



Kilkivan & District Community Care Assn Inc.

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ACNC number: 76639140711; **DGR endorsement** from 28.7.2022

Advocating for & providing care services and facilities on behalf of aged & disabled people in Kilkivan & districts.

President's Report to KDCCAI AGM on 13.12.23

Thank you all for attending the 4th AGM of Kilkivan & District Community Care Assn Inc – and thank you all for being part of The Rise & Shine Ageing-in-place Project!

As most of you know, it's almost 4 years now since the unanimous endorsement at a community meeting of what we believed this community of Kilkivan-Goomeri-Tansey-Woolooga needed to put in place and support in order for seniors in particular to have a sustainable, aspirational life after 65. That plan involves 4 key elements, and the first two are being rolled out very well in the view of your management team: the first is community transport via the now well-known KilkiVAN; the second is better value, more efficient delivery of Home Care Packages via the Kilkivan Care – Trilogy Care – Mable collaboration.

Let me provide for the record here today some further implementation details of those two elements. The **KilkiVAN** has been tremendously popular as a way for seniors to both connect with each other as well as travel to places that may not otherwise be possible. For example, the whale-watching trip to Hervey Bay was clearly an awesome experience, and the trip to Menopause the Musical in Kingaroy is still being raved about. Garden & nursery destinations also proved popular in 2022-2023, as did country music musters in Gympie. The KilkiVAN also fulfilled the important role of providing a monthly set-in-stone scheduled trip to Gympie for shopping & medical appointments, and it delivered regular opportunities for a courtesy bus service on Friday evenings to the local hotel and bowls club. And the ...VAN has also done charter trips to airports, and to other towns for sporting engagements. None of these trips could happen without the **four accredited volunteer drivers**: Greg Segnit, Steve Horseman, Kev Sempf & Suzanne Lanham. We are really grateful to them for their great, safe driving and commitment. Two other volunteers deserve our thanks for their KilkiVAN roles: Lynda Sempf who ensures the documentation and bookings overall run smoothly, and trip coordinator Jo Edwards who has, along with Greg, made the social calendar of the KilkiVAN a varied & hugely popular part of our operation. Thank you all for such a professional, engaged contribution to the Rise & Shine Project.

Kilkivan Care, under the excellent stewardship of **Coordinator Robyn Haack**, is experiencing welcome, steady growth, and currently has **29 clients**. Robyn is contracted to oversee all of the arrangements put in place in collaboration with Trilogy Care as the provider of the HCPs and with Mable, the online platform that facilitates the self-employment of the local support workers. 22 of these current clients are from Kilkivan district; 3 are from Woolooga; 2 from Goomeri & 1 from Tansey. Another is being remotely managed. With a further 14 locals either awaiting assessment or sidelined onto the rather ineffectual CHSP avenue, there is good reason to anticipate continued, steady growth. We know that we are delivering much better value than providers other than Trilogy Care can provide – we truly are locals caring for locals, while providing self-employment opportunities for about 20 local support workers! We will continue to **advocate for & encourage Mable support workers to extend their skill base** in line with the expanding range of client needs.

So that's two of the 4 elements of The Rise & Shine Project operating well. The **other two elements are firmly in focus now**. KDCCAI has long aspired to being able to use the now closed **St Kevin's Catholic Church in Church Street as a community hub**, which would allow a much more efficient operation for KDCCAI, especially with regard to its social connectivity services. While we are very grateful for all of the practical support provided by Gympie Regional Council in allowing us to use parts of their building in Bligh Street, we know there will be efficiencies and benefits to our operation if we can also acquire the church. That now seems likely: the Gympie Parish **provided us with first option** on the purchase of the property recently, and we are **proceeding to contract**. The negotiated price of \$200,000 plus GST represents a very significant investment by our organization and we are hopeful of funding at least half of it with a crowd-funding campaign which should soon be launched. Fortunately, an anonymous, generous local is providing KDCCAI with a no-interest loan for 6 months to enable the purchase to be completed. Because the property needs re-zoning to allow for community use, we are aware that the timeframe and budget will be frustrating, but our membership base very clearly endorsed the purchase decision late last month. For KDCCAI, this church asset is very important strategically.

