



Whiddon



The background image shows a young woman with long brown hair, wearing a red and yellow patterned top, high-fiving an elderly woman with short grey hair and glasses, who is wearing a red t-shirt. They are both smiling. In the background, there are shelves with various items, a vase of flowers, and a bulletin board with papers. The scene is set in what appears to be a care home or community center.

Whiddon's  
**Strategic Plan**  
**2026+**

**Transforming Care:**  
Future Ready



A white silhouette of a hand with fingers spread, positioned in the bottom right corner of the page, overlapping the orange decorative shapes.



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## Enriching lives and making a real difference

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“

The Strategic Plan reflects both continuity and ambition. It builds on the values and principles that have guided Whiddon for generations, while clearly signalling our intent to lead into the future.

”





## Setting Our Course

As we look to the future, we do so with a deep respect for our past. For almost 80 years, Whiddon has been part of the fabric of communities - growing, adapting and evolving in response to the needs of the people we serve. This ongoing commitment to review, learn and adapt has been central to our journey, and remains just as important as we plan for the next five years.

Whiddon is, and always has been, a community organisation. At our core is a simple and enduring purpose: to serve others with care, dignity and respect. That sense of responsibility to individuals, families and communities, continues to guide how we think, act and make decisions today.

We enter this next chapter from a position of strength, shaped by the dedication of our people and the resilience shown across our organisation. In a time of significant change within the aged care sector, our teams have remained focused on what matters most: supporting older people to live meaningful lives, strengthening connections, and delivering care that reflects both compassion and integrity.

Our strategic plan honours this legacy while looking ahead with clarity and ambition. It recognises that expectations are evolving, and that innovation, research and strong partnerships will be key to delivering better outcomes for the people we support.

As a Board, we are confident in Whiddon's ability to continue evolving, building on strong foundations while embracing new opportunities. Together, we are setting a clear direction for the future: one that remains grounded in who we are, responsive to the changing world around us, and focused on creating lasting, meaningful impact.

On behalf of the Board, I thank our people, volunteers, partners and supporters. Your commitment is what brings our purpose to life, and it is through this shared dedication that we will continue to serve our communities for generations to come.

**Len Kearns**

**Board Chair**



“  
Everything we do  
at Whiddon begins  
here: with the people  
we serve.  
”

## Looking Ahead: 2026/2027

Everything we do at Whiddon begins here: **with the people we serve.**

Every decision we make, every challenge we face and every opportunity we pursue starts with a simple question: how will this improve the lives of older people and the communities around them?

Over the past few years, we've spent time strengthening our foundations. We've invested in our people, improved our systems, and embedded practices like Relationship Based Care more deeply across our organisation. We often described this not as a time of standing still, but one of careful preparation, making sure we were ready for what comes next.

**Now, we are ready to move forward.**

Our 2026/27 plan reflects a shift, from preparation to momentum. It's about stepping into the future with clarity and confidence, knowing that while aged care continues to evolve, we are ready to respond, adapt and lead where it matters most.

The year ahead will be defined by delivery. We will advance significant developments at Temora, Bourke and Yamba, creating new opportunities for older people and the communities we serve. We will invest in our people through a refreshed Enterprise Agreement and initiatives that support growth, recognition and long term careers at Whiddon. We will continue building our Research and Positive Ageing capability, turning innovation into better outcomes for residents and clients. We will launch the Whiddon Foundation to help accelerate research, new programs and community impact. At the same time, we will continue strengthening Relationship Based Care through RBC Enrich and evolving our care and wellbeing services, ensuring we remain focused on what matters most: enriching lives and making a real difference.

At the heart of this strategy is a simple but powerful idea: people come first. When we get that right, everything else follows.

To bring that to life, we need more than vision. We need a clear and shared direction our people can connect with and trust. That starts with our purpose, which defines why we exist. Our vision sets where we are going. And our strategic directions guide how we get there.

We've deliberately kept these priorities clear and focused:



People



Care



Sustainability



Research



Communities

These are not just themes on paper. Every project, every investment and every decision we make is tested against them. If something doesn't align, we don't proceed. That discipline matters because it ensures that our actions consistently reflect what we stand for.

Just as importantly, we measure what we do. We look at outcomes, not just outputs or intent, so we can understand where we are making a difference and where we need to keep improving.

