
MARCH 2026



St Pat's

St Patrick's Community
Support Centre

Impact Matters

Find out how your contributions are making a meaningful difference for people in need.

Impact in Action: thanks to you, our Djenabidet Kalleep team continues to shine



St Pat's Peer support workers advocating and supporting clients

In a recent article published by The Guardian on the growing crisis of poverty, the Indigenous housing system was described as fragmented, complex and uncoordinated.

Unfortunately, this is not a new concept for the team at St Pat's community Support Centre, and for the **Djenabidet Kalleep (Footpath Home)** team working on the ground, these systematic challenges are part of the daily reality as they support the disproportionate number of Indigenous people at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

Brett Goring, one of the dedicated Aboriginal Peer Support Workers in our Djenabidet Kalleep team, has been working closely with a client, John Smith*, whose story highlights both the complexity of these challenges and the impact of compassionate, persistent support. Here's what Brett has to say:

***John Smith's name has been changed**

John came to our attention through a referral from our Housing Team.

John lives with Schizophrenia. From the beginning, my focus has been on engaging with him in a culturally safe way - building trust, fostering autonomy, and ensuring he remains in control of his own journey. Establishing rapport has not been simple. When unwell, John can become non-verbal and withdrawn. On many occasions, our interaction has consisted of little more than a brief hello before the door closes again. However, persistence and consistency have been key. Over time, John began opening his door more comfortably and has now identified me to external services as his support person - a significant milestone and a strong indicator of trust. With his consent, I undertook strong advocacy on his behalf. I met with his treating doctors and the Housing Team to gather a clearer understanding of John as a person - beyond his diagnosis and circumstances.

Today, John continues to thrive. The progress he has made is reflected not only in his increased engagement and stability but also in the positive feedback received from Fremantle Health Services (Almas Street) and our housing team, who have all commented on the noticeable improvements in John's wellbeing. This experience is a powerful reflection of the impact of Peer Work - building authentic relationships, advocating fiercely when required, and always centering the person's voice. It is a privilege to work alongside John.

Teresa Farmer, our Aboriginal Outreach Health Connector, shared this example of the sort of day-to-day difference she makes:

Sally was referred to us for support. As an Aboriginal woman, she carries not only her own responsibilities but also the wellbeing of her family. Like many of our mob, her journey has involved travelling long distances across Country to make sure her family can access the care they need.

When Sally sat down with us, we ensured the space felt culturally safe, respectful, and welcoming. Yarnin' together is an important part of how we work, allowing people to share their story in their own time and in their own way. During the conversation, it became clear that Sally required support across several areas, particularly housing and health.

As an Aboriginal service with lived experience, we understand that there are often things that go unsaid during these conversations. Because we share cultural understanding and community knowledge, it helps create a genuine sense of trust and safety. This connection allows our clients to feel heard and supported, and it also enables us to respond in a holistic way. By recognising the broader context of someone's life, we are able to work in a multidisciplinary way, addressing multiple needs at the same time rather than tackling issues one at a time.

I spent some time speaking with Sally about her health and provided her with information about available services. I encouraged her to contact Moorditj Koort Aboriginal Corporation to book a GP appointment. I explained the importance of completing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Check (715), as this allows the clinic to assess her health needs and identify whether she may be eligible for additional support programs that could benefit her and her family.

During our yarn, Sally shared that she has been travelling between Tennant Creek and Perth to access medical treatment for herself, her daughter, and her granddaughter. She also advised that she currently has a housing transfer application in place from Tennant Creek to Fremantle, as she hopes to relocate closer to services and ongoing support.

By the end of the meeting, several important steps have been taken. Lenny had begun the process of advocating for Sally in relation to her housing and support needs, and Sally left with information and encouragement to engage with health services in Perth.

Most importantly, she left knowing she was not navigating these challenges alone and that there are people ready to walk alongside her and support her moving forward.



