

STRAIGHT FROM THE HEART

YOUR CLUBS MAKING A BIG DIFFERENCE

The Clubs & Community Awards is an opportunity to celebrate the difference clubs make across NSW. Here are just a few of the finalists for 2026. Full list on the back page.

Campsie RSL Club
Stronger Together: Supporting Local Youth, Building Stronger Communities
Category: Education

Campsie RSL Club is proving that investing early in young people can change lives. Through its support of the Mental Fitness 4 Life pilot at Granville Boys High School, the club has helped vulnerable students build resilience, improve behaviour and reconnect with school. Backed by respected mentors and evidence-based learning, the four-week program delivered powerful results – school attendance increased, negative incidents dropped by 70 per cent and suspensions were eliminated entirely for participating students. Students also reported better mental health, stronger coping skills and improved relationships. The club's continued funding into 2026 reflects a belief that prevention is better than crisis response – supporting safer schools, stronger families and a healthier local community.

Dee Why RSL
Empowering Hospitality's Next Generation
Category: Education

Dee Why RSL is helping shape the future of the hospitality industry by opening its doors to local students and showing them what's possible. Through a partnership with the NSW Department of Education, the club hosted an immersive two-day hospitality tour, giving students hands-on experience and real insight into career pathways beyond the classroom. Students explored the venue behind the scenes, heard directly from staff across multiple departments and took part in a practical cooking workshop led by the club's culinary team. The experience sparked confidence, reduced anxiety about post-school options and delivered real outcomes, including two apprenticeships and 23 work experience placements. With ongoing plans to expand the program, Dee Why RSL is helping address local skills shortages while inspiring the next generation.

Mounties
Back to School Backpacks for Kids
Category: Education

Mounties Group is helping give thousands of children a fair start to the school year once again through its Back to School Backpack initiative. Partnering with Good360 Australia, the club delivered more than 800 fully stocked backpacks to students across NSW in term one this year, reaching metropolitan, regional and

remote communities – including every school-aged child in Wilcannia. Funded by an \$80,000 ClubGrants commitment and supported by hands-on volunteering, Mounties staff packed backpacks filled with essential learning supplies, easing pressure on families facing cost of living challenges. The initiative ensured children could walk into classrooms confident, prepared and ready to learn from day one.

Bankstown Sports
Hope for the Homeless
Category: Health Care

As homelessness rises across NSW, Bankstown Sports has made tackling the crisis a clear community priority. Over the past year, the club has backed multiple frontline initiatives supporting people experiencing or at risk of homelessness across the Canterbury Bankstown region. The club has provided funding, meals and practical support – from blankets and pillows to more than 1100 freshly-prepared meals cooked monthly by club staff. It's supported emergency accommodation, food relief and awareness-raising events, responding to homelessness with action, not just donations.

Mingara Recreation Club
Keeping Elsie's Promise: Vision to Palliative Care
Category: Health Care

What began as a single conversation at Mingara has grown into one of the Central Coast's most significant community health success stories. For more than a decade, Mingara has stood alongside the Lions Club of Wyoming East Gosford Centennial to support Elsie's Project – an extraordinary community-led campaign that delivered the region's first dedicated palliative care unit. From hosting advocacy forums and fundraising events to providing sustained financial and in-kind support, Mingara helped turn community determination into lasting health infrastructure. The result is adult palliative care units at Gosford and Wyong hospitals, plus a dedicated paediatric ward – giving families dignity, choice and compassionate care close to home. Serving thousands of patients, the project shows what's possible when clubs go beyond funding to become true community partners.

SS&A Albury
SS&A Drives Support for Children in Need
Category: Health Care

For families facing childhood illness, the ability to receive care at home can make a profound difference. Being surrounded by familiar environments and loved ones

reduces stress and disruption for both children and parents, while maintaining high clinical standards of care. The SS&A Club has a longstanding commitment to improving health and wellbeing access in the Albury Wodonga region, particularly for children and families when they need support most. This commitment was brought to life through the funding and delivery of a dedicated vehicle for the Paediatrics at the Children's Home program at Albury Wodonga Health. The new Subaru Forester is already changing how care is delivered, enabling nurses to provide vital paediatric support in family homes so children who are medically stable can remain safely and comfortably out of hospital.



Muswellbrook RSL Club
Muswellbrook RSL Veterans Centre
Category: Heart of the Community

What started as a mould-ravaged tennis court has become a powerful example of how clubs step up for their communities. Muswellbrook RSL Club has transformed an unsightly, unused space into a purpose-built Veterans' Centre, giving local veterans a welcoming place to access welfare services, meetings and support. Fully funded by the club at a cost of around \$400,000, the new facility features an office and meeting rooms for the local sub-branch. The initiative reflects the club's deep understanding of evolving veteran needs and its willingness to reinvest back into the community it serves.

