



ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022



Our Vision

A community working in partnership to support people with disability to live the life they choose.

Our Values

Belonging

We embrace a strong person centred approach, underpinned by the values we live by.

Safety

Choice

Respect

Contribution

Our Purpose

Enabling independence for people living with disability.

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Message from The Chairman



“ Throughout this time, all our workers have **worked so hard**, under extraordinary circumstances ”

The relentless flow of changes made by the National Disability Agency (NDIA) also continued to test us. The trend in reducing participants' funding packages has remained a significant concern with its potentially devastating impacts on the people we support. It also has an underlying impact on Sylvanvale's profitability.

The past year has been the most challenging in our organisation's history.

It started with a race against time as the team worked to secure vaccinations for the people we support and workers, while trying to keep everyone safe from the highly transmissible Delta variant.

In late December 2021, just two months after we achieved 100% double-vaccination rates for our workers, the even more contagious Omicron variant took hold. With it, the new problem emerged of keeping our sites staffed as workers went into isolation as close contacts or fell ill. During this period, 334 staff – more than half – were impacted by COVID-19.

Floods and unseasonable rain added to our challenges, causing damage at sites, and making it difficult for workers to get to work at times.

Throughout this time, all our staff have worked so hard, under extraordinary circumstances and I would like to thank them for their truly remarkable contribution. My special thanks also to Leanne Fretten for her vision and leadership in navigating the organisation through such a tumultuous time, and to the Executive Team that supports her. Thank you to my fellow Directors for their diligence and unwavering commitment to the organisation.

Finally, my sincere thanks to all the people we support and their families for entrusting us with the critical role of supporting them throughout another challenging period.

Jeff McCarthy
Chairman

“ my sincere thanks to all the people we support and their families for entrusting us with the critical role of **supporting them throughout another challenging period.** ”

Message from The CEO

The ever-evolving nature of the COVID-19 pandemic meant our teams have continued to operate under immense pressure. Our workers have risen to the challenge, displaying more than ever, the depth of their commitment to the people we support and to our organisation.

Despite the challenges, the team at Sylvanvale has had many remarkable achievements. Many reflected our focus and investment in technology. In July 2021, we launched a new intranet site, for workers which is now the central location for our documentation and systems. In October, we launched our brand new, accessible website for the people we support. Then in November 2021, we moved to the SharePoint Online document management system and Microsoft Teams – making it easier for workers to access files and collaborate.

Other highlights included launching our Towards Zero campaign to minimise agency staff in our services, with the ultimate goal of removing agency usage altogether. We also saw a reduction in workers injuring themselves at work.

We were pleased to announce collaborations with Enliven Housing and Good Housing and celebrated Mikarie Child Care Centre's 10



“ Our workers have risen to the challenge, displaying more than ever, **the depth of their commitment to the people we support and to our organisation.** ”

year anniversary. We were also thrilled to win the Outstanding Community Services award at the Sutherland Shire Local Business Awards, and to see Caringbah Craft Centre feature on Channel 10's news-current affairs show, The Project.

Thank you to all our workers for their outstanding efforts over the past twelve months. They have all shown incredible dedication throughout this time, particularly when facing the huge workload and workforce pressures caused by COVID.

My thanks to the Board of Directors, for your tremendous ongoing support, and to the Executive Team for your significant contribution.

Thank you also to the people we support, families and carers – who are the foundation of our organisation – for your continuing support and understanding in these extraordinary times.

Leanne Fretten
Chief Executive Officer

Our Goals

01

CUSTOMER-FIRST PHILOSOPHY AND CULTURE

Provide high quality services that meet the needs of our customers and the choices they make.

02

QUALITY-DRIVEN PRACTICE

Through a capable and informed workforce, foster a positive culture that supports high-quality supports and flexible service delivery.

03

SUSTAINABILITY

Improve our productivity and efficiency to support growth, innovation and sustainability.



Our Stakeholder Feedback

What People Are Saying

“ The generosity of Sylvanvale’s COVID-19 vaccination hubs is very much appreciated and goes to show why Sylvanvale is so well respected within the broader community. ”

“ I would like to say a big thank you to Sylvanvale for their constant support in my life over these past couple of years. ”

“ Our son is looking so happy and clearly having a great time during lockdown. It is much appreciated by all the families. ”

“ Seeing what you do at the Caringbah Craft Centre filled my heart with joy. ”

“ The staff have been fantastic during lockdown, keeping in touch with our son via FaceTime and providing updates throughout the day. ”

“ Thank you for supporting the operations teams in this unfamiliar territory. I appreciate everyone’s contributions and collaborations to keep everyone safe. ”

“ It’s very satisfying to be part of an organisation that strives to make a difference both directly and indirectly to people in need. ”

“ You are to be commended for your unstinting efforts whilst families are unable to be with those we love and would like to help care for. ”



Our Impacts

Our impacts in 2021-2022 reflect our strategic focus on being a customer-first, quality-driven and sustainable organisation.



