

GATEWAY
**STRONGER
COMMUNITIES**
INITIATIVE

2025-26 Impact Report



Letter from the Board of Directors

We're incredibly grateful for this opportunity that we have to serve the Greater Geelong community.

The 2025-26 year has been one of optimising and strengthening operations and building volunteer capacity within the Community Pantry.

With the ongoing cost of living pressures, the Community Pantry continues to see consistent growth. Each week the Community Pantry provides food, household items and hygiene products to 35-40 households. In 2024-2025, we were connected to 74 households. As of early June 2026, we are connected to 133 households. This is an average of 1.2 new households presenting to the Community Pantry each week. This highlights the growing need for food support among households in the Greater Geelong region.

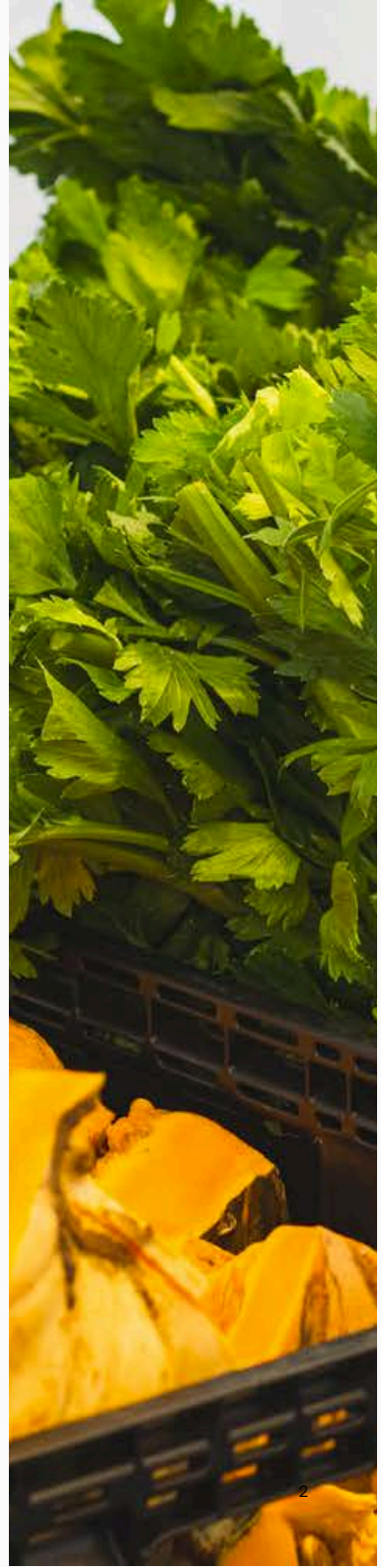
Thank you to our incredible team of volunteers, financial supporters and those who have connected individuals with our services. We are excited for continued opportunities to serve and strengthen our local community.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Lee Eden

Grant Jackson

Raynu Kay



12-Month Snapshot

The last 12 months have seen significant and consistent growth in the impact of Gateway Stronger Communities.

1,780

PANTRY SHOPS FULFILLED

133

[^] 81%

UNIQUE HOUSEHOLDS SUPPORTED

\$64k

WORTH OF GROCERIES PROVIDED AT COST PRICE

8,426

KGS OF FOOD, HOUSEHOLD & HYGIENE ITEMS DISTRIBUTED

1,580

VOLUNTEER HOURS

32

VOLUNTEERS ENGAGED

Our Partners





ABOUT US

Dedicated to building stronger communities.

We exist to serve and support local communities.

DIGNITY

We believe that every individual deserves to be treated with dignity and respect. We recognise the inherent worth of each person we serve and foster an environment of mutual respect.

HOLISTIC WELL-BEING

We are dedicated to supporting the complete well-being of every individual. This means addressing not only physical needs but also emotional, mental, and social aspects of health. While we can't meet every need, we aim to connect individuals with the best service(s) for their individual situation.