Leadership, in this environment, is about more than setting direction. It's about building confidence. Confidence that we are serious about our purpose. Confidence that we will make decisions that reflect our values, even when they are difficult. And confidence that we will continue to invest in better ways of delivering care.

Our role extends beyond the services we deliver. We are part of communities, part of a broader system, and part of people's lives at their most important moments. That comes with responsibility to lead thoughtfully, to innovate responsibly, and to always place people at the centre of what we do.

I am incredibly proud of our teams and the culture we continue to build together. And I am confident that, with a shared sense of purpose and clear direction, we are well placed to shape the future of aged care in a way that is meaningful, sustainable and deeply human.

**Chris Mamarelis**

CEO of Whiddon





## Living our Purpose

All of the important work that we do at Whiddon is guided by our Purpose and Vision. We genuinely strive to go above and beyond in all that we do. Our Purpose reminds us why we exist, our Vision tells us where we are going and our Strategic Directions are a guide for how we deliver.

### Purpose

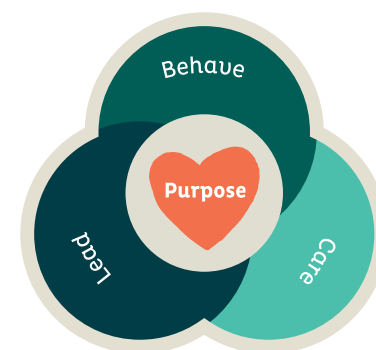
To enrich people's lives and make a real difference

### Vision

Transforming care with purpose and integrity, by empowering our people and strengthening communities.

## The Whiddon Way

The Whiddon Way unites how we lead, behave, and care, guided by a shared purpose. It reflects a relationship based approach where meaningful connections shape consistent, values-driven care and positive outcomes.



## Whiddon Values

Whiddon's values are at the heart of everything we do, guiding how we care, connect, and support others. They reflect our commitment to respect, compassion, and dignity in every interaction.



## Strategic Enablers

These strategic enablers provide the foundation for delivering high-quality, sustainable care, supporting innovation, operational strength, and environments that enhance wellbeing and independence.



