



Bedford Group Year in Review 2023/24

Creating more jobs, opportunities and pathways for people with disability.

Contents

- 03 Board and Committee Members
- 04 Chair Report
- 06 Chief Executive Officer Report
- 09 Milestones
- 10 The Bedford Community
- 12 Strategic Pillar Updates
- 25 Social Impact
- 26 Financial Summary
- 30 Ambassadors and Life Members
- 32 Supporters, Fundraising and Events

ON THE COVER: Bedford Job Coach Paul, supporting employee Nick to transition to open employment at R.M. Williams.



GreenInc team planting for the future.



**Diversity + Inclusion
+ Acceptance = Belonging**

Board and Committee Members

Board Members

Richard Hockney, Chair
Janet Miller, Deputy Chair
Tim Covark
Paul Edginton
Jayson Gough
Matthew Hender
Wayne Lyons
Erin McCarthy
Prue Reid

Sub Committees

Audit and Risk Committee
Culture and Remuneration Committee
Finance and Investment Committee
Service Governance Committee
Nominations Committee

Committee Members

Ann-Marie Chamberlain
Michael Francis
Juanita Ielasi
Kate Ireland
David McGown
David Sanders
Ian Stone
Nicole Sykes
Mark Watson
Michaela Webster
Rebecca Wilson

Chair Report

This year I am giving my final report as the Chair of the Bedford Board with my retirement from the Board in the first half of next financial year.

Since joining the Bedford Board in 2008, I have been proud to help navigate Bedford through many important changes in the disability sector.

The introduction of the NDIS in 2013 was a watershed moment and represented a commitment to the rights of people with disability that saw significant reforms across the disability landscape, and we welcomed this change.

Underpinning these changes was a shift from 'block funding' to individualised funding, where choice and funding is provided to NDIS participants rather than to service providers.

In September 2023, the findings and 222 recommendations of the Disability Royal Commission were handed down. Pleasingly, Bedford's Five Year Strategic Plan, now into its second year, effectively anticipated the recommendations, which call for the reduction of segregation in disability employment from the wider working community, and the provision of fairer wages. These recommendations align perfectly with Bedford's central purpose to provide more choice and opportunity to people with disability, and to create pathways into employment and meaningful work.

We believe this is the right way to advance inclusion in a modern era, and create financial sustainability in disability employment, and we are gratified that our five year strategy addresses those recommendations in an innovative and unique way.

In response to this lack of jobs in the community for people with disability, Bedford has become a leading innovator with an expanding portfolio of Bedford-backed social enterprises, offering open employment. Comprising a variety of business models across diverse industries that suit jobs-focussed social enterprises, all profits are re-invested back into our purpose.

With current cost projections for the NDIS at \$90 Billion by 2030, and sector benchmarking continuing to flag that over 70% of NDIS providers are losing money, Bedford is doing its part to reduce pressures by investing in capacity development systems which support the transition of NDIS participants into open employment to become truly economically independent.

These transitions create a cascade of social, financial and health benefits to the individual and broader community including economic benefits to the Government from increased tax receipts, decreased disability support pension, and a decrease in NDIS supported employment funding. Bedford social enterprises are creating positive outcomes for both our employees and the community at large.

Although we intrinsically know that transitioning employees with capacity and desire from supported to open employment is beneficial on many levels, we wanted to put some more rigour around those outcomes. Bedford commissioned the Centre for Social Impact at Flinders University to measure the social value of transitioning supported employees to open employment. And we are pleased with the Social Return on Investment (SROI) outcomes achieved to date.

We appreciate that there are employees who won't make the move to open employment, for their own reasons, and Bedford is committed to reimagining what supported employment could look like in the future through different business models and connecting more of the supply chain into our businesses.

Our financial result for the year is not strong on paper. However, it is important to recognise that we are half-way through our Five Year Strategic Plan. A plan that will position Bedford as a financially sustainable organisation for the future.

On a personal note, it has been a pleasure to contribute to the Bedford story over the past 20 years. My association with Bedford won't end here, but after six years as Chair it feels like the right time for me to step aside. I leave knowing that Bedford is in good hands, led by a Board with deep and diverse expertise, a progressive strategic plan, and a single purpose – to support people with disability to live the life they choose.



Richard Hockney
Chair





Chief Executive Officer Report

For 79 years, Bedford has supported people with disability with the guiding purpose to offer more choice and opportunity to live the life they choose.

We are proud to be taking a leadership role with our contemporary and responsive Five Year Strategic Plan, launched in FY23, which outlines investment of over \$50 million in new enterprises, facilities, and services that will provide unprecedented choice in employment pathways and opportunities.

This year, Bedford changed to become a group of entities that will allow us to create our portfolio of 'profit for purpose' enterprises, backed by Bedford. This saw the launch of two new social enterprises – GreenInc and Dovetail. Both offer open employment pathways from their alignment with supported employment offerings at Bedford – namely APG and Manufacturing respectively.

A hallmark of this year has been acquisition and integration through new partnerships, increased work sites, and upscaling of operations. We welcomed Adelaide Hills Foods in Lobethal to the Cultivate Food and Beverage social enterprise in February 2024, and Minda's SA Group Enterprises supported employment businesses at Lonsdale, CBD, Ottoway and Reynella in June 2024.

As we look at different ways to run commercial businesses that can pay higher wages and generate a profit to reinvest in our purpose, we are implementing a range of business models from start up, acquisition, transition, and scale-up.

We are also collaborating to scale our social impact and an example is a partnership with White Box Enterprises, an incubator for jobs-focussed social enterprises. Together we are transitioning a newly acquired laundry at Lonsdale (formerly Minda Laundry) into a best practice social enterprise, known as Beacon Laundry.

Employment pathways for people with disability are not limited to Bedford-backed social enterprises. A partnership between R.M. Williams and Bedford's Advisory Service has seen two employees from Bedford manufacturing using their transferrable skills during a 3-month on-the-job trial with R.M. Williams, resulting in full-time positions on their payroll and earning award wages. As this report is being written, four additional job opportunities at R.M. Williams are open to Bedford employees who may choose to move to open employment.

As a lifelong learner myself, we recognise the importance of learning and skill-building, whether they be increased job-readiness, independence or new creative interests. Bedford continues to expand its footprint of Day Options and Experiences (now known as Learning and Experiences) across the state, with seven hubs offering important capacity building, social and community-based programs.

Our Five-Year Strategic Plan is bold as we make major step-change. In order to position Bedford as a financially sustainable organisation for the future, significant investment and resourcing has been required that has largely been funded from the strong Bedford balance sheet. There is also recognition that with cost pressures on the NDIS, we need to diversify our revenue streams if we want to truly scale our social impact. As such we have formed partnerships with impact investors who are committed to generating both financial returns and social good, with \$2.4M (of \$4.2M) raised via convertible notes.

