

The Bridge News

June 2026

Leading with Purpose: Welcoming Richard Dawe as CEO

Richard Dawe has been announced as The Bridge Inc's Chief Executive Officer (CEO), marking an important step forward for our organisation and the communities we support.

Since joining The Bridge Inc in 2018 as Chief Financial Officer, Richard has brought both strong financial leadership and a genuine commitment to the people at the heart of our services. During his time as Acting CEO, he has connected closely with participants, families and staff across our organisation, building meaningful relationships and developing a clear understanding of how we can continue to grow and improve together.

His approach to leadership reflects The Bridge Inc's values of Integrity, Connectedness, Individuality and Courage. With a focus on collaboration and open communication, Richard is committed to ensuring every person feels heard, respected and supported to work towards their goals. This people-centred approach continues to guide how decisions are made and how services are delivered.

For our community, this appointment brings both continuity and confidence. It reflects The Bridge Inc's ongoing commitment to delivering high quality, person-centred support while remaining responsive to the needs of those we support.

Under Richard's leadership, The Bridge Inc will continue working towards a more connected and inclusive community, where people with disability are supported to build confidence, pursue their goals and create meaningful futures.



Message from the CEO

As I reflect on the stories shared in this edition, I am reminded of what truly defines The Bridge. It is not only the programs we deliver or the partnerships we build, but the people who bring our purpose to life. Our participants, families, staff and community partners are at the centre of everything we do.

It is an honour to step into the role of Chief Executive Officer and continue this journey alongside you. In recent months, I have had the privilege of connecting with many of our participants and staff, and I continue to be inspired by the resilience, ambition and sense of community that exists across The Bridge.

This newsletter shares the top news and impact stories from across The Bridge over the past six months. We've expanded services like Your Job Now in the North, welcomed our first resident into the new Independent Living Homes in the South, and introduced new interstate trips and partnerships with sustainable businesses.

We are also continuing to listen and improve. Through new feedback opportunities and accessible resources, including our Easy Read Participant Handbook, your voice is helping shape how we deliver support.

We're proud to honour our history while looking confidently to the future. Our new Independent Living Homes in Noble Park now stand on the same land where our original centre opened more than 55 years ago. This milestone celebrates our long legacy and continues our commitment to inclusion, dignity and choice.

Across every story, one theme stands out. Connection. Whether through employment, community, culture or shared experiences, these connections are what make our community strong.

As the NDIS continues to evolve, I want to reassure you that The Bridge remains committed to delivering safe, high-quality services as a registered NDIS provider. We will continue to offer guidance and consistency as the NDIS reforms happen.

Together, we will continue to build a more inclusive and connected community and share a few great moments along the way.

Richard Dawe

Richard Dawe
Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

NDIS Reforms: Supporting You Through Change

The Bridge understands the announced updates to the National Disability Insurance Scheme may raise questions for participants, families and the broader community. This “reset” of the NDIS is designed to strengthen the Scheme and ensure it continues to support people with disability into the future.

The changes focus on improving quality, safety and consistency across the sector. This includes clearer eligibility requirements, new assessment processes over time and stronger expectations for providers to be registered and meet set standards. There may also be changes to how some supports are delivered or funded, with a shift in how services are provided over time.

For now, your current plan will stay the same and there is no immediate action required. Changes

will be introduced gradually, and we are here to support you in understanding what they may mean as more information becomes available.

The Bridge has been a fully registered NDIS provider since 2016. This means our services meet strict quality and safety standards, our staff have the appropriate qualifications and checks and our organisation is regularly audited. Being registered reflects our commitment to providing safe, consistent and high-quality support you can trust.

As the NDIS continues to evolve, working with a registered provider will become even more important. The Bridge will continue to stand alongside you, providing reliable support and clear guidance every step of the way.



Our Commitment to Continuous Improvement

Over the past six months, our Client Experience team have been focused on strengthening how we support participants, families and our wider community. We've been asking an important question. How can we continue to improve the experience for the people we support?

During this time, we have introduced a range of new resources and feedback opportunities, helping us better understand what matters most and ensuring your voice continues to shape our services.