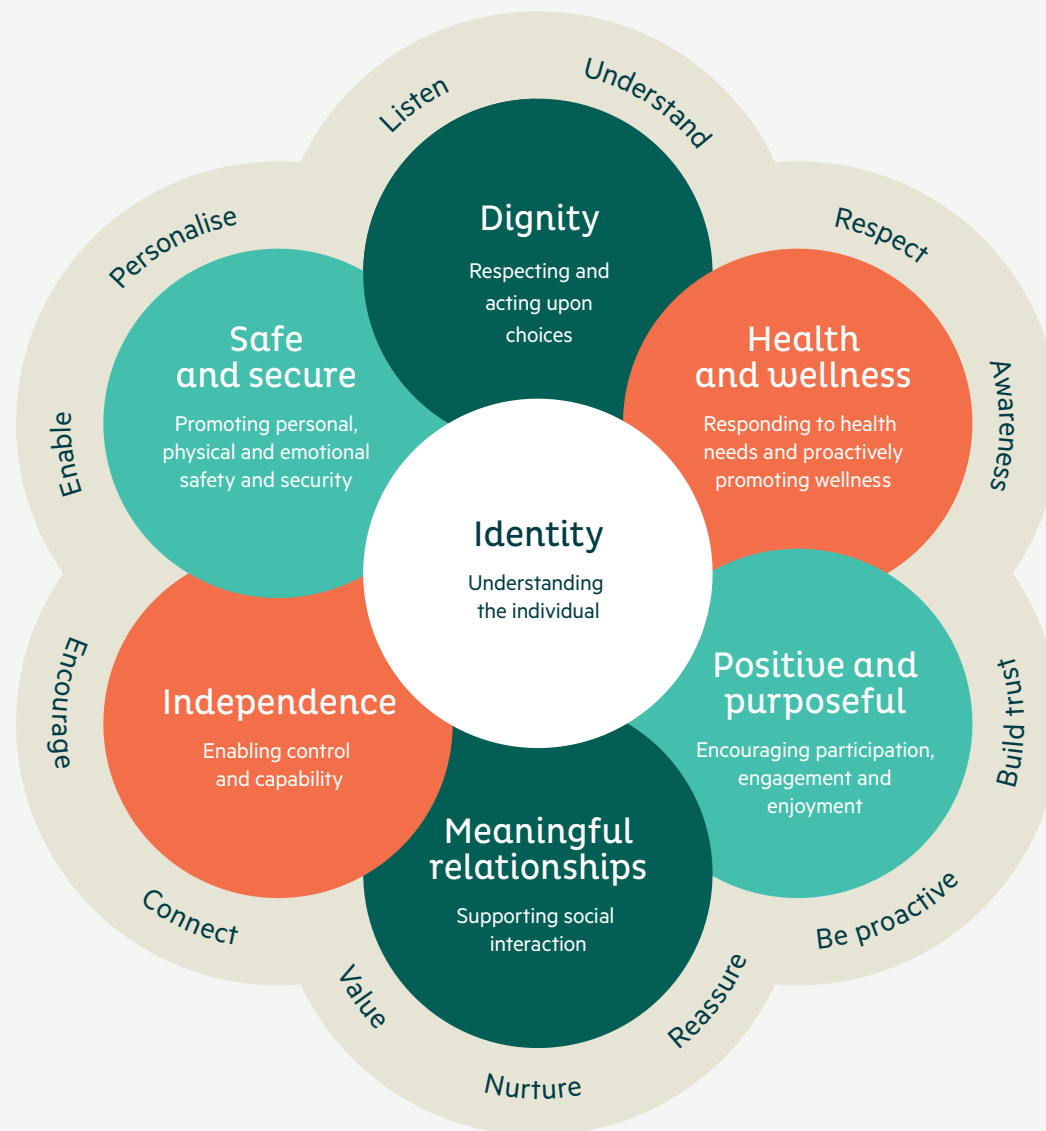
### My Life - Our Model of Care

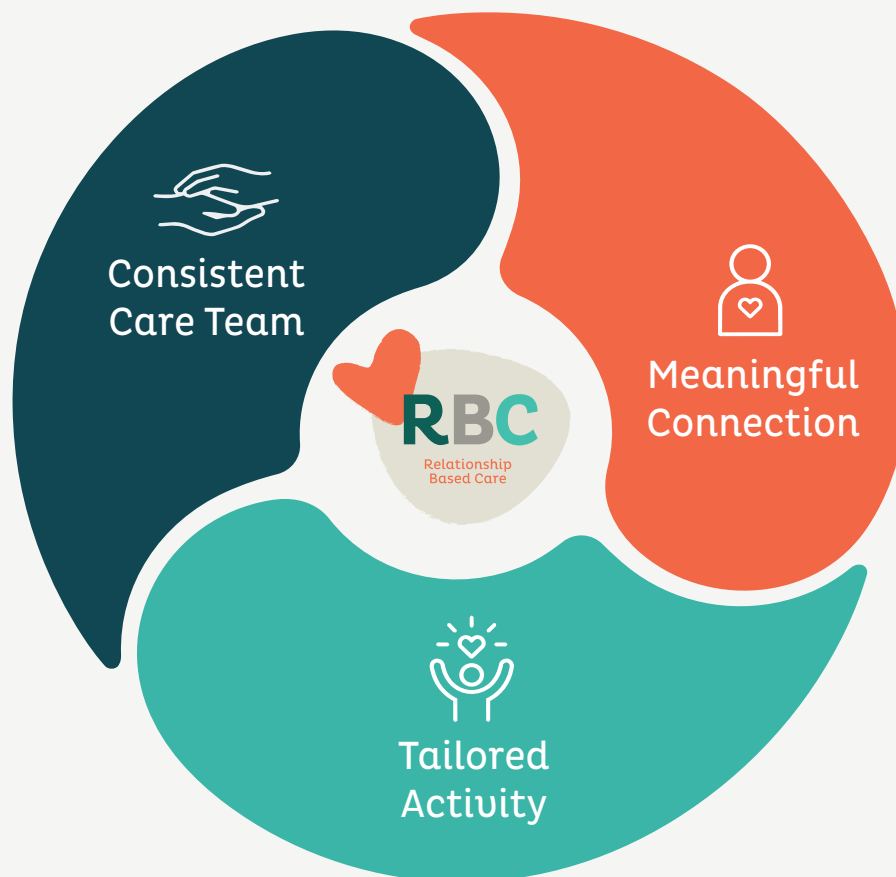
Whiddon's MyLife Model of Care is a contemporary, person-centred framework that recognises each individual as a whole person, with identity at the heart of everything we do. It brings together clinical, physical, emotional and social wellbeing, ensuring these are not treated in isolation, but as equally important contributors to a meaningful life.

