to strive to offer our residents an optimal quality of life, encompassing care, lifestyle opportunities, spiritual and emotional support via our dedicated, passionate team of staff and volunteers.

Direct Care Expenditure per Resident per Day



Resident Food and Catering Expenses A\$ Millions



We are committed to fostering trust and engagement within our community. These achievements underscore our dedication, not only to financial excellence, but also living our core values.

Sharing our Gifts



Supporting Little Wings

After being diagnosed with Pethes Disease, the infant daughter of our then Deputy Director of Nursing began her regular trips to Sydney for treatment and surgery, always accompanied by her Mum Catherine or Dad Tom. Little Wings, a little-known charity, provided free transport in their own planes for Eleanor and children in similar situations. Catherine brought the story to work and soon SCC began collecting refundable cans and bottles to provide fuel for Little Wings transport. Staff, residents, and friends regularly fill our bins which are then collected and cashed to pay for aircraft fuel. We are proud to support Catherine, Tom, Eleanor, and Little Wings charity.

John Paul College Partnership

This year we developed our connection between four senior classes from St John Paul College and Mater Christi residents. Students take part in Christian Prayer Services and are given the opportunity to lead a group in prayer. Sip and Create activities are also a highlight between students and residents. In this activity, residents and students are encouraged to share a creative passion, with knitting being popular. Different creative activities are explored each week. These intergenerational connections foster exchange of cultural & spiritual values, traditions, and skills between residents and students. A cuppa is shared between residents and students after each visit.

"It is good to have the opportunity to meet with residents and hear their stories" says student Jed.

Resident Lyn adds, *"Wonderful to share this time with the kids and find out what they are doing."*



Contacts & Resources



Sawtell Parish

1/44 Boronia Street,
Sawtell NSW 2452
(02) 6658 3544
www.sawtellcatholicchurch.com.au



Sawtell Catholic Care

1 Marian Place,
Toormina NSW 2452
(02) 6653 1241
www.scca.net.au



Mater Christi

3 Marian Place,
Toormina NSW 2452
(02) 6658 6133
www.scca.net.au



Marian Grove

3 Marian Place,
Toormina NSW 2452
(02) 6653 1241
www.scca.net.au



Sawtell Home Care

3 Marian Place,
Toormina NSW 2452
(02) 6653 1241
www.scca.net.au



The Link

631 Hogbin Drive,
Toormina NSW 2452
(02) 6638 9911
www.thelinkevents.com.au