WINNER

Winner of Outstanding Community Services at Sutherland Shire Local Business Awards



FINALIST

Outstanding Early Intervention Program at Australian Disability Service Conference Awards



10

Years Mikarie Child Care Centre in operation



100%

Staff fully vaccinated against COVID-19



\$30,000+

Raised at Sylvanvale Pre-WWII Car Show



153

Compliments received



52

Staff received loyalty awards for their longstanding service



COLLABORATOR

New partnerships with Enliven Housing and Good Housing



1.9+ MILLION

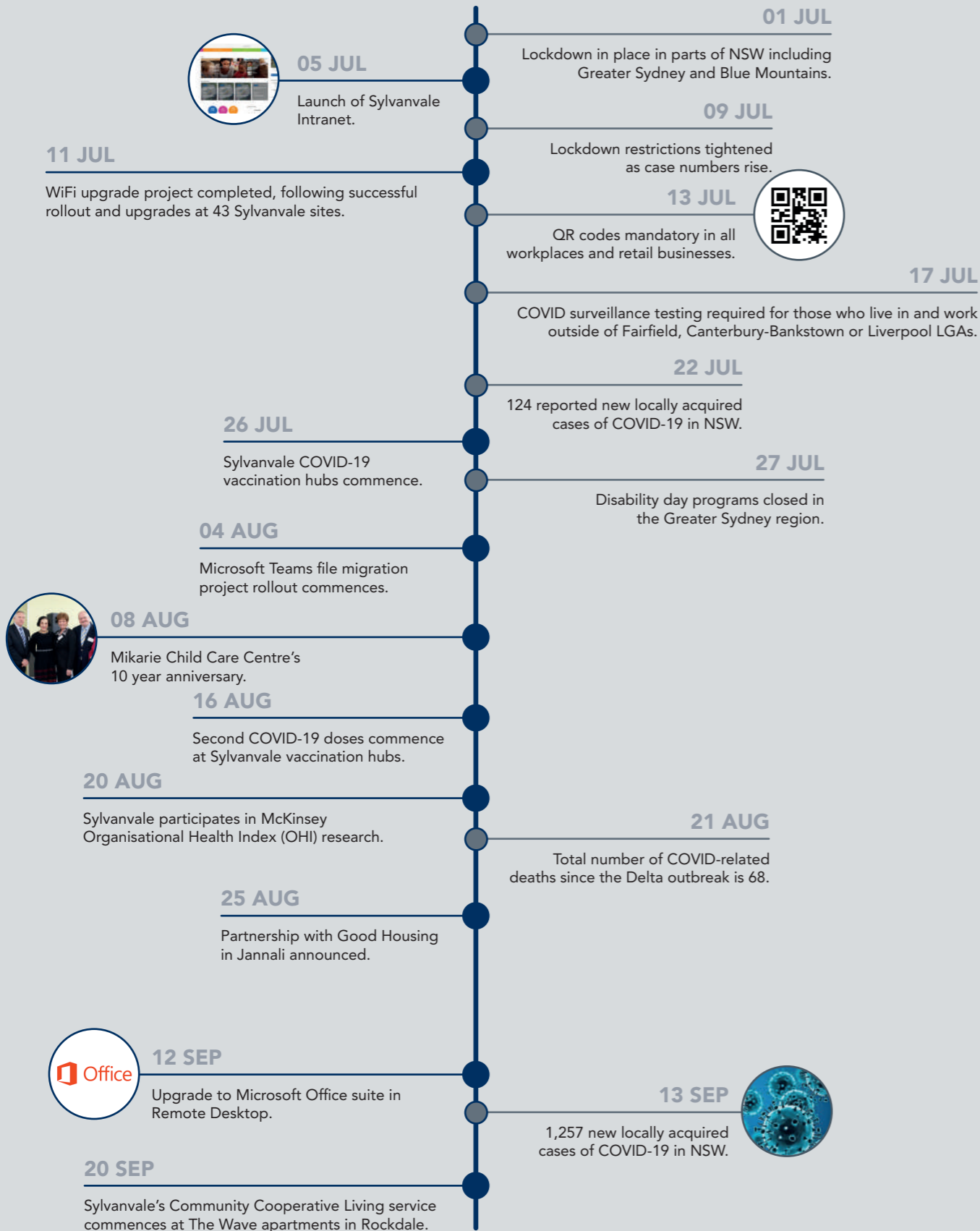
Items of PPE purchased

2021-2022 Timeline

July – September 2021