Grounded in strong relationships and a reablement approach, MyLife supports people to maintain independence, stay connected, and continue doing the things that matter most to them. It is embedded through Relationship Based Care, which underpins how we partner with clients, families and teams every day.

The model is structured around seven wellbeing outcomes that guide how care and support are delivered in practice. By consistently delivering on these outcomes, we aim to enhance quality of life, strengthen identity and purpose, and create genuinely meaningful experiences for the people we support.

At Whiddon, MyLife is our commitment to enriching lives and making a real and lasting difference.





### RBC has three key elements

| Consistent Care Team                                                                                                                         | Meaningful Connection                                                                                                                            | Tailored Activity                                                                                               |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Rostering and team practices that enable the same people to support residents/clients - building trust, comfort and understanding over time. | Taking time to listen, connect and understand each person's story - partnering with residents/clients and loved ones to shape personalised care. | Supporting meaningful activities, relationships and routines that reflect what matters most to each individual. |

## Relationship Based Care (RBC)

Relationship Based Care (RBC) is the foundation of how we deliver care and services at Whiddon. It is the approach that enables our MyLife Model of Care to come to life and supports consistent, meaningful outcomes for residents and clients across Residential and Home Care services.

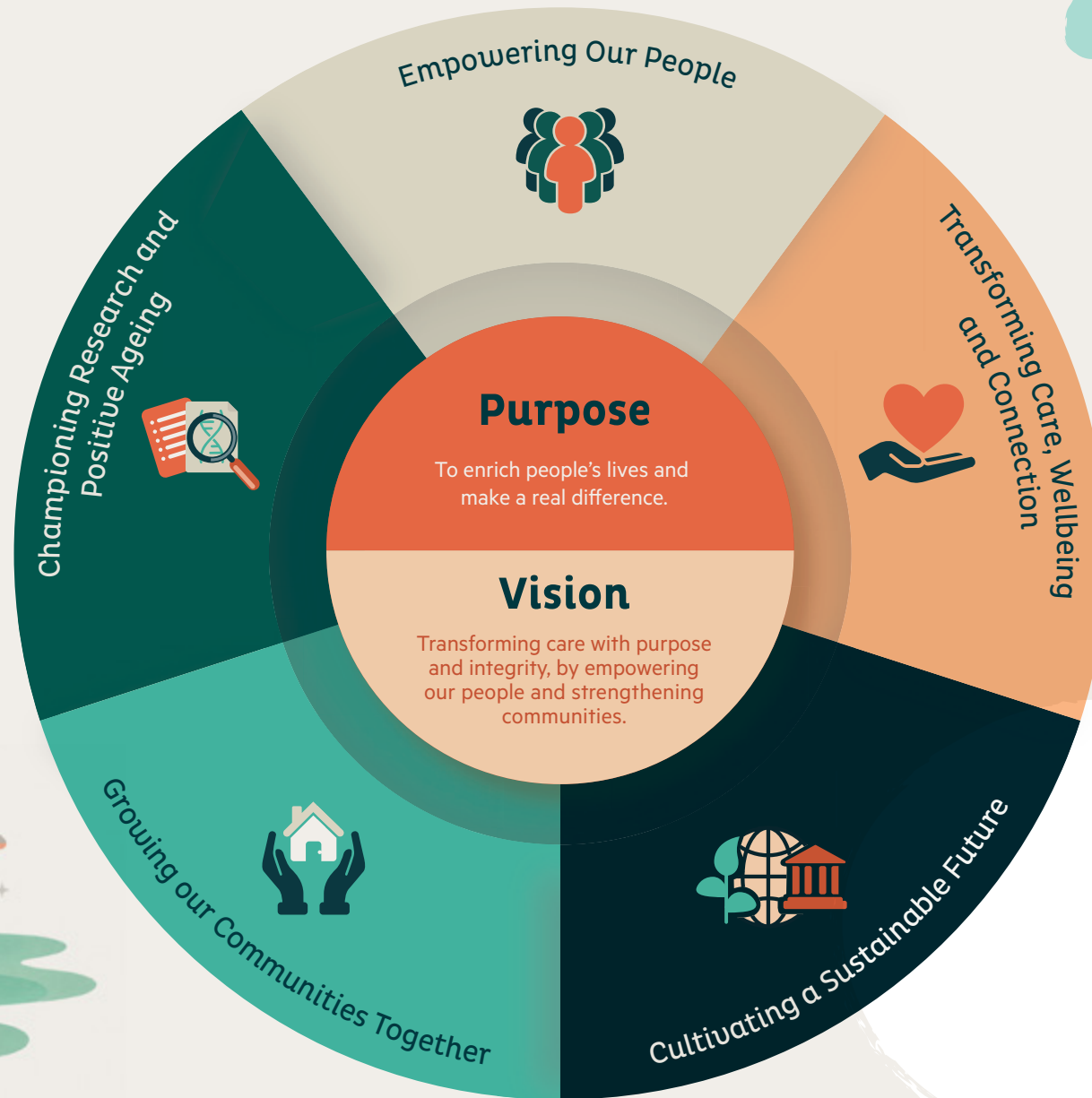
RBC represents a deliberate shift away from task-driven care towards a deeply human, relationship-centred way of working. It focuses on building genuine connections, understanding each person's identity, preferences and lived experience, and using this knowledge to shape care that is truly personalised.