FY24 returned an expected loss as we continued to fund our strategy from both operating cashflow and repurposing assets. The cost of transitioning, startups, M&A integration, increasing gaps in NDIS funding compared to the cost of service delivery,

increasing compliance and soft retail trade, all combined to finish the year with an anticipated loss. As we approach the midpoint of our five year strategy, we are at the low point and the benefits of heavy investment will be incrementally realised across 2025 to 2028 as our new manufacturing facility comes online and the new social enterprises mature. Restructuring an organisation like Bedford requires both capital and operating investment. Two major acquisitions in FY24 have resulted in higher than normal operating expenses to integrate them into Bedford and establish the appropriate governance.

In the Financial and Social Impact Summary pages of this report, it shows we are on track to achieve our objectives to remain strong so we can continue to deliver on our purpose for the next 80 years. FY25 anticipates a jump from \$89M to over \$130M in revenue with most of the cost of this growth occurring upfront in FY24.

Our five year strategy was always designed to stretch the organisation at the peak of activity which is what we saw in the FY24 period. It is important we stay the course on our plan as the pain has been absorbed and the gain is about to happen.

I want to thank the Board for their vision and governance, the Executive Team and senior management for their relentless pursuit of our strategy and for their resilience as we work through the stresses of major change.

On behalf of the Bedford community, I would like to thank Richard Hockney for his significant contribution to Bedford over the last 20 years and for his leadership and support in making a real difference in the lives of people with disability.

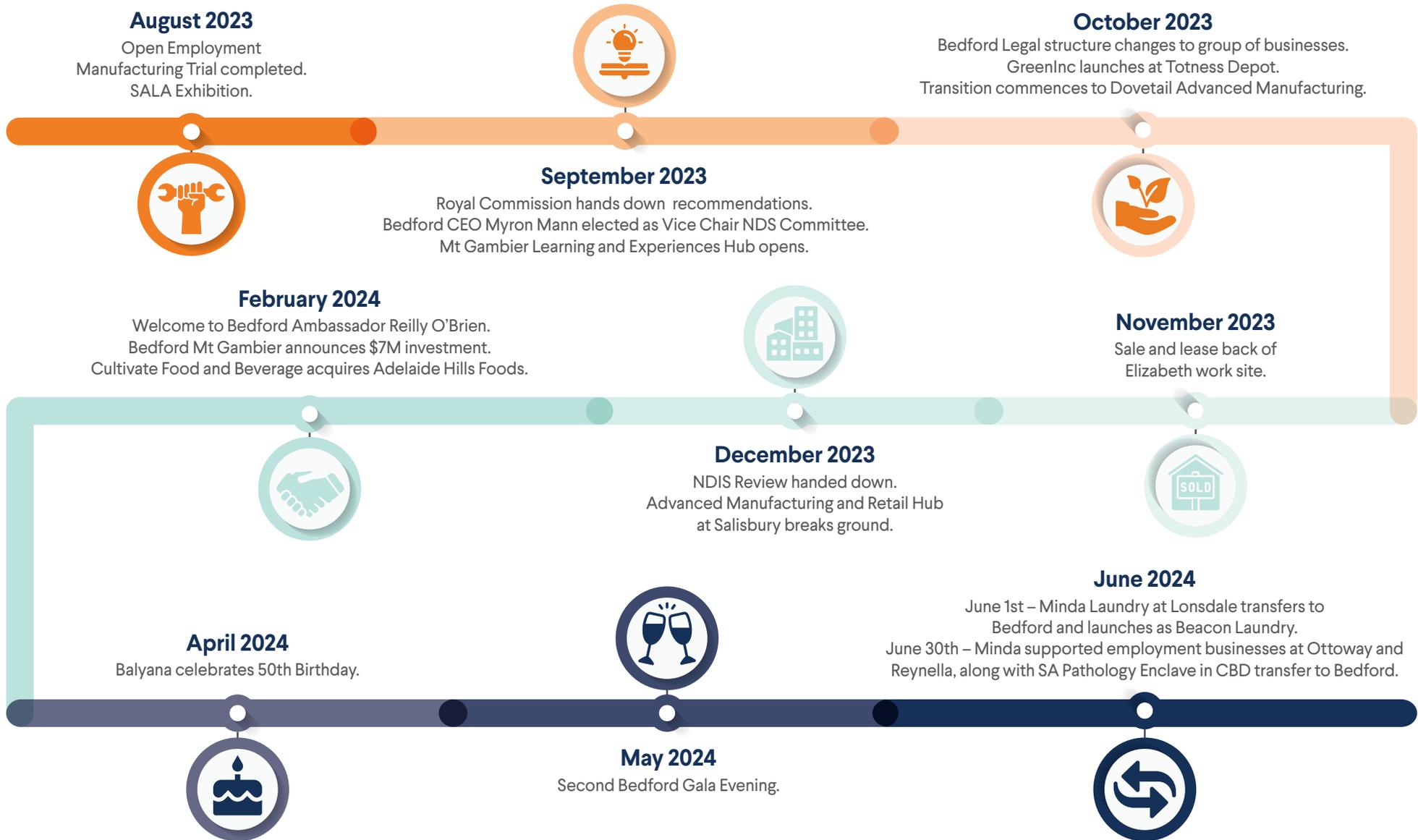


Myron Mann
Chief Executive Officer

Pottery pieces created by Learning and Experiences clients at Panorama serve as inspiration to client Shane progressing on his own work for the Bedford SALA exhibition.



2023/24 Milestones



The Bedford Community

Staff

Metropolitan Adelaide and Regional South Australia **815**

Supported Employees

Metropolitan Adelaide

Panorama, Gepps Cross, Elizabeth, Tonsley, Reynella, Ottoway, Pooraka, Lonsdale, CBD. **842**

Regional South Australia

Port Pirie, Kadina, Mount Gambier, Port Lincoln, Whyalla **114**

Learning and Experiences Clients

Metropolitan Adelaide

Learning and Experiences - Panorama, Torrensville, South and North West Programs **249**

Regional South Australia

Learning and Experiences - Port Lincoln, Whyalla, Port Pirie, Wallaroo, Mount Gambier **234**