One of these initiatives is our new Easy Read Participant Handbook, designed to support new participants as they get started with The Bridge. The handbook provides clear, accessible information about our services, your rights and our responsibilities as a provider, helping to build confidence from day one.

We have also introduced a series of feedback surveys to learn more about the activities participants enjoy and where we can continue to improve. These insights help us better align our programs and supports with individual goals, preferences and needs.

Recognising the important role of carers, we have also connected with our carer community through a dedicated survey. This has helped us better understand how we can support carers in their vital role, including ensuring they feel supported in looking after their own wellbeing.

At The Bridge, continuous improvement is an ongoing journey. We are committed to listening, learning and evolving, working alongside our participants, families and community to deliver meaningful, person-centred support.

We look forward to continuing these conversations and strengthening the ways we connect and grow together.



Bringing Communities Together Across The Bridge

The Bridge recently brought together participants from our North and South locations for a day focused on building new friendships.

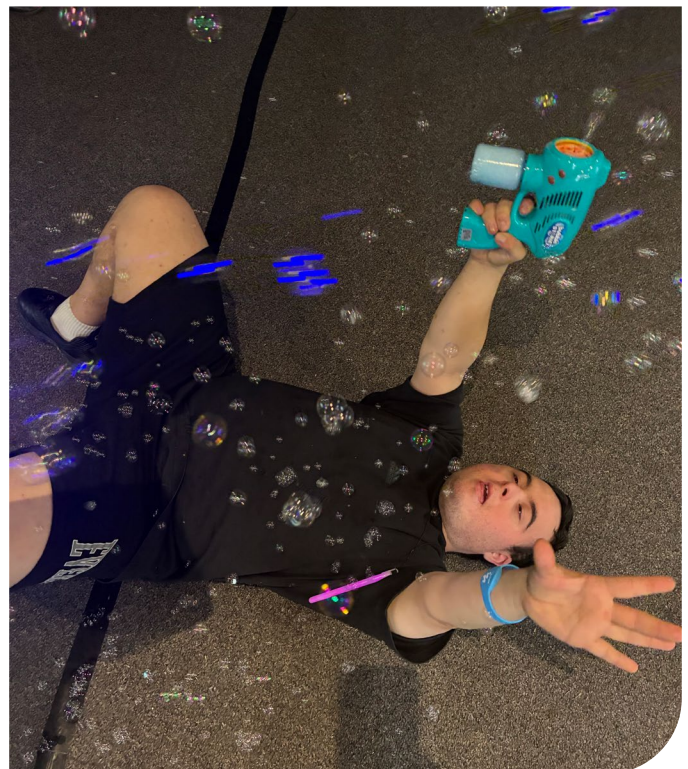
What began as an idea from one participant grew into a shared event, with more than 100 participants and staff coming together. It was an opportunity to meet new people, reconnect across sites and spend time together as one community.

Although the weather required a change of plans, the day continued with activities at a local park followed by an indoor BBQ. Ice cream was generously provided by Dulce Gelateria, a local business owned by the parents of a Greensborough Day Program participant.

The day finished with a disco that many participants described as the highlight. A thank you to 'The Voice', the Disability Self Advocacy Group representing the Greensborough site, for helping bring the event together.

The Bridge continues to create opportunities like this, supporting people to stay connected, build relationships and feel part of a strong and inclusive community.

To learn more about our community services, contact enquiries@thebridgeinc.org.au.



Customer Service Excellence Award Finalist

The Bridge is proud to recognise a fantastic achievement within our Employment team, with Brooke Lowe named a finalist in the Excellence in Customer Service Award at the CoAct ConnectUp 2026 Awards Gala.

Since joining the CoAct network in November 2025, The Bridge's Inclusive Employment Australia (IEA) service has already made a strong impact. As Senior Team Leader, Brooke has played a key role through her commitment to delivering high quality support to both job seekers and employers.

During the transition to IEA, Brooke supported many participants to continue their employment journey with The Bridge. Many chose to stay connected, reflecting the trust and strong relationships she had built over time.