● Sylvanvale-specific

● External

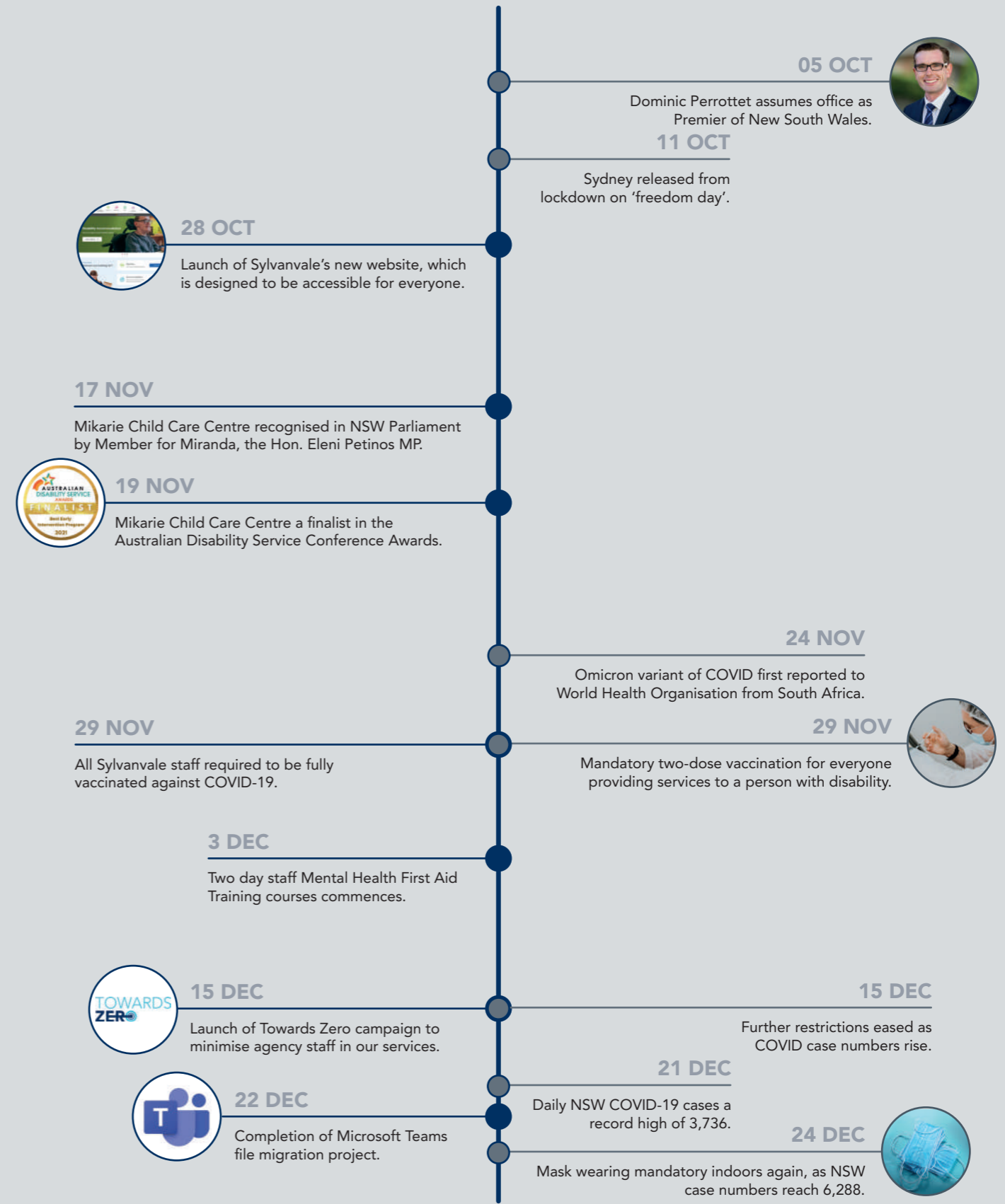


2021-2022 Timeline

October – December 2021

● Sylvanvale-specific

● External

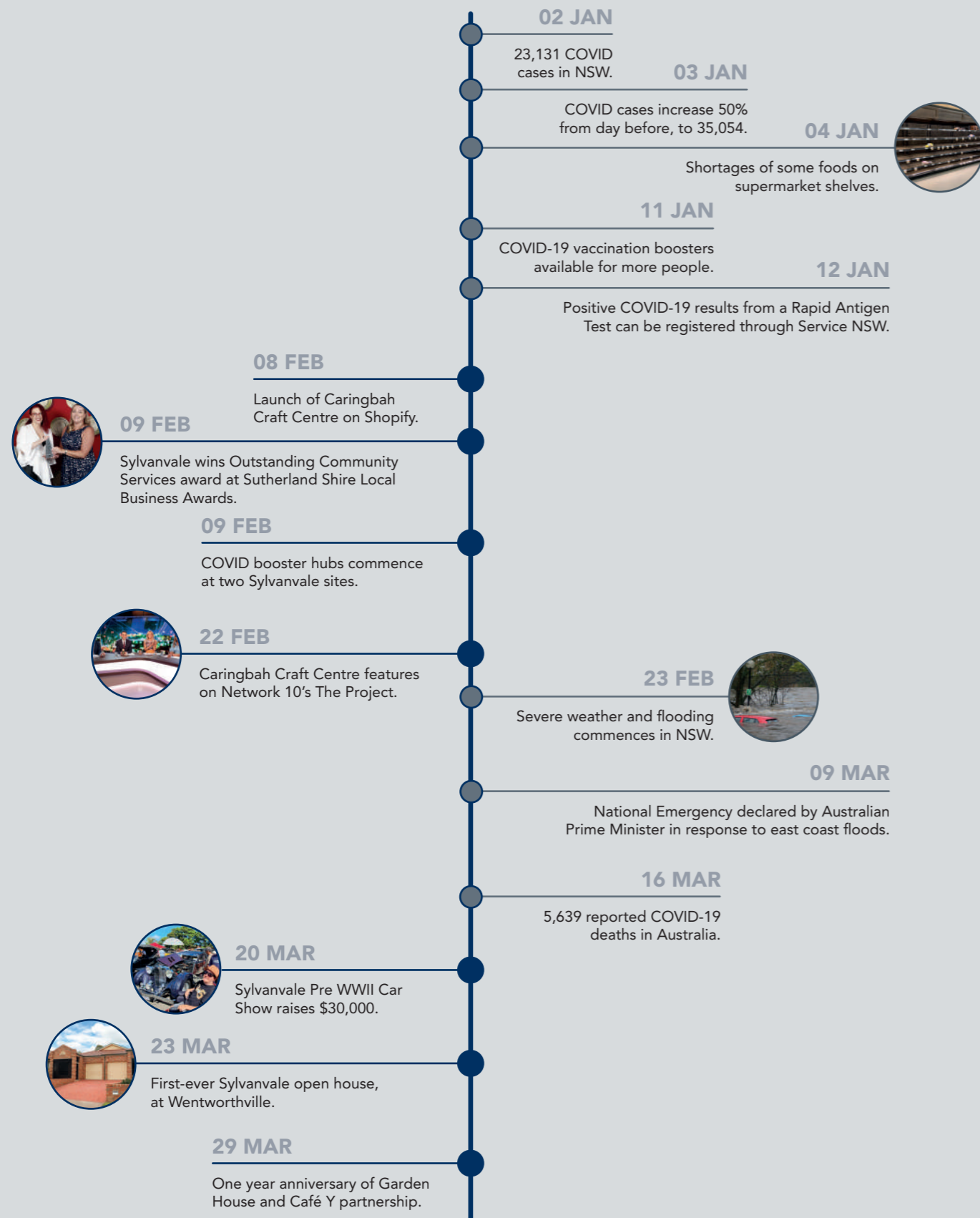


2021-2022 Timeline

January – March 2022

● Sylvanvale-specific

● External

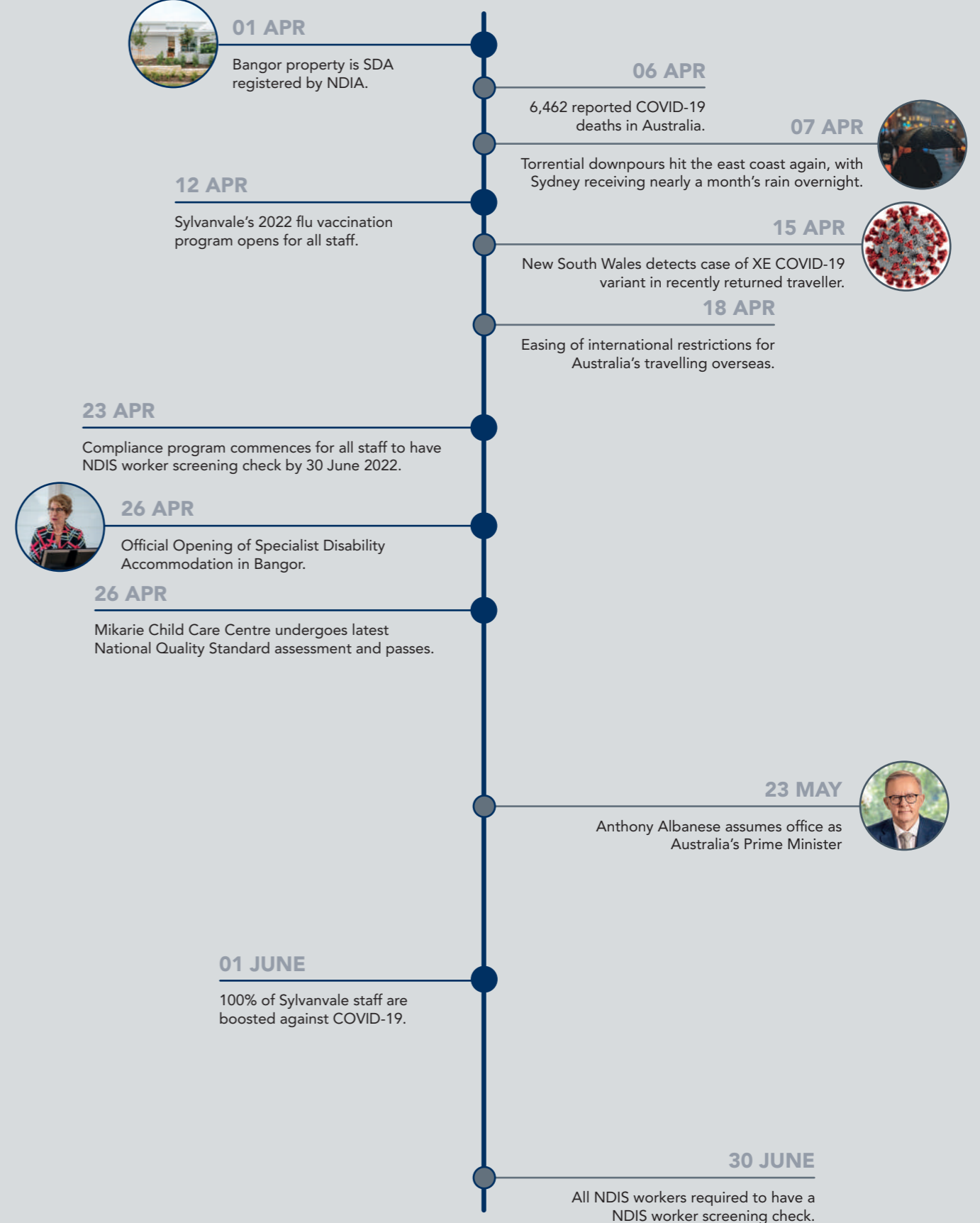


2021-2022 Timeline

April – June 2022

● Sylvanvale-specific

● External



Support Workers on the Frontline

During the extraordinary, challenging and ever-changing past year, there was no truer Sylvanvale hero – and no one who embodied our values more – than our support workers.

When most of the community was required to stay at home, our support workers went to work. In doing so, they risked exposure to COVID-19 – putting their own lives, and the lives of their loved ones, at risk.

So much was asked of them. During the peak of the Delta variant, many of our support workers had to wait in long queues to be PCR tested every three days in accordance with government requirements.

They frequently had to wear full personal protective equipment (PPE) for their shifts,

creating issues with heat, dehydration, and discomfort, increasing the physical demands of their work. Some staff had to support people who had tested positive to COVID-19.