The **two vacant Church Street blocks** adjacent to the Catholic Church are where this organization hopes to see **accessible, appropriate rental accommodation** built to deliver the final element of Rise & Shine. Disappointingly, after some months of participation in a complex grant application process with another charity which was the proponent for state government funding, it became clear that there was insufficient alignment with the intent of our Rise & Shine objectives, and KDCCAI recently withdrew support for the other charity's proposal. We now hope to develop another, more aligned partnership so the **significant infrastructure funding for a group home as well as one- & two-bedroom homes** can be acquired. Then we can truly Rise & Shine?!

One aspect of the KDCCAI project that continues to give our operation pleasing support is the **interest of academics from our local university, UniSC, in the objective of sustainable ageing-in-place here**. To that end, a team is researching preventative health strategies in what's known as the RAW (Rural Ageing Well) study that may assist in rural/regional settings with **dementia**; Sophie Andrews, Dan Wadsworth, John Rosenburg, Dana Lee & Anangsha Patak in particular have held information sessions & focus groups both in Kilkivan & Goomeri to inform their research. We look forward to hearing their findings and helping to implement their recommendations to do our small part in supporting this community to deal with the dementia tsunami expected. These academics have also helped to provide other opportunities for our residents: a pop-up health clinic and workshop last October is an example.

KDCCAI always needs money! Despite all of our current operations, except for Kilkivan Care, being executed by volunteers, it is very challenging in these times to raise the money to ensure that a sustainable, aspirational old age is achievable in this part of the world. I continue to be **astonished that there is no funding available to organizations such as ours to fund labour costs**, usually because the project has already commenced. And like other community organizations, KDCCAI is concerned that the **phasing out of cash** is going to prove challenging for some traditional methods of local fund-raising. As many of you know, because you are the core fund-raisers, we have conducted multiple/never-ending activities in the 2022-23 period to achieve the impressive fiscal position our excellent Treasurer will outline to you soon. **Monthly bingo** (with caller Ged Salter usually in charge) has been a regular boost with growing numbers, especially since we super-charged the raffle prizes! Thanks to Ray & Heken Chapman & Graham Wedel of Oakview for the live music they generously provide for most bingo sessions. Robyn Ditton & Jo Edwards have been very regular, tenacious raffle & stall organizers – thank you both. And with a 10-week endurance test to raise the widely-publicized \$10,000 target, we exceeded expectations by raising over \$24,000. We currently have an impressive Xmas stocking raffle underway and other initiatives in the pipeline for 2024.

Several other activities underpin the on-going support for The Rise & Shine Project. **Kilkivan Kickstart**, the free monthly newsletter produced by Lynda Sempf, Anneliese Bambling & me is 31 editions old now! And octogenarian Judy Farrow is our faithful stapler of each hard copy, while Kilkivan Post Office is our no-fuss, reliable & discounting printer! Thanks, Judy & Jody! As well as providing core community information in both an online & hard copy format, Kickstart also provides a forum to keep promoting our ageing-in-place project across the entire target area of Kilkivan-Goomeri-Tansey -Woolooga.

Seniors' Social Hub continues to be a popular gathering opportunity twice per month here in the Boardroom. For our Xmas morning tea last Wednesday, we were delighted to have

37 people in the room at one stage: 9 Mable support workers and our first Kilkivan Care client Hayden Winn (who is our only Level 4 client) were present, along with regular senior attendees from Woolooga, Oakview & Kilkivan. We are actually well aware that a large part of the Hub's appeal is the **excellent catering** contribution made by octogenarian KDCCAI member Marg Denton – thank you so much, Marg.