Residents

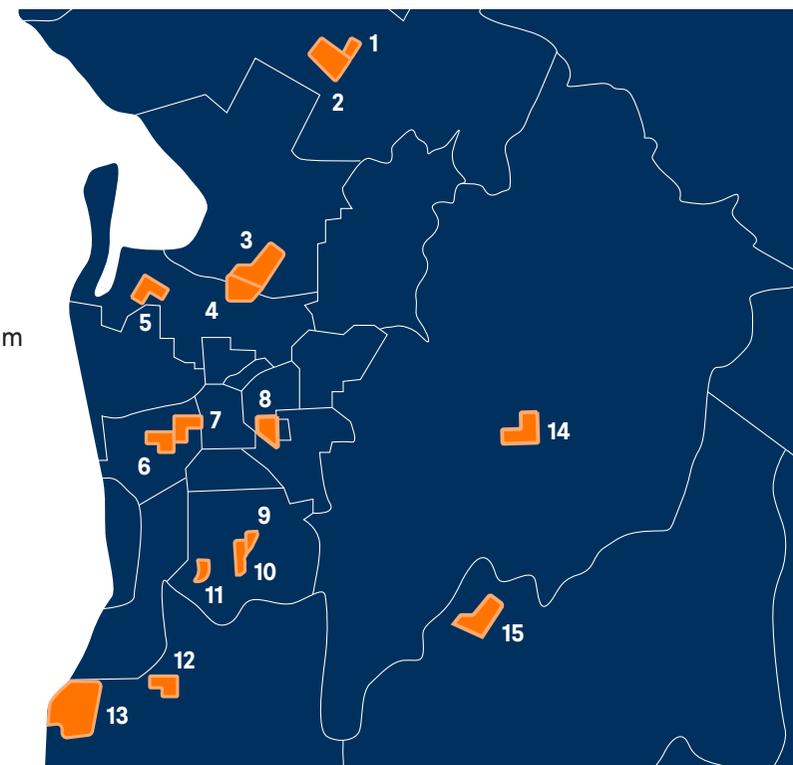
Clapham (Balyana) **47**

Regional South Australia

- 1. Port Lincoln
- 2. Whyalla
- 3. Port Pirie
- 4. Wallaroo
- 5. Kadina
- 6. Mount Gambier

Metropolitan Adelaide

- 1. Elizabeth
- 2. Edinburgh
- 3. Pooraka
- 4. Gepps Cross
- 5. Ottoway
- 6. Brooklyn Park
- 7. Torrensville
- 8. CBD
- 9. Balyana at Clapham
- 10. Panorama
- 11. Tonsley
- 12. Reynella
- 13. Lonsdale
- 14. Lobethal
- 15. Totness





Team members working with purpose at Beacon Laundry at Lonsdale.

Strategic Pillar Updates

1. Increased Pathways and Opportunities

Bedford exists to support people with disability to live the life they choose. This means providing options for meaningful supported employment and pathways to transition into open employment, and opportunities to participate in social, educational or enrichment programs that truly add value and purpose.

Bedford as an Innovator

In response to a lack of jobs for people with disability in the community, Bedford has created its own portfolio of Bedford-backed social enterprises; Cultivate Food and Beverage, GreenInc Landscape Construction, and Dovetail Advanced Manufacturing. Each enterprise offers open employment and award wages and operate as for-profit businesses. They have a charter to employ a minimum of 20% of their workforce of people with disability or with other barriers to employment. The 20% figure is a direct reflection of the wider community - 20% of whom identify as living with disability. We intend for our social enterprises to lead the way as true all-abilities employment, and model what other employers could achieve in workplaces across Australia.

Building more Employment Pathways for the Future

In February 2024 Cultivate Food and Beverage, the Bedford-backed food manufacturing social enterprise acquired Adelaide Hills Foods bakery in Lobethal. Expanding its footprint to a second site, the acquisition increased the product range through the much-loved portfolio of brands - Emmaline's, Barossa Pizza and Emma & Myrtle's and secured a nationwide retail distribution network through Coles, Woolworths and Aldi, further providing pathways for people with disability.

The second Bedford-backed social enterprise, GreenInc, officially launched at the custom-built depot in Totness in October 2023, and will service the growing demands in the Adelaide Hills area. GreenInc grew out of Bedford's long-standing landscape gardening service, APG (Adelaide Property and Gardens). Several APG supported employees transitioned into open employment at GreenInc from its inception, and this pathway will continue to provide supported employees with the opportunity to take up open employment, and a credentialled career in landscaping. GreenInc partners with South Australian developers such as Lanser, Peet, Fairland and local councils to undertake large-scale landscape construction and development of community spaces, improving amenities for local communities across the state.

In October 2023, nineteen employees transitioned into open employment at the newly created Dovetail Advanced Manufacturing social enterprise at Panorama. The Bedford-backed Dovetail operations specialise in the manufacture of quality timber products and furniture such as wardrobes, kitchen cabinetry and office fit-outs for consumers and businesses.

Partnering for Pathways

Bedford acquired a commercial laundry in Lonsdale in June 2024 as part of the Minda SA Group Enterprise transfer of businesses to Bedford. It was rebranded to Beacon Laundry in collaboration with White Box Enterprises (WBE), a specialist social enterprise incubator. Bedford and WBE have joined forces to develop guiding principles to transition the laundry to a best practice, open employment social enterprise.



Artist impression of the Advanced Manufacturing and Retail Hub at Salisbury.

Growing for the Future

Together with project partners Leyton Properties, Leyton Funds, and Sagle Constructions, Bedford broke ground on its Advanced Manufacturing and Retail Hub at Salisbury in December 2023. The Hub will span 20,000 sqm and will be the centre-piece of Bedford Five Year Strategic Plan, and will open in time for Bedford's 80th Anniversary in 2025.

The Advanced Manufacturing and Retail Hub will provide state of the art, fit-for-purpose operations for Cultivate Food and Beverage and Dovetail Advanced Manufacturing social enterprises.

The Salisbury Hub will showcase the latest advanced manufacturing technologies in robotics and automation, allowing growth and efficiencies in processing, whilst providing employees with the opportunity to learn new skills and work in jobs of the future.

Coaching Pathways

Bedford Advisory, which launched last year, supports the transition of employees into new workplaces or different forms of employment. The supports are available for current Bedford employees and businesses who, with an on-the-job coach, can conduct an open employment job trial.

This year, with the support of a Bedford Job Coach, two employees from Gepps Cross successfully completed a Job Trial at R.M. Williams and were offered permanent roles at the completion of the trial. These employees used their transferable skills from Bedford manufacturing operations, successfully transitioning from supported employment at Bedford to open employment with R.M. Williams.

Diversifying Supported Employment

We recognise that open employment is not the preference for all employees, and Bedford is committed to growing its business partnerships and investigating different business models to ensure it provides a diverse range of jobs for people with disability.

The acquisition of the Minda SA Group Enterprises supported employment businesses officially completed on 30 June 2024, which adds more diversity in employment offerings, including electronic and mattress recycling at Ottoway, along with creative design opportunities through Blend Creative, a graphic design business, at Reynella.

This diversified supported employment offering also includes working outside of Bedford as labour hire with groups of employees in the community. We continue to explore the feasibility of different business models that will offer meaningful and contemporary roles in the future that meet job-seeker expectations for all people with disability.



Nick, ex Bedford employee, transitioned to open employment at R.M. Williams.

Partnerships for Inclusion Initiative

In addition to employment pathways, Bedford is committed to offering more opportunities for learning and new social experiences.