Twin Towns
A Driving Need for Food
Category: Heart of the Community

As the Twed grapples with a deepening food and homelessness crisis, one local club has delivered a solution with real impact. Twin Towns has stepped up to support Vibe Care Pantry, a frontline charity now feeding around 3000 struggling families across the region. After floods, cyclones and soaring costs pushed demand to breaking point, the charity's ageing delivery truck simply couldn't keep up – leaving food behind while people went hungry. Through its Twinnies Gives program, Twin Towns helped fund a brand new 25-tonne refrigerated truck,



SS&A Albury chief executive officer Gerard Darmody, far right, with nurses and children in front of the brightly-wrapped set of wheels for use by the Paediatrics at the Child's Home (PATCH) program at Albury Wodonga Health. Picture: Jodie McMaster

combining \$150,000 in ClubGrants with further support from the Twin Towns Services Community Foundation. The result has been transformative, doubling food distribution and ensuring surplus food reaches families instead of landfill. It's a powerful reminder that clubs are more than social hubs – they are community lifelines when locals need help most.

Club Lennox Sports
Building Resilience Through Connection Club
Category: Mental Wellbeing

In a screen-obsessed world, where kids are more connected online than to each other, Club Lennox Sports has delivered a solution that's making a real difference. The Club's Connection Club program, run during school holidays, helps local children build confidence, resilience and emotional wellbeing through sport, mindfulness and creative activities. Designed for children aged 5 to 12, the program combines soccer, touch football and lawn bowls with breathing exercises, meditation and healthy cooking – teaching kids how to move, connect and calm their minds. Delivered in partnership with local coaches and wellbeing facilitators, Connection Club puts respect, inclusion and positive connection at its heart. The program is developed and delivered by Club Lennox Sports using its facilities, staff and community partnerships, covering operational costs and catering. Since

launching in 2025, the program has proved hugely popular with families and is now a holiday staple in Lennox Head.

Bondi Golf & Diggers Club
Helping the Community When It Matters Most
Category: Small Club, Big Heart

In the aftermath of the Bondi Beach terror attack, Bondi Golf & Diggers Club showed how local clubs step up when their community needs them most. Recognising a surge in emotional distress, the small community club partnered with Lifeline Bondi to fund a dedicated crisis support seat for 12 months – helping ensure more calls were answered during a critical period. The support was an extension of the club's long-term partnership with Lifeline, hosting charity golf days, backing mental health awareness events and other various suicide prevention initiatives. At a time when many were hurting, this support has saved lives and helped people at their most vulnerable.

Urbenville Bowling Club
Small Community Club Supporting Rescue Helicopter
Category: Small Club, Big Heart

Urbenville Bowling Club has quietly played a vital role in saving lives across the Northern Rivers. When emergency services needed a safe landing site for

aerial transport, the small community club stepped up – upgrading the access road and building a concrete helipad that is now used hundreds of times by the Westpac Rescue Helicopter, as well as by police, fire and ambulance services. Funded through the efforts of the club, its members and local contractors donating their time and skills, it includes lighting and windsocks – installed on the club's roof – and ongoing maintenance by volunteers to keep it operational day and night. The club also raises funds annually for the rescue helicopter service and is planning further upgrades to improve patient transfers and emergency access.



Ryde-Eastwood Leagues Club
Protecting our Community When It Matters Most
Category: Social Inclusion

When crisis strikes, Ryde-Eastwood Leagues Club has shown what real community responsibility looks like. In 2025, the club took the extraordinary step of providing its own residential

properties to provide safe, fully furnished transitional accommodation for individuals and families escaping domestic violence. These club-owned homes offer dignity, security and a vital first step from crisis to recovery, supported by specialist services and pathways to long-term housing. Beyond accommodation, the club has embedded action at every level – supporting crisis interventions onsite, distributing emergency escape packs, training staff to respond, backing awareness campaigns and investing in prevention programs through sport and community partnerships.

Club Maitland City
Hope has a Home with Carrie's Place
Category: Social Inclusion

In 2023, Club Maitland City launched the CMC Foundation, a registered charity dedicated to tackling local causes – and its partnership with Carrie's Place has become a lifeline for women and children escaping domestic violence. Recognising the growing demand for their services, the club committed to forming an ongoing partnership built on action rather than awareness alone. Through the Foundation, the club has contributed more than \$123,000 in financial and in-kind support, including an \$80,000 commitment to fully furnish new crisis accommodation so families arriving with nothing can feel safe, dignified and at home. From whitegoods and food

support to winter appeals and matched fundraising campaigns, the club has focused on practical help that delivers real outcomes.

Liverpool Catholic Club
Breaking Barriers on the Ice
Category: Social Inclusion

For children who are visually impaired, school holidays can be isolating – but Liverpool Catholic Club has helped change that. In 2025, the club supported a free, fully-inclusive Skate Ability Day, giving local children a safe and confidence-building holiday experience tailored to their needs. Delivered at the Club's Ice Rink with support from Skate Ability, Minifit Australia and Guide Dogs NSW/ACT, the program combined inclusive ice skating with adaptive sport and movement activities. The day removed barriers for families and created a space where every child felt supported, capable and included. The initiative builds on the club's long-term commitment to accessibility, inclusive facilities and specialist programs.