COMMUNITY

We strive to build a strong, inclusive community. Beyond practical needs, we aim to create connections with those we support, providing them the opportunity to engage with an encouraging and supportive community.

SAFETY

We aim to create an environment that is friendly, inclusive and welcoming so that those we serve can seek assistance without fear or concern. Those who we support, and our volunteer workers should always feel safe.

ABOUT THE

Community Pantry

Meals & Food Items

Individuals and families receive an allocation of points based on the number of people in their household. Each week, individuals and households are able to use these points to self-select food items. Self-selection promotes dignity of choice.

Food items available include meat and other proteins, pasta, rice, cooking sauces, tinned food, long life milk, frozen meals, cereals and snacks.

In addition, through our partnership with Geelong Food Share, we receive a variety of fruit, vegetables and bread. These provide a point-free shopping option for households.

House & Hygiene Items

We also provide the option for individuals or households to select household and personal hygiene items they may require.

Community Connection

We believe that community support goes beyond just meeting material needs. This led to the creation of our Community Connection Space, a safe and welcoming social environment, alongside our pantry, where individuals come to chat, connect, and strengthen their community engagement.



My wife and I are so appreciative of the Community Pantry. The assistance we receive in the gift of pantry items, fruit and vegetables has made a large difference to how we can plan our budget. Also, the social side of our weekly visit is wonderful, with the friends we have made, we spend a lot of time conversing. I am nearly 93, so most of our old friends have passed. This is a great way to have some respite. May your community continue with this great work.

Ivan & Margaret Carr

Volunteer Engagement, Fundraising & Training

2025-2026 has been a year of building volunteer capacity and strengthening operational systems. This was achieved by providing increased opportunities for volunteer engagement and strengthening operations through volunteer training. Pathways for fundraising and awareness building within the community were also significant milestones for the Community Pantry.

In January 2026, a team of volunteers from the Community Pantry and Gateway Church Geelong ran a sausage sizzle fundraiser at Bunnings Leopold. In February 2026, another team of volunteers participated in a highway collection.

Several students from Leopold Primary School also ran a fundraiser, running a market stall selling stickers, handmade jewellery and accessories. The proceeds of their sales were donated to the Community Pantry. These students also volunteered in the Community Pantry during the school holidays.

Together, these fundraising initiatives were able to raise a total of **\$3,958**.

Through April and May 2026, the Barwon Health Mental Health & Wellbeing Local facilitated a Mental Health First Aid for Older Adults course for volunteers. This course provided volunteers with knowledge, skills and strategies to better support the complex, multi-faceted needs that clients may have. Our ongoing partnership with the Local will provide greater pathways for service navigation and referral to other support providers.



How can you help?

Give Financially

The continued work of Gateway Stronger Communities is made possible through the financial support of our donors.

Your contribution makes a significant difference in the lives of those we support.

Consider recurring donations:

\$25/week

Provides support for a smaller household of 2-3 people with self-select items.

\$40+/week

Provides support for a larger household of 5-6 people with self-select items.

Donate Goods

Non-perishable food items can be donated by dropping them off at Gateway Stronger Communities (175 Moolap Station Road, Moolap) during business hours, Tuesday - Friday.

Volunteer your time

Our Community Pantry is run predominantly by our volunteer team. Get in touch with us if you are interested in volunteering.

*All donations over \$2 are tax-deductible in Australia

Visit strongercommunities.org.au/donate for once-off and recurring donation options



Thank You

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☎ (03) 8842 4473

✉ connect@strongercommunities.org.au

🖱 strongercommunities.org.au

Our Governance



Gateway Stronger Communities Initiative is a registered charity with the Australian Charities & Not-for-profits Commission and is endorsed as a Deductible Gift Recipient* (DGR) under Item 1 of the table in section 30-15 of the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997*.

***All donations over \$2 are tax-deductible in Australia.**