Pauline Boscato and some of the team from Crossroads and Djenabidet Kalleep

Rethinking “Family”:

An Aboriginal Perspective

For many, the term family still evokes a narrow, Westernised image, a household of two parents and their children, stable, contained, and easily defined. For Aboriginal people, family has always been understood in far broader, relational, and interconnected terms.

Aboriginal kinship system is grounded in obligation, reciprocity, and shared identity. Mum, Nan, Aunty, Uncle, Brother, Sister, Bub, Cuz, Pop, these are not titles of convenience but expressions of relational responsibility. Everyone belongs, and everyone is accountable to that belonging.

Djenabidet Kalleep embodies this cultural truth. For many in our community, we are the family they were removed from, the family they are searching for, or the family they have never had the chance to know.

We hold space for people whose families have been torn apart, dispersed, or made unreachable.

This is why Djenabidet Kalleep is, in every meaningful sense, a family-focused service. We ensure that every person who walks through our doors is treated as family, because they are.

Pauline Boscato, Aboriginal Services Manager, St Pat’s

Djenabidet Kalleep is St Pat’s trauma informed, mob-centred service. The Djenabidet Kalleep team provide assertive outreach, lived-experience peer navigation, housing support and culturally appropriate and specific health connections to improve outcomes for Aboriginal people experiencing homelessness in our community.

Want to know more about Djenabidet Kalleep and how you can help support this amazing team? Please contact Annalisa on annalisa.oxenburgh@stpats.com.au.

Thanks to our major partners, our Beach Street Redevelopment Begins



CEO Michael Piu welcomed VIP guests to celebrate this important milestone.

Friday 20th February marked the commencement of work on St Pat's 3 Beach Street warehouse to transform it into a purpose-built Engagement Hub. Ministers, St Pat's partners and supporters, and community leaders gathered together next door at 5 Beach Street to celebrate this milestone.

The morning featured a powerful message in language gifted to St Pat's from our Aboriginal Reference Group, which Aunty Marie Taylor translated for those gathered.

Over 100 guests made an appearance to listen to speakers, including Hon. Wayne Martin AC KC, who reflected on the importance of collaboration, community commitment.



Minister Simone McGurk and Hon. Wayne Martin taking part in the smoking ceremony



Hon. Wayne Martin addressed ongoing concerns for increased homelessness at St Pat's redevelopment ceremony morning tea

The beginning of the build represents far more than just the refurbishment of a building. It symbolises the work that has already been done, and the important work that lies ahead in the coming years as the build continues.

As Mr. Martin emphasised, increased pressures from the rise in cost of living, housing shortages, and overstretched community services are being felt more than ever. The impact of these pressures is already visible in the increasing number of people experiencing homelessness and hardship, and the demand for support is expected to continue growing in the coming years.

A special mention to the Sapienza family, whose extraordinary legacy gift of 5 Beach Street to St Pat's, means the mission and vision for St Pat's can continue to grow. 5 Beach Street is acting as a staging site for the current Fremantle Redevelopment of St Pat's buildings on 3 Beach Street and 12 Queen Victoria Streets but holds huge potential for future development in benefit of those St Pat's serves.



Auntie Marie Taylor signing the message gift given from the ARG to St Pat's

The redevelopment is expected to be completed by the end of this year, creating a purpose-built Engagement Hub designed to better support people experiencing homelessness. The new space includes a welcoming reception area, a cafe and dining room, a fully equipped kitchen, multipurpose spaces, as well as medical consultation rooms including dentist and optometry suites, offering full functioning services to clients.

Once the redevelopment is complete, St Pat's looks forward to welcoming supporters and donors to visit the new space and see firsthand the impact their generosity has helped to create.

We look forward to welcoming you then.