Thank you to Anneliese Bambling who continues to do a great job of keeping our **website** up to date. And our KDCCAI **Facebook page** now has 371 followers – thank you to Lynda Sempf for her commitment to our social media! It takes lots of time, photos & text but she somehow manages to keep the page vibrant and popular.

Lynda also helped to instigate the fortnightly delivery of **frozen meals from Top Nosh** at Beerwah: a delivery comes to Gympie's Aldi store carpark & one of our champion volunteers Steve Horseman collects them and delivers them to the freezer he lent us to store them in the shed. Clients on HCPs are able to use package funds to pay for 70% of the cost of these delicious meals (they pay the balance from their own funds). Several regular orders come from Kilkivan & Woolooga clients.

And a recent connection (initiated by David & Bella Timperley) with Cindy Hartwig of Heartbeat Training in Gympie is proving valuable to KDCCAI & locals: we have received used mobility equipment, new incontinence gear and, in the last fortnight, meals from Food Bank. Most of the recipients of these meals are not our Kilkivan Care clients but others worthy of a hand up. We thank Cindy for her passionate commitment to ensuring that the area west of the Mary River is included when distribution of donated resources is considered.

The **commitment required** to continue this ageing-in-place project is **incredible** – not just from me as President & Instigator-in-chief, but also from the other management team members, the Treasurer and Secretary. **Esther Ringrose** was mustered into the **Secretary** role after the resignation early in the year of Sandy Brenton, and has worked very collaboratively with Lynda and me to fulfill the responsibilities of the position. We thank Esther for her contribution and have appreciated especially her support of the Seniors' Social Hub record keeping.

I reiterate what I said in last year's President's Report about our **Treasurer Lynda Sempf**: her integrity, honesty and depth of understanding of the overall project are key to this role. I appreciate so very much Lynda's unwavering support and advice – she is the most wonderful friend and colleague and we all owe her an enormous debt for the unwavering commitment she has shown.

While not an official member of the Management team under our Constitution, the Coordinator is regularly consulted on the core policy matters by the three management

team members – I think that works well. **Robyn Haack's** professional, collaborative and compassionate qualities have meant that Kilkivan Care continues to offer our precious local clients an exceptional level of support.

And we four have had to lean heavily on other members and non-members throughout the year to get this important work done and keep across things 24/7 all year round. These people include our terrific **Mable support workers**, and some of these have shown incredible commitment to their clients in difficult circumstances. And we will continue to encourage Mable workers to upskill so all clients' needs can be accommodated.

One person whose experience and expertise continues to be relied upon is **lawyer John Joyce**; he generously allows me to touch base with him when I believe we need an informed, independent professional opinion – that's quite regularly!! (Maybe that's got something to do with John's imminent relocation?!)

The other people who need to be thanked for their contribution in 2022-23 are the **marvellous locals & other supporters who donated** items or money to support our project. Nonagenarian Athol Bevan has recently given us another 3 of his battery-powered handmade replica wooden ships to raffle; various craftspeople & artists have donated their creations for raffles or on-line auctions; many others have given cash generously, despite a cost-of-living crisis.

I also need to thank the **partners and families of those members who are very committed** to our ageing-in-place project – they often sacrifice and compromise so that those of us working hard every week can do so. Thank you, Steve & Kev especially!

The Rise & Shine Project is, I hope, an inspiration for those of all ages who want to see this community as a more sustainable place to live well, for longer. Locals supporting locals but in an integrated, carefully designed way so hopefully no-one falls through the gaps – we think Rise & Shine is a wonderful formula for ageing well in a rural context! It's already delivering better in-home care for 29 locals, and its KILKIVAN is getting locals to lots of places they might not otherwise be able to venture. If we keep striving and working together as we have over the last 4 years, who knows what's possible?!

Thank you for supporting the vision & thank you for listening!

Rosie Fitzgerald, President of K&DCCAI 0407600620