An innovative new 'Accessible Outdoors' joint initiative, in conjunction with three SA Government partners; SA Water, National Parks and Wildlife SA, and Forestry SA commenced. The program is dedicated to breaking down barriers and helping to foster a deeper connection to nature within the state's national parks, reservoir reserves and forest reserves.

A range of facilitated activities for people living with disability or mobility issues are available, such as kayak fishing, snorkelling and bushwalking. Raising awareness about the barriers faced by some visitors to public open spaces is one of the core elements of this program, and participants are provided an opportunity to share their experiences and offer insights on the challenges and obstacles they face while visiting the great outdoors.

Learning and Experiences Opportunities

Bedford Learning and Experiences programs further expanded across the state, with the opening of a new Learning and Experiences Hub at Mount Gambier, co-located within the timber mill. The service has been very well received in the local community, offering skill-building for home, independence, and job-readiness as well as providing social connection.

Thanks to grants from Human Services SA, the Learning and Experiences sites at Wallaroo and Torrensville will undergo some upgrades. The Wallaroo kitchen will be refurbished to make it a purpose-built accessible space. Torrensville will be using the funding to create an outdoor accessible garden space, with raised garden beds for veggies and herbs for their cooking program. These upgrades will offer Bedford Learning and Experiences clients a much improved experience.

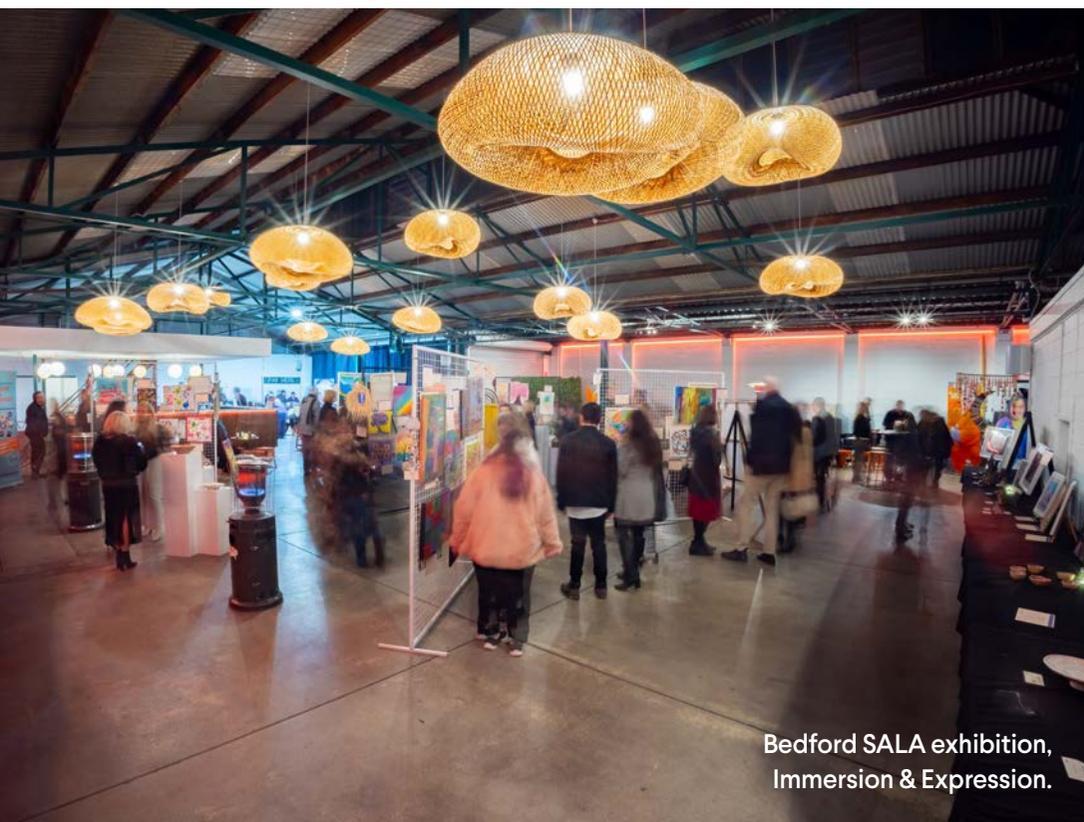
Learning and Experiences clients enjoying kayaking as part of the Accessible Outdoors program.



Programs continue to maintain strong partnerships with community organisations such as Meals on Wheels (in regions), Kuitpo Tree Climb, and Surf Life Saving SA. A popular program over the summer months is with partners 'Sailability' who take a small group out and teach them the basics of sailing and boating safety – the activity helps to increase fine and gross motor skills while enjoying a day on the water at Port Adelaide. Another recently introduced program that is proving popular amongst our more creative clients is Film-making. The program offers the opportunity to increase skills with digital media, become more confident with technology and explore another outlet for creative expression..

Creative Micro-enterprise Opportunity

The Immersion and Expression SALA Exhibition built on the success of the previous year and in August 2023 was once again open to the public at the Jackson Square venue. Bedford artists had the opportunity to participate in micro-enterprise, by creating, marketing and selling their pieces. Articles from a range of media were exhibited, including pottery, painting and sculpture. A total of 79 artwork pieces sold over the course of the exhibition with over \$3K worth of sales returned to the artists.



Bedford SALA exhibition,
Immersion & Expression.





Bedford-backed GreenInc Landscape and Construction team at work building a community space.

2. Skilled and Inspired Workforce

At Bedford we aim to provide a workplace that models inclusivity, skills-based productivity, and provides job satisfaction for employees and staff.

Prioritising Wellbeing

At Bedford, addressing psychosocial hazards is vital to maintaining a safe work environment. Over the past year, the WHS team has implemented a range of proactive strategies to mitigate risks across various Business Units. To kick off the wellness conversation, Bedford collaborated with Gallagher Bassett's in-house psychologist to create a 45-minute Wellness Self-Care training program. Launched in July 2023, this wellbeing initiative saw 415 workers from metro and regional sites participate in sessions designed to raise awareness about self-care strategies that promote overall wellbeing and workplace fitness.

In March 2024, Bedford rolled out a second tailored Self-Care training package specifically for Supported Employees, delivered face-to-face by our trained Employee Development Coordinators (EDC's).

Accredited Training

Cultivate Food and Beverage and GreenInc Landscape Construction are both host employers with Registered Training Organisations (RTO's) that offer credentials in cookery for the apprentices at our state-of-the-art culinary school and certification for landscaping at GreenInc. Tailoring the training to our apprentice and staff field of study ensures they acquire specialized skills and knowledge vital for their future career success. Staff also have the opportunity to undertake qualification in Individual Support through the Upskilling Program - to date 28 staff undertook a Certificate IV (14 units/skills) and 17 staff undertook the Diploma (16 units/skills.)