[For further information and to donate to the redevelopment please see here to continue supporting St Pat's future.](#)



Inside of build site, redevelopment of Engagement Support Centre

Prepare to take a seat at your St Pat's Community Table



Inspired by the much-loved Freo Long Table, this community driven initiative invites supporters across Western Australia to host their own food sharing event. Whether it's a backyard dinner with friends, a workplace morning tea, a school lunch or a picnic with neighbours, every table helps raise vital funds to support people experiencing homelessness.

Become part of St Pat's community table, invite your community and raise funds in a way that works for you, and be a symbol that when community comes together, that's where real difference is made.

If this is something you would like to be apart of, please watch out for incoming updates and news regarding St Pat's community long table event.

Because of You, Hope Was Shared over Christmas

Thanks to your generosity, our Christmas Appeal raised an incredible \$140,000 to support people experiencing homelessness during the festive season.

Because of you, more than 400 Christmas hampers were delivered to individuals and families facing an uncertain Christmas, bringing comfort and joy when it was needed most.

Your support also made it possible for St Pat's to host our Client Christmas Party, where clients enjoyed a delicious roast lunch served by the wonderful CIVMEC team alongside St Pat's volunteers and staff.

Your kindness helps keep our doors open year-round, ensuring individuals and families can find comfort, safety and connection when they need it most.

Thank you for making this possible.



St Pat's Client Christmas Party was held at St Patrick's Basilica

St Pat's People



Meet Grecia

St Pat's Library Connect Program in partnership with City of Fremantle

“The library environment allows people to seek help in a familiar, safe and low-barrier space, and I really value being part of that.”

What does a day in the library look like?

No two days are ever the same. Typically, a few people come through seeking information or support, mostly around homelessness, financial assistance, or other challenges they're facing. There are also conversations and collaboration with library staff and City of Fremantle staff throughout the day.

What drew you to the Library Connect Program?

I was drawn to the program because of its unique setting and its focus on providing accessible, community-based support. The library environment allows people to seek help in a familiar, safe and low-barrier space, and I really value being part of that.

Can you tell us what the library connect program is and what your roles is in the program?

The Library Connect Program is a collaboration between St Pat's and the City of Fremantle that began in September 2020. The aim of the program is to offer support, referrals and advice to people seeking assistance or information on services available in Fremantle, including individuals experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness, in a safe and inclusive space.

As a Community Support Worker, my role is to provide initial support and information, as well as connection and referrals to other services. This includes assistance with housing and financial issues, emergency relief, and broader community supports.

**With gratitude to the Stan Perron Charitable Foundation
for their generous support of the Fremantle Library Connect Program**

Write a Will for Free this March



This March it's your chance to write a legally binding Will, free of charge!

From the 16th to 30th of March St Pat's is partnering with SafeWill Australia to offer our supporters the opportunity to write a legally binding will online, completely free of charge. You can create a will in under 20 minutes through Australia's leading online wills writing platform, with every document reviewed by a qualified solicitor for peace of mind. Having a secure and valid will ensures your legacy is secure and protects your loved ones into the future. [Click here to secure your free will this Wills Week.](#)

A thank you note to the Sapienza family



CEO Michael Piu (left) with Sam Sapienza (right) outside of 5 Beach Street predevelopment

Following the success of the redevelopment ceremony held on the 20th of February, we once again extend our sincere thanks to Sam and Connie Sapienza and their family for their extraordinary gift of 5 Beach Street. The property is currently serving as the staging site for the redevelopment of the St Pat's Support Centre.

During the morning, Mr. Sapienza shared a remarkable connection to the day. Exactly 61 years earlier, he had arrived in Australia at the arrivals terminal located directly opposite 5 beach Street. It was a fitting and meaningful moment, reflecting both his personal journey and the generosity that has made such an important contribution to the future of St Pat's.

To view CEO Michael Piu's acknowledgement of this special occasion head to [linkedin](#).

Fremantle Docker's volunteer at St Pat's



St Pat's staff and Fremantle Dockers Players and Staff kicking starter pack goals

While the Fremantle Dockers gear up for the 2026 season, a group of players and staff took time out in January and again in March to volunteer at St Pat's.