Tuncurry Beach Bowling Club
A Place to Belong
Category: Social Inclusion

Tuncurry Beach Bowling Club has been formally recognised by Dementia Australia as "working towards becoming dementia friendly", reflecting a deep commitment to inclusion, understanding and respect for locals living with dementia and their families. Working closely with Dementia Australia and community members, the club has introduced staff education, improved signage and accessibility, and hosted awareness sessions to reduce stigma and build confidence in supporting patrons with cognitive challenges. People living with dementia now report feeling more comfortable, welcome and supported when visiting the venue. Importantly, the club is also encouraging other local businesses to follow its lead, creating a broader ripple effect of compassion across the region.

Pennant Hills Golf Club
From Tunnel to Turf
Category: Sustainable Future

In partnership with the NorthConnex project, the club has delivered a landmark water sustainability initiative that secures its future while benefiting the wider community. The project redirects up to 86 million litres of high quality treated water each year from the NorthConnex tunnel system to the club, virtually eliminating the need for drinking water to irrigate the course. It has involved capturing reverse-osmosis treated water annually from the NorthConnex tunnel treatment plant and transferring it directly to the club's water storage facilities. To enable this, a horizontal bore was constructed beneath Pennant Hills Rd, linking the treatment plant to the club's existing recycled water infrastructure. This has reduced pressure on Sydney's water supply, cuts run-off into local creeks and improves resilience during droughts. It preserves valuable

green open space that cools the local area and supports biodiversity.

Wests Group Macarthur
Buzzing for the Bees
Category: Sustainable Future

When a valued local organisation was at risk of losing its home, Wests Group Macarthur stepped in and delivered a long-term solution with lasting impact. Facing eviction after the loss of funding, the Macarthur Beekeepers Association found a new future thanks to a purpose-built facility created by the club. Wests invested heavily to establish a permanent beekeeping and education hub at Lakeside Golf Club, complete with hives, training spaces and honey extraction facilities. The partnership has safeguarded decades of local environmental education while supporting pollination, biodiversity and food security across the region. Beyond infrastructure, the club provides ongoing support through facilities, promotion and community engagement, helping the association grow and thrive.

Club Marconi
A Favourite Community Festival that Celebrates Tradition
Category: Vibrancy & Culture

For more than 60 years, Club Marconi's Chestnut & Wine Festival has brought Western Sydney together in a celebration of culture, tradition and community spirit. Held every April, the much-loved Festa delle Castagne shares a cherished Italian tradition – roasting chestnuts – while welcoming thousands of people from all backgrounds to enjoy food, music and family fun. What began in the 1960s with a few hundred kilos of chestnuts has grown into the biggest chestnut festival in NSW, now roasting more than 1500kg and attracting over 7000 attendees each year. Powered by dedicated volunteers, the festival blends tradition with modern entertainment, from live performances to kids' activities. The festival has preserved and celebrated Italian heritage, strengthened social bonds and provided a welcoming space for Sydney's multicultural community.

Moama Bowling Club
Major Boost for Community Safety
Category: Emergency Response

Moama Bowling Club has once again shown why clubs play a vital role beyond their own walls, committing \$100,000 to the Echuca-Moama Safe Towns CCTV Project to help improve safety across the two towns' busiest precincts. The contribution helped unlock Stage 1 of a coordinated CCTV network covering Echuca's CBD, shopping and tourism areas, building on an earlier \$30,000 investment from the club. Developed in partnership with police, councils, businesses and community groups on both sides of the border, the project aims to deter anti-social behaviour, support

emergency responses and boost confidence for locals, workers and visitors – particularly after dark. For a region driven by tourism and hospitality, safety is essential.

Bankstown RSL Club
Sport Through Partnership with Bankstown City FC
Category: Fostering Grassroots Sport

Bankstown RSL Club is proving that strong communities start at the grassroots, through its long-standing partnership with Bankstown City Football Club. By investing in local football – from juniors taking their first kick to senior players representing the region – the club has helped keep sport accessible, inclusive and affordable for families. The club's support reduces cost pressures by helping fund uniforms, training programs and community events, while upgrades to lighting and facilities have allowed participation to grow, including increased opportunities for women and inclusive teams. Beyond the field, the partnership supports school holiday clinics, multicultural programs and volunteer development, strengthening local connections and leadership.



Parra Leagues
Restoring Sight, Smiles and Dignity Locally
Category: Health Care

Health care should be available for everyone, however sadly for many people living on the margins, it isn't necessarily a given. A painful tooth, failing eyesight or untreated infection can quietly erode confidence, independence and dignity, often without visible urgency yet with profound consequences. Parra Leagues has partnered with Mobileyes & Dental Foundation to deliver free mobile dental and vision care directly to some of Parramatta's most vulnerable residents – bringing essential care to those who would otherwise go without. The clinic has provided locals with free dental check-ups, comprehensive eye examinations, prescription glasses and care kits including toothbrushes, toothpaste, floss and education on basic oral health. The partnership has helped transform health care access, ensuring that sight, smiles and dignity are not privileges – but rights.