Workplace Culture

Pulse surveys conducted highlight a positive sentiment among our people, reflecting Bedford's commitment to a supportive work environment. Many team

members expressed enjoyment and gratitude, emphasising how valued and recognised they feel within the organisation. This positive feedback underscores the effectiveness of our leadership in fostering a culture of appreciation, namely communication, collaboration, and career development opportunities. As we move forward, Bedford is dedicated to building on these strengths, ensuring that our people continue to feel inspired and connected to our purpose, particularly during a time of significant change. By reinforcing our commitment to a positive workplace culture, we aim to further enhance employee wellbeing and organisational success.

Peer Support – Mental Health First Aid Officers and Contact Officers

Bedford strives to ensure that we provide a healthy, supportive workplace for staff and employees to promote wellbeing, productivity, and a strong culture and have appointed staff volunteers to fill the roles of Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Officers and Contact Officers. There are twenty serving MHFA Officers, who are required to hold a current Mental Health First Aid qualification. They are available to assist staff and employees who may be developing a mental health problem, a worsening of an existing mental illness or a mental health crisis. In addition, twenty four staff volunteers were formally trained as Contact Officers, and are available as a first point of contact to speak to anyone in the business who may be experiencing bullying, harassment or sexual harassment. The Officers are responsible for listening and supplying information about appropriate available supports.

Job Dictionary Project: A Step Forward

The Job Dictionary (JD) Project aims to enhance operational safety and to reduce the risk of an injury. The first phase enlisted fourth-year physiotherapy students from Uni SA to assess work tasks, culminating in 15 JD being developed and ready for use. Phase two began in February 2024, expanding to regional and two metro sites, where a new team of Graduate Physiotherapists developed 30 ready-to-use Job Dictionaries. These resources document both physical and psychological hazards while offering effective injury risk reduction techniques.

Prestart Stretching Program: Moving Toward Health

In July 2023, the Prestart Stretching Program engaged 90% of Panorama Packaging employees in a morning routine of specially designed stretches. This initiative promotes not only physical health but also psychological wellbeing and quality of life, significantly reducing the risk of manual handling and repetitive strain injuries.

The Employment Mentors supported a Panorama Packaging employee in leading these exercises, allowing them to showcase their skills in front of their peers.

Feedback highlights the positive impact of the program: “The employees loved the activity and felt a sense of pride in demonstrating their new skills, which has improved their overall quality of life in various aspects,” reported an Employment Mentor.

These initiatives illustrate Bedford’s ongoing commitment to fostering a safe, supportive, and engaging workplace environment for all workers.



Apprentice Chef
Kira at the Cultivate
Food and Beverage
commercial kitchen
in Brooklyn Park.



Adrian from
Dovetail Advanced
Manufacturing unloads
timber and panels.

3. Business Sustainability

In order to do social good, Bedford must generate surplus funds to reinvest into its purpose and sustainability is one of the cornerstones of the Five Year Strategic Plan. Despite a challenging economic climate, Bedford is in an enviable position with a strong financial balance sheet, and sustainable business practices will ensure that continues.

The disability sector at large remains under financial pressure due to significant growth. Sector benchmarking continues to flag that over 70% of NDIS providers continue to lose money. With caps on NDIS funding growth, both participants and providers are impacted.

Part of Bedford's sustainability plan is diversifying our revenue streams, with strategic expansion through acquisition, selling off assets that are no longer fit-for-purpose, joint venture partnerships and attracting social impact investment. All these sources seek to enhance our overall business resilience.

Structured for Sustainability

Employment has always been part of Bedford's DNA with a rich history in providing jobs in supported employment across a diverse range of industries. In order to create more pathways and pay higher wages, the legal structure of Bedford had to change.

On 1 October, Bedford became a group of companies which includes Bedford Group Limited as the head company (NFP), Bedford Services & Advisory Limited, which offers employment support services, and Bedford Social Enterprises Limited, which contains the portfolio of open employment entities.

Importantly, the new structure allows for profits from the social enterprises to flow back to the NFP, ensuring that profits are reinvested in our purpose, and will support services and employment pathways for people with disability over the longer term.

Social Impact Investment and SROI

As a result of the legal restructure, Bedford's three social enterprises do not rely on any NDIS funding and run as commercial 'profit for purpose' entities. This has allowed the release of an impact investment capital raise to fund the acquisition of Adelaide Hills Foods.

Impact investors generate both financial return and social impact from the successful transition of people with disability into open employment, and that yield is measured by a social impact valuation model developed in conjunction with Flinders University.

Investment and Partnerships

A unique joint-venture deal with Leyton Funds is financing the construction of what will be one of the largest social enterprise sites in Australia as an integral part of Bedford's growth strategy. The \$50M Advanced Manufacturing and Retail Hub is under construction and on target to open in Salisbury in 2025. It is expected to employ up to 150 people and will be home to Cultivate and Dovetail social enterprises.

Bedford also announced a \$7M investment in Mount Gambier in the state's South East. This includes new state-of-the-art equipment in timber manufacturing which aims to double capacity, drive greater efficiencies and broaden the timber processing services at the Mill. Included in this investment is the new Learning and Experiences Hub at Mount Gambier that is co-located on site and opened in September 2023.

4. Exemplary Governance, Quality and Safety

At Bedford, we have transparent and accountable corporate governance, best practice frameworks and strive for continuous improvement in all governance practices. Good governance leads businesses to achieve their goals ethically and in compliance with regulatory expectations and best practices and is never more important than when a business includes a potentially vulnerable workforce.

Business Certifications

Bedford was audited throughout the year to ensure our businesses meet national and international quality standards for operations and the delivery of products and services.

This year, Bedford achieved certifications for;

- ISO 9001 – Delivery of Products and Services
- ISO 45001 - Work Health Safety
- AWPCS – Wood Manufacturing
- HAACP – Food Handling
- SQF and SMETA - Food Safety Guidelines

Throughout the auditing process Bedford achieved excellent results thanks to our program of continuous improvement and internal auditing processes. Bedford and the Bedford-backed social enterprises continue to be certified as ‘Quality’ organisations and clients and customers can be assured we have the right management systems and processes in place to continue to be a business of excellence.

NDIS Registration

The NDIS Commission conducted an audit in 2022, and officially renewed Bedford’s NDIS certificate in FY24. The audit received nil non-conformances. This year, Bedford Service Advisory has been preparing for the mid-term surveillance NDIS audit due in February 2025. This preparation includes the development and roll-out of a robust NDIS internal audit framework, with Engels Floyd assigned to conduct the internal audits.

Safeguarding our People

The Safeguarding Team works collaboratively with operational teams, with a focus on proactive strategies to prevent incidents and enhance service quality. By fostering strong relationships with the NDIS Commission and other internal and external stakeholders, the Safeguarding Team have assisted Bedford to drive continuous improvement and ensure exceptional client support, even in the face of an ever-evolving sector. Commitment to quality client services has been further reinforced by a revamped internal NDIS audit program, setting new benchmarks for excellence.