Her contribution extends beyond individual support. Brooke has strengthened partnerships, supported her team through change and consistently gone above and beyond to ensure positive outcomes for participants and colleagues.

The Bridge congratulates Brooke on this well-deserved recognition and celebrates the difference she continues to make.



Your Job Now (YJN) Launches in Greensborough

The Bridge is excited to share the launch of our Your Job Now (YJN) program at our Greensborough site, marking an important step in expanding our employment supports for people with disability.

YJN is the job skills building and work experience service designed to help people develop real-world skills and take positive steps towards employment. Through personalised support, group learning and engaging activities, participants are supported to become work-ready in a way that feels achievable and empowering.

To celebrate the launch, participants played a central role in a special opening event, leading a ribbon-cutting ceremony and hosting a morning tea.

The Bridge looks forward to continuing to grow the YJN program in Greensborough and surrounding areas, supporting participants to build skills, increase confidence and take meaningful steps towards employment.

If you or someone you support would like to join the YJN program and take the next step towards employment, we encourage you to get in touch with our team at enquiries@thebridgeinc.org.au



Driving Impact Through Sustainable Partnerships

As The Bridge continues to grow its Social Enterprise operations, we are seeing our impact expand alongside it.

With the launch of our third Dandenong warehouse, The Bridge Works 3PL, we have strengthened our partnerships with a number of like-minded, sustainability-focused businesses. These collaborations not only support our commercial operations but also contribute to meaningful social and environmental outcomes.

We are now working alongside organisations such as Sustainable Salons, Australia's leading recycling service for the hair, beauty, barbering and pet grooming industries, diverting up to 95 percent of waste from landfill. Our partnership with BlockTexx supports the recycling of textiles and clothing, helping to transform unwanted materials into reusable products and reduce environmental impact. We also partner with Little Green Panda, who produce compostable cups and plastic-free sugarcane straws designed to break down naturally.

In addition, The Bridge partners with Soap Aid, a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to improving hygiene outcomes in vulnerable

communities by collecting, recycling and redistributing soap, with The Bridge operating its repurposing plant.

Together, these partnerships reflect a shared commitment to sustainability, innovation and responsible business practices.

Backed by a growing team of more than 175 supported employees, The Bridge continues to deliver high-quality commercial services while creating real employment opportunities for people we support. Our work demonstrates that strong business performance and social responsibility can go hand in hand.



City of Casey Equity and Inclusion Award

The Bridge Employment services was proud to have been recognised at the City of Casey Community Awards winning the Equity and Inclusion Award.

Attending the awards in March 2026, members of our team were honoured to first be named finalists in this category, and then to be announced as the award winners. This recognition reflects the strong commitment across The Bridge to creating inclusive opportunities and supporting people from diverse backgrounds to achieve their goals.

At the heart of this achievement is the work being delivered through our Open Employment Services, particularly the Casey CALD and Youth Project. This program focuses on supporting

culturally and linguistically diverse young people in the City of Casey to become work-ready and secure sustainable employment in their community.

This award represents more than a single moment of recognition. It reflects the relationships built with participants, families and community partners, and the shared effort to create positive, lasting outcomes. It also highlights the dedication of our team, whose care, respect and commitment continue to make a difference every day.

The Bridge thanks the City of Casey for this recognition and for their ongoing support in promoting equity and inclusion across the community.



Independence Begins in Noble Park

The Bridge has opened brand new Independent Living Homes in Noble Park, marking an important new chapter for the site. Matt, the first resident to move in, has already begun settling into his new home.