In January the group packed client starter packs, which are vital for people who have recently secured accommodation or need essential everyday items. From laundry supplies to basic kitchen amenities, the starter packs help individuals and families settle into accommodation with the items many of us take for granted.



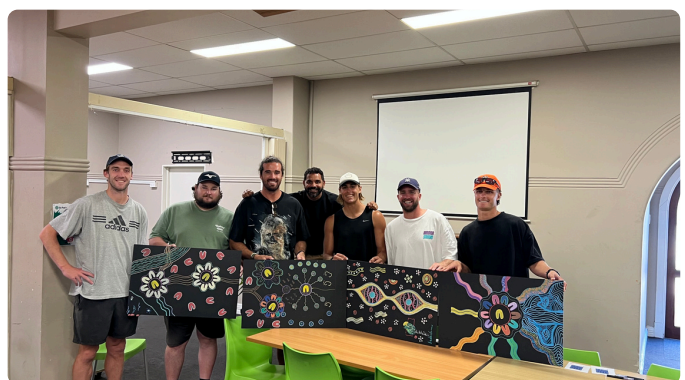
Making quick work of the client bathroom starter packs

With captain Alex Pearce joining the effort, the team completed the task in record time. What usually takes more than 25 hours was finished in just 1.5 hours. A great example of a team of volunteers making quick work of a job that has a lasting and meaningful impact for our clients and the community.

In early March, the players returned to volunteer in our Engagement Hub. Coordinated by the Djendabidet Kalleep team, they helped decorate blackout paintings for the Moorditj Miyal eye clinic. *Eyes are precious – they connect us to family, Country, culture, and community. The eyes are just as important as the heart, mind and body.*

A heartfelt thank you to the Fremantle Dockers players and staff who gave time to support our community. Their willingness to roll up their sleeves and get involved — from packing saucepans and cutlery for client starter packs to contributing their artistic flair to our services — has made a meaningful difference to the team, the clients, and the broader St Pat's community.

Go Fremantle Dockers!



Final product that will feature at the eye clinic

Interested in volunteering?
We'd love to have you on board — [find out how you can get involved here](#)



From St Pat's CEO



Michael Piu CEO (centre), Hon. Wayne Martin AC KC (right), Minister Simone McGurk (left) and Chairman, Pat Colgan (left).

It has been a very busy start to the year at St Pat's. The housing crisis continues to put extreme pressure on our services as we deliver a wide range of support to people at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

Our new Family Support Program, proudly supported through funds from the Stan Perron Charitable Foundation, is already at capacity - delivering desperately needed services to families.

We are also incredibly grateful to the Stan Perron Charitable Foundation for recently confirming support for our Fremantle Library Connect Program (featured here in this edition) as well as a review to determine which Local Government Areas might be the highest priorities to consider an expansion of this highly successful program. Thank you so much to Stan Perron for recognising the value of Library Connect.

Phase 1 of our Fremantle Redevelopment Project was marked by a special ceremony celebrating a significant milestone in St Pat's future and our ongoing commitment to ending homelessness. All of this wouldn't be possible without the invaluable support of **our major donors and partners, with special mention to State Government Western Australia, Lotterywest, Minderoo Foundation, Congregation of the Sisters St John of God, The Congregation of the Presentation Sisters (WA), The McCusker Charitable Foundation, Richard Lockwood, Osboine Family, Sea Corporation, The Catholic Women's League of Western Australia, The Leeuwin Estate Charitable Foundation, the Ungar Family and our anonymous major donors.** This redevelopment is a tangible and critical step forward in enhancing the support we provide.

As we move forward in the year, these moments of connection, celebration and progress remind us of the importance of community, generosity and collaboration to achieving our mission: ending homelessness.

Michael Piu,
CEO St Pat's