A Trusted Voice in the Sector

Bedford works closely with the Government and disability sector to ensure we have a voice in shaping the future of disability employment. This includes the Disability Employment Reform Team, Alliance20 (25 largest disability providers in Australia) and National Disability Services (NDS), with Bedford’s CEO, Myron Mann, elected as Vice Chair of NDS Committee (SA division).

Accreditation

This year, Bedford received certification as a member of Social Traders, endorsed by the Social Enterprise World Forum. This certification makes us part of the largest network of businesses and government working with Social Traders, allowing us to access new market opportunities through social procurement, and improving our chances of securing grant funding with Local, State, and Federal Government and philanthropists interested in funding legitimate social traders.

Bedford is also a member of BuyAbility, an initiative of National Disability Services (NDS) aimed at growing employment to give people with disability the opportunity to participate in the workforce. BuyAbility is a directory and information hub designed to connect Social Enterprises with business customers across Australia. The BuyAbility Website provides government and private business with an easily navigated website to identify and source BuyAbility Social Enterprises nationally.

Community Feedback Forums

Bedford Community Connect (BCC) meetings remain an important forum to engage with, and inform, our community on sector updates, Five Year Strategic Plan progress, Bedford's change program in response to our external environment, as well as provide valuable networking time. With 22 sites, the forum is conducted in person and virtually with the Executive Leadership team endeavouring to visit as many sites as possible.

Consultation and Inclusion

Bedford continues to enhance its governance with four Board Members with lived experience of disability.

In addition, the Client Reference Committee (CRC) ensures decision-making at Bedford has the voice of people with disability. Chaired by an external representative, the CRC supports a two-way communication channel between Bedford and clients.

This year the eight appointed members of the CRC participated in a series of six capacity building and advocacy workshops, along with five meetings.

The Bedford Employee Representative Committee (ERC), a peer committee made up of a group of 33 Bedford employees, met monthly to address any site-based issues. They receive regular updates from Bedford Business Units such as Safeguarding, WHS, Learning & Experiences and lead discussions about open employment, advocacy, and issue resolution. ERC have been a valuable sounding board, and feedback to the business, including recommendations on updating or refining communications for inclusive messaging in the workplace.



Above: Members of the CRC and Our Voice SA (OVSA) pictured L-R; Melinda (OVSA), Jason (CRC), Harry (CRC), Sebastian (CRC), Tahlia (Bedford GM, Client Engagement), Tristan (CRC), Alison (OVSA). (Absent CRC members; Chloe, Courtney and Nicholas.)

2023/24 CRC Activity Report

We are the CRC (Client Reference Committee) members, we come from different parts of Bedford in Adelaide and Mount Gambier. In July 2023 we had our first meeting. We have done a mix of workshops and CRC meetings. In the workshops we learnt about things like self-advocacy, human rights and decision making.

At the CRC meetings we have done things like write a proposal to the Service Governance Committee (SGC) about how we can work together. We now go to part of the SGC meetings and give a report about our work.

We wrote a proposal about a new group called the Family and Carers Reference Committee. We have also given feedback and ideas to Bedford about what is important to us. We have provided feedback to Bedford on forms, flyers, and policy. Some of us gave a presentation at the Bedford Community Connect and went to the Our Voice SA conference in Adelaide and Mount Gambier.



Dovetail team member, Simon,
preparing flat-pack panels.

Social Impact

Bedford commissioned a research study with the Centre for Social Impact at Flinders University to quantify the positive social and economic benefit of transitioning supported employees (under the NDIS model) into open employment (on a full award wage) and to identify the real-world benefits of the social good attached to this transition for individuals, businesses, the community, and the wider economy.

The benefits of open employment creates a cascade of social, financial and health benefits for employees with disability, in addition to the economic benefits that flow through to the government and broader community through increased wages, and therefore income taxes, reduction in Disability Support Pension payments and a reduction in NDIS payments towards supported employment.

People with disability transitioned to open employment	25
Social Impact*	\$272,450
Average increase in hourly wage	79%

**Social Impact = No. of people with disability in open employment x % increase in wage x number of hours worked.*



Lynton transitioned from supported employment at APG and is now a team member of new Bedford-backed social enterprise GreenInc.

Financial Summary

FY24 incurred heavy costs with the transitions, startups, M&A integration, increasing gaps in NDIS funding compared to the cost of service delivery, increased compliance and soft retail trade. All combined, the year finished with an anticipated loss.

As we approach the midpoint of our five year strategy to become financially sustainable, we are at the low point and the benefits of heavy investment will be incrementally realised in the forward years as our new manufacturing facility comes online and the new social enterprises mature.

The necessary restructure has required both capital and operating investment and two major acquisitions resulted in higher than normal operating expenses to integrate them into Bedford and establish the appropriate governance.

FY25 anticipates a jump from \$89M to over \$130M in revenue with most of the cost of this growth occurring upfront in FY24.

Trading Summary (\$000's)	FY24	FY23
Total Revenue	88,789	85,672
Other Income	5,833	3,460
Operating Expenses	105,452	94,065
Operating Deficit	(10,830)	(4,933)
Financial Income	1,380	1,736
Net Profit	(9,450)	(3,197)
Net Cash Flow	(3,244)	3,254

▲
12.7%

Commercial Revenue

Development of Social Enterprises

▼
-4.7%

Funding Income

SIL and Supported Employment Attrition

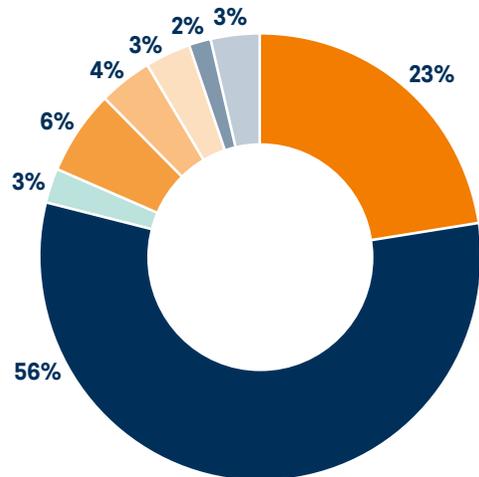
▲
12%

Operating Expenses

Wage and Input Inflation, One-off Acquisition and Restructure Costs

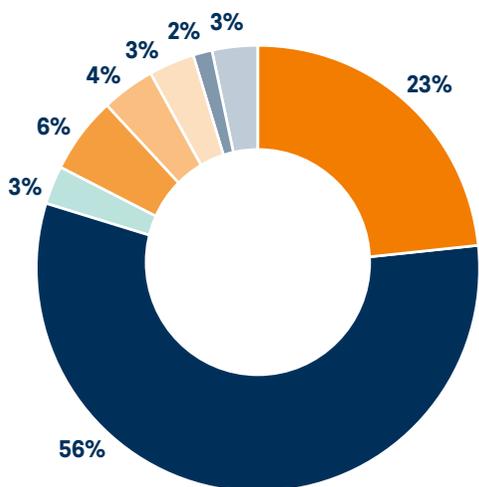


Learning and Experiences clients enjoy a hike as part of the Accessible Outdoors program.