Remarkably, staff took it in their stride. According to site worker Shane, “I work with a young man who is unable to have the vaccine. If for me to don on the full PPE and be uncomfortable for a few hours at work is going to greatly reduce and minimise the chances of him being exposed to the virus, I’m all for it.”

When the Omicron variant took hold, our support workers had to be even more adaptable – taking on extra shifts when their colleagues went into isolation or became sick with COVID-19.



“Despite the pressures, our support workers came to work each day, without complaint, **driven by their commitment to the people they support.**”



“They frequently had to wear full personal protective equipment (PPE) for their shifts, creating issues with heat, dehydration, and discomfort, **increasing the physical demands of their work.**”

Despite the pressures, our support workers came to work each day, without complaint, driven by their commitment to the people they support. The wellbeing of those individuals was their paramount concern.

Behind the scenes, teams at Sylvanvale worked incredibly hard to keep our support workers, and the people they support, safe. Thousands of hours were put into securing PPE, Rapid Antigen tests, access to vaccines, developing, updating, and communicating protocols and keeping up to speed with the latest Public Health Order. Often, they worked late into the night and on weekends, under enormous pressure.

But it was our support workers who had to go onto the frontline each day, bearing the highest risks and the most discomfort.

For frontline worker Maria, who supported three men with COVID-19, it was all worth it. “It’s been quite a journey and yes it was scary. But I feel proud in one way because we were able to get our boys back to being healthy,” she said.

Sylvanvale is very grateful to its support workers for their extraordinary contribution.



A Hive of Activity: Sylvanvale Community Hubs

In another tumultuous year, Sylvanvale's community hubs have been a hive of activity; a place where arts, crafts, sustainable ideas, and community have been embraced and flourish. For Sutherland Community Hub and Caringbah Craft Centre, it has been a particularly noteworthy time.

Sutherland Community Hub

This year, our centre-based Sutherland Community Hub reopened after lockdown with a renewed focus on refreshing and reviving its program to further enrich the lives of the people who attend.

A focal point was ensuring we offer activities that the people we support want to do and enjoy. The hub's management team invested a lot of time in planning activities and recruiting and training staff - teaching them how to support people to take part in activities. They created a vision board with ideas, and activity plans with step-by-step information.

The team was careful to check whether people were enjoying activities – taking note of their behavioural responses and their level of engagement. People enjoyed a variety of activities including regular music, dancing, laughter yoga, Zumba, discos, cooking and art.

During the 2021 lockdown, the team ensured people living in Sylvanvale accommodation could continue to engage in activities at home; providing them with activity packs for the week ahead. They also carried out regular check-ins through Microsoft Teams.

The hubs team has received a huge amount of positive feedback from families and carers,

with impacts even being seen at home. One happy parent told us, "We are not sure how you did it, but for the first time we can recall, while we were busy at home, our daughter went into her own room and got out her colouring book and kept herself busily occupied for some time this afternoon."



“ Loved the segment on The Project about the wonderful work you are doing. Made me cry. ”

Caringbah Craft Centre

Our one-of-a-kind Caringbah Craft Centre, where wooden products are made by people with disability working alongside qualified staff, skilled tradespeople and volunteers, spent time in the spotlight this year.

On 8 February 2022, the hub launched its brand-new online store using e-commerce platform Shopify, paving the way to sell its products Australia-wide. Shortly after, on 22 February 2022, Caringbah Craft Centre featured on Network 10's The Project. The show's producers chose to do the segment after hearing about the centre's unique service model, which fosters the creativity and skills of the people who attend.

The show highlighted what people can do when they work together, and the strong bonds built within the enterprise hub. It attracted a lot of attention, receiving 39 donations totalling \$3,125, over 120 product orders through the Shopify site and an 823% increase in Caringbah Craft Centre webpage visitors.

It also generated enormous amount of positive feedback, including, "Loved the segment on The Project about the wonderful work you are doing. Made me cry. Thank you for caring about others – well done."

Outside of the limelight, the hub continued to create clever, beautiful products – including disability-friendly tables, chairs and daybeds for Sylvanvale's site in Potts Hill.

“ The team was careful to check whether participants were enjoying activities. ”

Celebrating 10 years of Mikarie Child Care Centre

It has been a memorable year for Mikarie Child Care Centre, which celebrated its tenth anniversary on 8 August 2021.

Mikarie is a special unique place. It is the only truly inclusive child care centre in the Sutherland Shire that provides early education and quality care to children with high support medical needs, and children without a disability, in the one setting.

The need for the centre became clear when Sylvanvale conducted research in 2010 that revealed a profound absence of adequate early education for children with disability in the local community. That research also highlighted the benefits of inclusion not just for children with disability, but for all children and the community more broadly.

It was on 8 August 2011 that Mikarie opened its doors for the first time to families across our community.

Since its inception, Mikarie has had a significant impact on the lives of many local families. The centre has continuously worked on ways to be even more accessible and inclusive. In 2017, it expanded to include the Emu Room for children with high support needs who would often not be able to attend a mainstream long day care centre or preschool. In 2018, it launched a supported playgroup open to the whole community, aimed at children aged 0-3 years who need support to meet their developmental milestones. Then in 2019 it opened a fully accessible sensory garden.

The centre has also achieved numerous accolades. Most recently, this included winning 'Building Inclusion Award' at the 2018 HESTA Early Childhood Education & Care Awards and being a finalist in the 'Inclusivity Practices Program Excellence' category at the 2019 Early Childhood Education Awards.