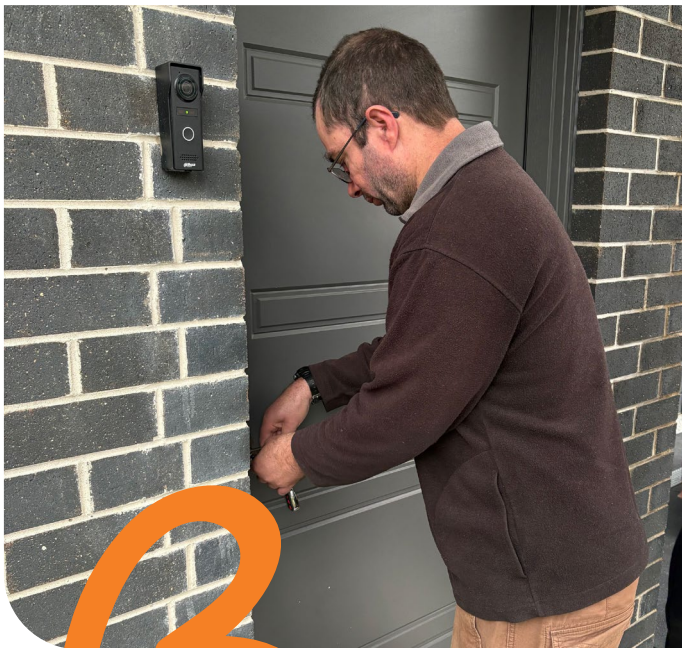
Matt has been part of The Bridge community for some time and is a valued member of The Bridge Mow & Mend team. Now settled into a three-bedroom home, he is embracing this next step towards greater independence while waiting for two future housemates to join him.

The new homes have been purpose-built to support people with Improved Liveability and High Physical Support needs, combining accessible design with Supported Independent Living services delivered by The Bridge. Each home has been created to provide comfort, safety and the opportunity to live more independently.

Although the buildings are new, the history of this site is an important part of The Bridge story. It was once home to the organisation's original service building, known as the Urimbirra Day Training Centre, which supported people with disability in Noble Park from the 1970s. For decades, it served as a place of connection, opportunity and community.

That legacy continues today in a modern way. The homes reflect an ongoing commitment to choice, dignity and independence, ensuring people are supported to live the life they choose.

If you or someone you support would like to learn more about our Independent Living Homes in Noble Park, reach out to our team at enquiries@thebridgeinc.org.au.



Art, Culture and Connection at Narre Warren

A meaningful new addition has been made to our Narre Warren Day Program centre, with the completion of a mural created in collaboration with Aboriginal artist Joshua James.

Created by Joshua, a proud Noongar Wardandi Bibulmun man, the artwork reflects both culture and connection. Titled *Ngarnt Bilya*, meaning “Gumtrees near the River”, the mural tells a story through flowing design, symbolising the many pathways, supports and connections that exist within The Bridge.

At the centre of the artwork, a river flows through the space, representing the journey of each person who attends the program. Alongside this, figures and cultural symbols represent participants, while surrounding elements reflect the important role of families and community. The inclusion of gumtree leaves connects the artwork to both culture and the local environment.

Before the design began, time was spent listening and learning about the Narre Warren community. Insights from staff and participants helped shape the final artwork, ensuring it reflects what the space means to the people who use it every day.

To mark the completion, participants and staff came together for a special presentation, where Joshua shared the story behind the piece. Now, as participants arrive each day, they are welcomed into a space that feels vibrant, inclusive and deeply connected to community and culture.



Building Memories in Byron Bay

Our Getaways team have been on the move again, with participants enjoying an unforgettable interstate adventure to Byron Bay.

The trip was filled with memorable moments, from visiting iconic spots like Cape Byron Lighthouse, St Helena Lookout and the breathtaking Minyon Falls, to exploring the peaceful surrounds of Crystal Castle and Shambhala Gardens and the vibrant Rainbow Temple. Participants also enjoyed time at the beach, local markets and the historic shipwreck, making the most of everything Byron Bay has to offer.

Along the way, there were plenty of opportunities to relax, connect and have fun, whether it was swimming, sharing meals, exploring nature or enjoying a few light-hearted moments and unexpected wildlife encounters.

A strong focus on participant choice meant everyone could shape their own experience, try new things and build confidence in a supportive environment.

We would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to our incredible staff for organising and supporting such a meaningful trip. Their dedication helps create opportunities for adventure, connection and lasting memories. Participants had a wonderful time in Byron Bay and came home with stories to share and experiences to remember.