Operating Expenses FY24

Materials and consumables	23,875
Staff and employees	59,467
Distribution expenses	2,742
Occupancy expenses	6,308
Depreciation and amortisation	4,203
Professional services	3,374
Facilities upkeep	1,876
Other	3,606

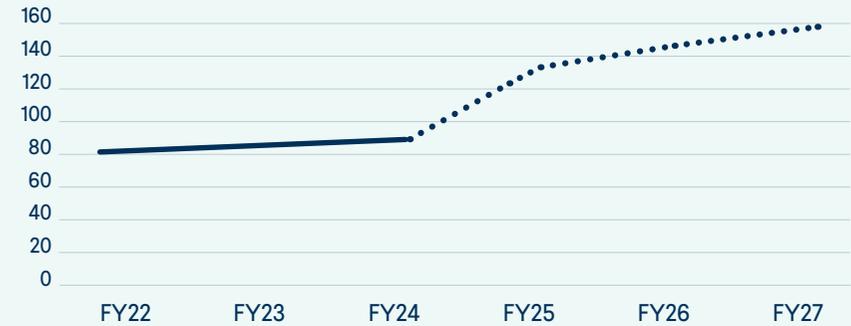


Operating Expenses FY23

Materials and consumables	22,073
Staff and employees	52,925
Distribution expenses	2,643
Occupancy expenses	5,375
Depreciation and amortisation	3,565
Professional services	3,087
Facilities upkeep	1,385
Other	3,012

Five Year Strategic Plan

Revenue \$M



EBITDA \$M



Ratio: Commercial Revenue to NDIS Funding



Summary Balance Sheet (\$A000's)	FY24	FY23
Total Assets	84,801	76,489
Total Liabilities	43,864	26,426
Net Assets	40,937	50,063
Reserves	13,471	14,632
Accumulated Funds	27,466	35,431
Total Equity	40,937	50,063

Cash Flow (\$A000's)	FY24	FY23
Net Cash from Operations	(10,791)	2,675
Net Cash from Investing	5,832	1,788
Net Cash from Financing	1,715	(1,209)
Net Cash Flow	(3,244)	3,254
Opening Cash and Equivalents	5,968	2,714
Closing Cash and Equivalents	2,724	5,968

A full version of our detailed audited financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2024 will be available at acnc.gov.au

Five Year Strategic Plan Net Assets \$M



Cash Generated \$M



Learning and Experiences client
Vincent takes a moment to
relax in the Sensory Room at
Torrensville Hub.



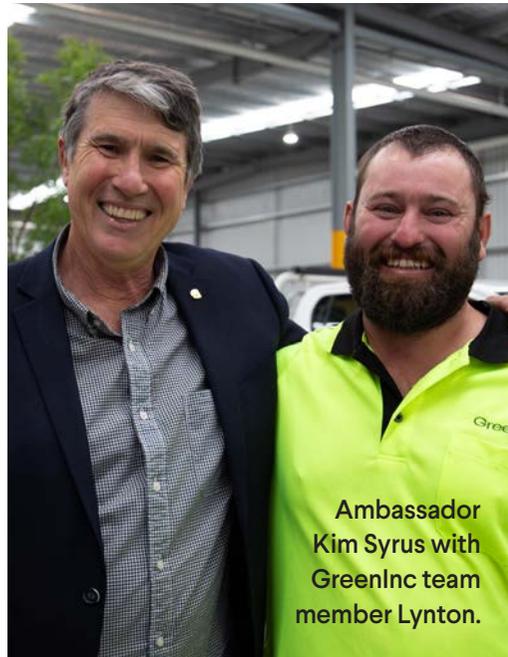
Bedford Ambassadors

Tom Doedee

This year we farewelled long-standing and much-loved ambassador, Tom Doedee, as his football career took him interstate. Tom was given a send off from Bedford Panorama employees where he was thanked for his years of service to Bedford and its community.

Kim Syrus

Veteran media personality Kim Syrus continues to support our cause as Bedford's APG Ambassador. From cookbooks to landscaping projects, the host of Channel Nine's *Outdoors Indoors*, Kim Syrus has filmed and featured Bedford several times, helping to raise awareness and build advocacy for the great work of Bedford employees and staff. Kim is a regular face at Bedford events and launches, attending the GreenInc launch in Totness and Bedford Gala.



Ambassador
Kim Syrus with
GreenInc team
member Lynton.



Bedford Ambassador
Reilly O'Brien visits
Bedford Port Lincoln
and chats with Lexia.

Reilly O'Brien

In 2024, Bedford welcomed Adelaide Football Club ruckman, Reilly O'Brien who made an immediate impact at Bedford, with attendance at the Bedford Gala, and visits to Bedford Port Lincoln, Panorama, Elizabeth and R.M. Williams to meet one of our successful Job Coach trial participants. Reilly is passionate about creating a more inclusive society, where everyone has equal opportunities to reach their goals.

Honorary Life Members

Our Honorary Life Members have all provided exceptional service to Bedford and the disability community in their own individual ways, with a common theme of passion and dedication. We welcome six new life members in FY24 - Kenneth T Jenkins (posthumously), Ray Grigg, Greg Connor, Wayne McKeon, Stephen Hains AM, and Peter Roodhouse and thank them, along with all of our Life Members, for their valued contributions.



Life Member Stephen Hains AM and Bedford Chair, Richard Hockney, at the Bedford Gala

Mrs ER Atwell

Dr G Bethune

Dr AB Black OAM

Ms A Bolkus and Mr M Dwyer

Mrs CM Brown

Ms VK Bryant

Mr EM Byrt

Mr M Chappel

Mr Greg Connor

Mrs R Davison

Miss G Dickson

Mr R Domaschenz

Mr C Dunsford AM

Mrs L Fuss

Mr JC Goodall

Mr Ray Grigg

Mr Stephen Hains AM

Mrs S Hateley

Mrs A Heyworth

Mr Kenneth T Jenkins*

Mr KF Kelly AM

Dr NH Kirby

Mr D and Mrs J Knight

Mr S and Mrs ED Kosmala OAM

Mrs S Kuchta

Mr S Liebhardt

Mrs J MacFarlane

Mr M Makrid

Mr BP Martin AO and

Mrs M Martin

The Hon RG Matheson AM KC

Mr Wayne McKeon

Mrs BD Morish

Sr M O'Connell

Mrs R and Mr HD O'Connor AM

Mrs Faye Packham

Mrs H Pitt

Mrs N Pullen

Mrs TM Pye

Mr T Robins OAM

Mr KC Rogers OAM

Mr Peter Roodhouse

Mrs D Shaw

Mr A Somerville

Mr RJ Styling AFSM OAM

Mr I Terry and Mrs M Terry

Mr JA Uhrig AC

Mrs J Von Stanke

Mr PG White

Mrs F Whyte

Mrs BC Mudge *

Mrs M Shannon AM OAM *

Mrs A Tiddy *

** Member deceased*

Supporters, Fundraising and Events

Once again, we extend our heart-felt gratitude to all those who supported Bedford with either financial or in-kind donations, particularly those who bequeathed gifts in wills and major donations. Your generous donations help us to deliver on our purpose of supporting people with disability to live the life they choose.