Since its inception, Mikarie has had a **significant impact on the lives of many local families.**



Due to the pandemic, Mikarie was unable to celebrate its 10-year anniversary with a formal event. However, on 10 August 2021 the Mikarie children came together to mark the important milestone with cupcakes and party games.

We are very proud that Mikarie children learn social inclusion and that inside we're all the same. These are values which will stay with them for the rest of their lives, and which ultimately benefit the whole community.

Our enormous thanks to each and every one of our educators, children, families and carers, and supporters for readily embracing Mikarie Child Care Centre, for being part of its legacy and for helping to make it the remarkable place that it is.

Mikarie has had a long-lasting impact on the lives of many of the children it supports and their families. This includes Ayla, who joined the centre in February 2018 unable to stand and struggling to communicate but came so far that she moved into a mainstream room at the centre.

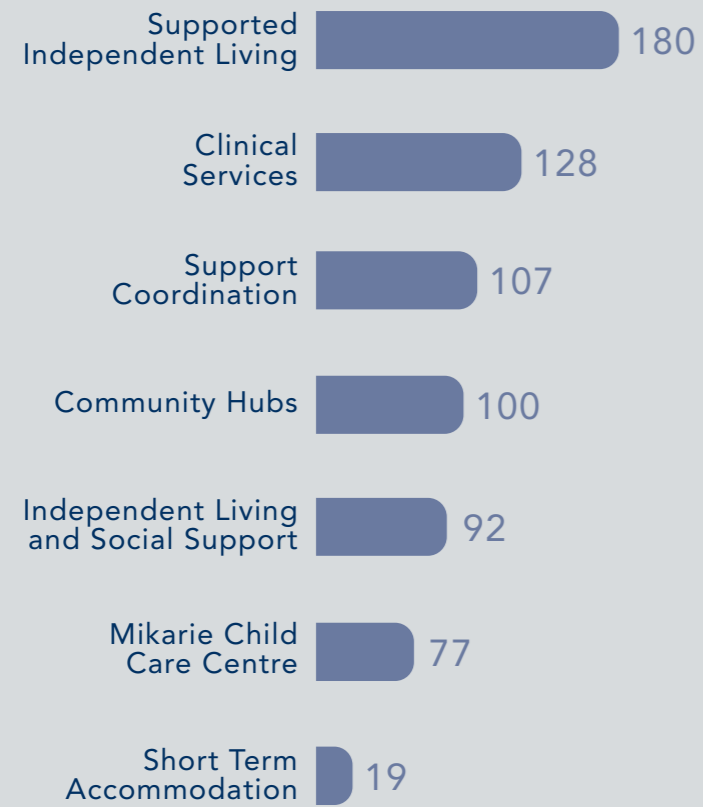


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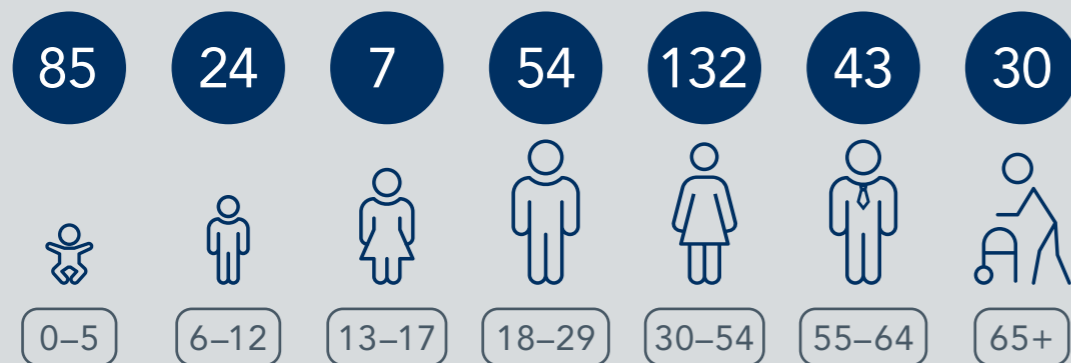
The People We Supported