Interested in joining our next adventure? Get in touch with our Getaways team at getaways@thebridgeinc.org.au to learn more.



Staying Connected Through Support Coordination

The Bridge understands that life circumstances can change, but the right support should remain consistent. For Deb, a recent move with her family to Kyabram brought a shift in location, while her connection to support remained strong.

With guidance from our Support Coordination team, Deb has continued to access the services and supports she needs through a flexible and responsive approach. By working remotely, the team has ensured she remains supported and focused on her individual goals.

Deb has been building her confidence across a range of areas, including education, health and recreation. With a combination of individual and group-based supports, she has been able to continue developing skills at her own pace and in a way that reflects what matters most to her.

One of Deb's recent goals was learning to sew. Through persistence and encouragement, she has successfully created her own skirt, a milestone that reflects not only her progress, but her growing confidence and independence.

Stories like Deb's highlight the importance of personalised, consistent support and the value of working alongside each person as they move towards their goals. No matter where someone is located, The Bridge remains committed to providing support that is flexible, reliable and centred around the individual.

If you or someone you support would like to learn more about Support Coordination, get in touch with our team at enquiries@thebridgeinc.org.au







The Bridge Inc.

Registered Office

- Level 1, 33 Princes Highway
Dandenong VIC 3175

☎ (03) 8710 8555

New Service Enquiries

enquiries@thebridgeinc.org.au
1800 274 343

General Enquiries

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The Bridge Connects

Registered Office

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☎ (03) 8710 8555

Leisure and Recreation (Getaways) In Home and Community Support (Your Supports)

Support Coordination

(03) 8710 8555

Day Programs

- **Springvale South Day Program**
69-71 Athol Road,
Springvale South VIC 3172

- **Narre Warren Day Program**
67-69 Webb Street,
Narre Warren VIC 3805

- **Dandenong Hub**
Level 1, 31 Princes Highway
Dandenong VIC 3175

- **Beaconsfield Day Program**
49 Wallace Street
Beaconsfield VIC 3807

- **Cranbourne Day Program**
3 Stawell Street
Cranbourne VIC 3977

- **Pakenham Hub**
89-91 Slattery Place
Pakenham VIC 3810

- **Macleod Day Program**
88 McNamara Street
Macleod VIC 3085

- **Greensborough Hub**
25 Grimshaw Street
Greensborough VIC 3088

Independent Living Homes:

- **Chaucer Crescent,**
Bundoora VIC 3083
- **Fernside Avenue,**
Briar Hill VIC 3088
- **Airlie Road,**
Montmorency VIC 3094
- **Gould Circuit,**
Noble Park VIC 3174

The Bridge Employment

Registered Office

- Level 1, 33 Princes Highway
Dandenong VIC 3175

☎ (03) 8710 8555

Inclusive Employment Australia (IEA) Job Skills Building (Your Job Now) Supported Employment Social Enterprise

Inclusive Employment Australia

- **Narre Warren IEA**
1/26-28 Verdun Drive
Narre Warren VIC 3805

- **Doveton IEA**
23 Autumn Place
Doveton VIC 3177

- **Pakenham Hub IEA**
89-91 Slattery Place
Pakenham VIC 3810

- **Emerald IEA**
323C Main Street
Emerald VIC 3782

- **Koo Wee Rup IEA**
352-354 Rossiter Road
Koo Wee Rup VIC 3981

Your Job Now

- **Dandenong Hub**
Level 1, 31 Princes Highway
Dandenong VIC 3175

- **Greensborough Hub**
25 Grimshaw Street
Greensborough VIC 3088

- **Pakenham Hub**
89-91 Slattery Place
Pakenham VIC 3810

Supported Employment/ Social Enterprise

- **The Bridge Works**
95A Cheltenham Road
Dandenong VIC 3175

- **The Bridge 2Works**
93B Cheltenham Road
Dandenong VIC 3175

- **The Bridge Works 3PL**
18 Short Street
Dandenong VIC 3175

- **The Bridge Works Northside**
36 Green Street
Thomastown VIC 3074

- **The Bridge Works Mobile Services**
Mow & Mend
Cleaning Crew