As a registered charity, Bedford is committed to using donations from our supporters responsibly and ethically. We also respect the request of donors who do not wish for their donations to be publicly disclosed.

In FY24, Bedford undertook a range of fundraising initiatives:

Lotteries

Bedford Lotteries continue to raise much-needed funds to support people with disability in the areas that the NDIS does not fund. This year we launched a new Bedford Lottery website and implemented digital marketing campaigns. Whilst supporting a great cause, it is always rewarding to hear winner stories, like Kaye and John, who won \$80,000 and escaped the winter with an extra-long holiday to Queensland!

Charity Partnerships

In November 2023, Bedford was fortunate to be chosen as the charity partner of the annual Asia Australis – HT Capital Charity Golf Day. It was a stunning sunny day at the Mt Osmond Golf Club where the organisers and golfers raised in excess of \$45,000 for Bedford.

Drakes Supermarkets have been a valued Bedford supporter for over 20 years, donating more than \$29,000 as part of the Drakes Charity Show Bag initiative in FY24. Not only does this partnership give valuable funds back to the local disability community, it also provides work for Bedford employees packing the showbags.

Once again, John Paul Drake got to catch up with all of his friends at Bedford Elizabeth to oversee the packing process and make one of his famous videos.

This year we commenced a new partnership with SafeWill, offering the Bedford community the opportunity to complete their will online, with ease and special offers. The wills are checked by registered Australian lawyers, and as part of the process Bedford can be nominated to receive a bequest. A number of generous supporters have joined the Bedford Bequest Society.

Bedford's partnership with Direct Collect, a social enterprise recycling for environmental and social good, is ongoing. Their bin collection service provides homes and businesses with a dedicated bin to pop their 10 cent refundable bottles, cans and containers into. Bedford can be nominated as the charity to receive the funds, and this is proving a popular way to do social good, be environmentally friendly and conveniently refund direct from your driveway. Thank you to everyone who has signed up for a Direct Collect bin and nominated Bedford as your charity partner.



Appeals

Acknowledgement and thanks to the supporters of our Butterfly Effect bi-annual Appeals that have contributed to providing specialist trainers and facilitators for Bedford's Learning and Experiences programs and regional site upgrades this year.

Bedford Gala – Beyond Imagination

Bedford's flagship annual Gala fundraiser returned to the Adelaide Convention Centre in May taking guests on a whimsical journey of possibility and delight, with the theme Beyond Imagination.

Close to 600 guests came together to raise over \$230,000 with spectacular performances from Restless Dance Theatre, and the aerial artist Le Ariel who stunned the crowd with her next level acrobatics.

Hosted once again by the inimitable international performer and Adelaide icon, Hans, and with the support of a record number of sponsors, the evening paid homage to Bedford's 79 year-history as Australia's second largest employer of people with disability and featured the stories of several inspirational Bedford employees and clients.

Guests embraced the live auction and vied to take home some amazing auction items, which included everything from artworks, to holidays and luxury entertainment offerings, Taylor Swift's signed guitar, and a pre-packaged party hosted by a favourite Adelaide Crow!



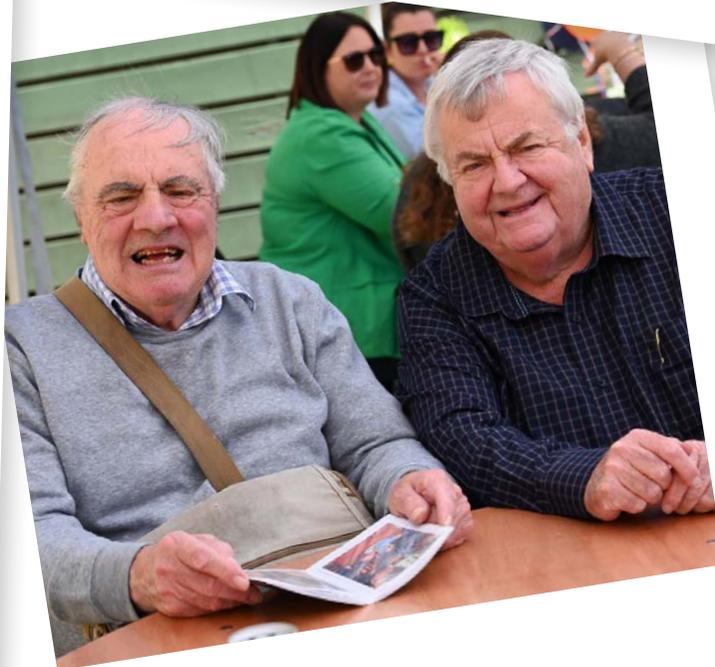
Balyana Turns 50!

In 2024 Balyana, the home of Bedford's Supported Independent Living residential community located in the leafy suburb of Clapham, celebrated its 50th Birthday in April. First opened by former Prime Minister Gough Whitlam in 1974, Balyana encouraged residents to connect with each other in shared spaces, and celebrate their tight-knit and supportive community that remains a hallmark of Balyana living throughout its history.

The event celebrated many of Balyana's residents who, over the years, have worked at Bedford, or attended the Learning and Experiences programs. Balyana's history also comprises the exceptional care and contributions of the staff who support residents 24/7, creating a safe place for residents to live where they are valued, treated with dignity and respect, and supported to make their own decisions and choices about their lives.

While a lot has changed at Balyana, we are proud to say that in 50 years, the core goals remain the same - to support people with disability to pursue independent living, and to enjoy choice and opportunity with how they live and work.







Bedford

Bedford acknowledges the traditional custodians of all of the lands on which we operate, and pays respect to Elders past, present and future. We recognise and respect their cultural heritage, beliefs and relationship with the lands. We acknowledge that they are of continuing importance to First Nations people living today.

Bedford Group Limited

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PO Box 18, Melrose Park SA 5039
bedfordgroup.com.au
ABN: 34 158 717 447

Connect with us



Left: APG (Adelaide Property and Gardens) team planting street trees in the City of Playford.

cultivate

dovetail

GreenInc

apg

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