By Service*

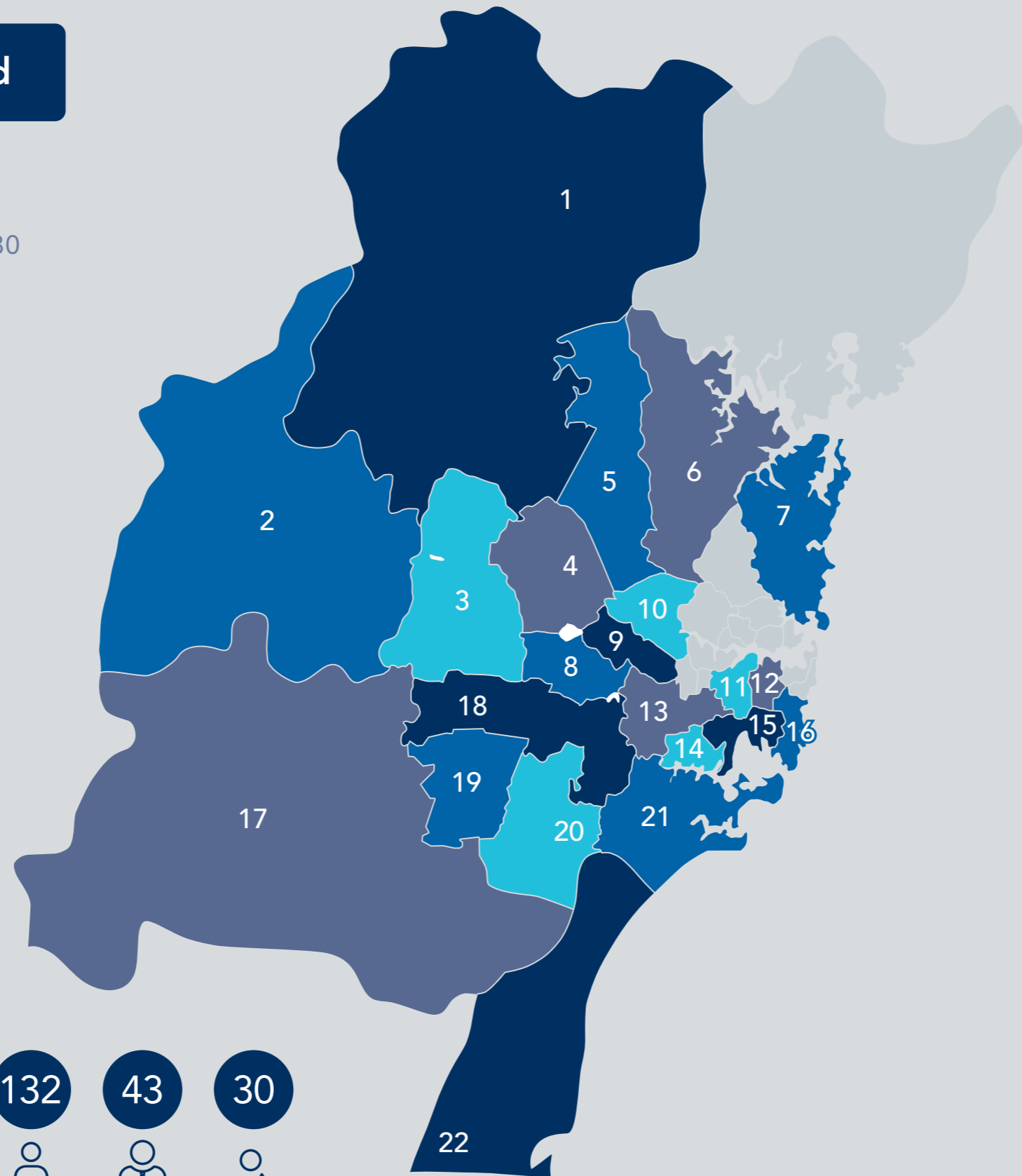


*Some people access more than one service type.

By Age



Where The People We Support Live By Local Government Area



1. City of Hawkesbury
2. City of Blue Mountains
3. City of Penrith
4. City of Blacktown
5. The Hills Shire
6. Hornsby Shire
7. Northern Beaches
8. City of Fairfield
9. Cumberland Council
10. City of Parramatta
11. Inner West
12. City of Sydney
13. Canterbury-Bankstown
14. Georges River
15. Bayside
16. City of Randwick
17. Wollondilly Shire
18. City of Liverpool
19. Camden Council
20. City of Campbelltown
21. Sutherland Shire
22. City of Wollongong

Total Sylvanvale Employees

593

Thank You

During the 2021–2022 financial year Sylvanvale was supported to achieve its goals by the following government agencies, trusts, foundations, businesses and community groups. Our enormous thanks to them, and everyone that volunteered, attended events, gave prizes and donated throughout the year.

Business and Community

- Ausgrid
- Barbara Snel
- Colortile Miranda
- Commonwealth Bank
- Good2Give
- Lorna Stone
- mySupply Store
- Nexon Asia Pacific
- Rat Pack Social Club
- Ritchie's Stores Pty Ltd
- Royal Motor Yacht Club
- Port Hacking
- St John Bosco Parish
- Sullivan Dewing Chartered Accountants
- Sutherland Croquet Club
- Urban Rituelle
- Vanessa Smoothy
- Warren Saunders Insurance Brokers

Trusts and Foundations

- IMB Shire Community Foundation
- Sylvanvale Foundation

Government

- Australian Government Department of Health
- Australian Government Department of Industry, Science and Resources
- National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA)
- NSW Department of Education
- NSW Department of Family and Community Services
- State Members for Cronulla, Miranda, Heathcote and Holsworthy
- Sutherland Shire Council

“ Thank you to each and every one of our supporters. **You are an integral part of our vision** of a community working in partnership to support people with disability to live the life they choose. ”

Community Support

Pre WWII Car Show

The Sylvanvale Pre WWII Car Show raised over \$30,000 to furnish Sylvanvale's new luxury disability accommodation homes in Bangor.

Commonwealth Bank – Sylvania branch

In December 2021, our Garden House community hub received a \$500 local donation from the Sylvania branch of the Commonwealth Bank, a strong supporter of Sylvanvale.

Ausgrid

Mikarie Child Care Centre was excited to receive \$1000 from Ausgrid, which the centre will use to buy sensory equipment - including a calming canoe.

St John Bosco Parish

Parishioners at St John Bosco showed their wonderful generosity again, donating \$6,200 towards equipment at Mikarie Child Care Centre.

Grants Received

- \$104,800** Start Strong Pathways Grant for Supported Playgroup
- \$14,900** Start Strong Long Day Care Program
- \$10,000** Commonwealth Bank Community Grant
- \$10,000** Stronger Communities Programme – Cook Electorate
- \$10,000** NSW Department of Education Community Grant





Jeff McCarthy
Chairman



David Kelly
Deputy Chairman



Bethany Taylor
Director



John Slack
Director



Robert Brown
Director and Company Secretary



David Rafferty
Director



Leanne Fretten
Chief Executive Officer

Jeff has significant experience in large private and government owned businesses and in the disability sector, having held Executive roles at Transport for NSW, RMS, WestlinkM7, Downer and Endeavour Energy. Jeff manages his own Strategic Advisory business and is a member of the NSW Government's Water Infrastructure Advisory Board. Jeff is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, a Fellow of Engineers Australia, and holds a Bachelor of Engineering degree and Masters of Commerce degree.

David is a senior airline industry executive with over 30 years' experience, many of those in management roles leading technical, commercial, and business change activities. David holds a Bachelor of Aeronautical Engineering degree and is a Fellow of the Royal Aeronautical Society.

Bethany works in the public sector. She has a Bachelor of Arts (Politics), Bachelor of Law and a Graduate Diploma of Legal Practice. Bethany also holds Diplomas in Business, Business Administration, Management, Human Resource Management and Quality Auditing. Her strong interest in the community stems from family involvement in the sector and a deep sense of community spirit.

John brings over forty years of experience in the insurance and funds management industry to Sylvanvale. John was the chief actuary for two life insurance companies and served on the Board of a leading life insurance company in New Zealand. He has also served on the Board of a local Lions club for over 20 years. John is currently a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Robert brings valuable experience in operational governance from his role as Manager International Terminals for Qantas Freight. He is a qualified accountant, AICD member and has solid experience in demonstrating strong regulatory compliance with government agencies. Robert is the Chairperson of the Finding Yellow Disability Foundation and has managed his own freight consulting business since 2014.

David Rafferty has 22 years in disability service provision. He has participated in National Disability Services committees and also serves on the board of the Centre for Disability Studies. An advocate for inclusion, empowerment and innovation, the result of which he believes should be a new beginning for people who require professional support in their lives. David is a graduate of the long course in Social Role Valorisation (SRV).

Leanne commenced at Sylvanvale as an Occupational Therapist and has since held various management roles in the organisation across a number of departments including Children's Services, Client Services, and People & Culture. Leanne was appointed Sylvanvale's Chief Executive Officer in 2016.

Financial Summary

In 2021-2022, Sylvanvale Limited achieved an operating surplus of \$3.98 million.

This year's financial results were materially impacted by the continuing COVID-19 pandemic and a reduction of funded Supported Independent Living (SIL) supports under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). The government's funding of individuals saw supports reduced for the people we support.

The financial impact was largely offset by Government NDIA COVID subsidies, which supported the continuing provision of services during the pandemic.

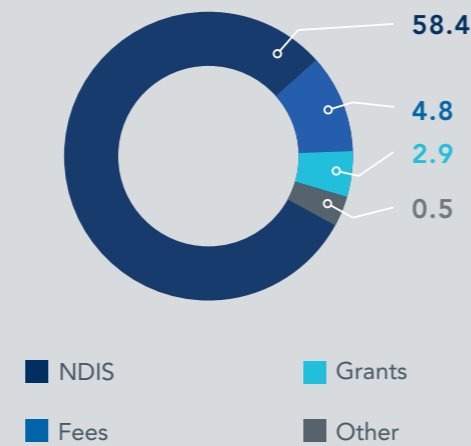
During the year, the organisation implemented a technology capital improvement project that moved Sylvanvale's WiFi to a new network – giving customers better, faster WiFi coverage. Next year we will continue to invest in IT infrastructure to improve administrative efficiency and to facilitate growth strategies of new service offerings, including the innovative community cooperative operational model.

Management will also remain focused on monitoring expense management, with a view to mitigating costs to ensure the organisation's sustainability going forward.



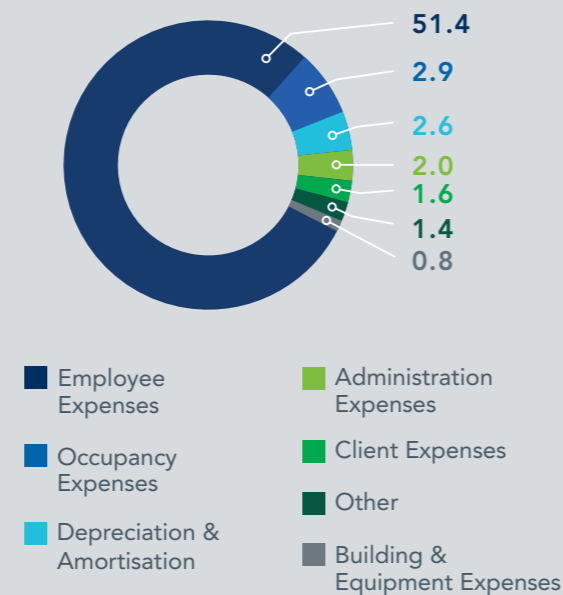
2021-22 Income

[\$ million]



2021-22 Expenses

[\$ million]



“ government funding for individuals was decreased, which equated to a reduction in supports. ”

Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

[\$,000]

For the year ended 30 June 2022	2022
Revenue	\$66,626
Expenses	\$62,646
Surplus for the Year	\$3,980
Total Comprehensive Income	\$3,980

Statement of Financial Position

[\$,000]

As at 30 June 2022	2022
Total Assets	\$27,453
Total Liabilities	\$23,473
Net Assets	\$3,980
Total Funds	\$3,980





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