At its core, RBC is a partnership between residents/clients, their families, and our teams. Through continuity of care, meaningful interactions and shared decision-making, we create an environment where people feel valued, respected and understood.

This approach is underpinned by a strong reablement focus - supporting people to maintain independence, stay connected to what matters most, and continue to live with purpose and dignity.

RBC is "the way we care," shaping every interaction to move beyond transactional tasks to meaningful, relationship-driven experiences.

# Strategic Directions





| Transforming Care                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Cultivating a Sustainable Future                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Research & Positive Ageing                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Empowering our People                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Growing Communities                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Delivering relationship-based care (RBC) which empowers choice and dignity.                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Building enduring care, culture & communities for generations to come.                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Innovation grounded in research, technology & real world application.                                                                                                                                                         | Supporting & developing our people to act with purpose, skill and heart.                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Strengthening connection with the communities we serve, while learning from them to shape better care, stronger partnerships and more meaningful local impact.                                                                                       |
| To achieve this direction, we will deliver projects that not only foster expert, compassionate care, but also create experiences that truly enrich and change lives.                                                                                                                                     | Through these initiatives, we will build a stronger, more sustainable future and deepen the bonds that connect us with our communities.                                                                                                                                                             | We will realise this direction through bold projects that harness the ideas and creativity of our people, fuel discovery & challenge the future of Aged Care.                                                                 | This will be achieved through projects that nurture our people, inspire growth and create a culture where the Whiddon Way thrives.                                                                                                                                            | This will be achieved through collaboration, advocacy and projects that support our regional communities.                                                                                                                                            |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evolve RBC to include world-leading dementia care training</li> <li>• Invest in and grow our Reablement Programs</li> <li>• Continue to enhance our Dining Experience and Homestyle Kitchens</li> <li>• Invest in and develop research opportunities</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to actively pursue opportunities to grow the organisation responsibly</li> <li>• Drive Whiddon's Property Development projects</li> <li>• Initiate Whiddon's ESG Strategy</li> <li>• Evolve our AI Initiatives to support our Strategy</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grow our Research &amp; Positive Ageing Hub</li> <li>• Develop new opportunities with our research partners</li> <li>• Evolve Point of Care Technologies and Partnerships</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Front-line wage growth</li> <li>• Establish an Employee Voice Framework</li> <li>• Support Overseas Nurses Program</li> <li>• Expand our Employee Whiddon Benefits Program</li> <li>• Launch our new co-designed Uniforms</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to support community partnerships (existing and new opportunities)</li> <li>• Embed the Whiddon Foundation and Philanthropy Strategy</li> <li>• Launch our Whiddon Communities Strategy</li> </ul> |

## Care Guided by Experience

At Whiddon we are strengthening everyday care through deep expertise, evidence and leadership. Expert-led Care ensures that our services are informed by leading practice, translated into real world outcomes, and embedded consistently across our organisation.

Whiddon's investment in specialist clinical and wellbeing expertise is strengthening care, reducing risk, and supporting better quality of life - both now and into the future.

**Our Expert-led Care Approach includes:**

### Expert Reablement & Falls Prevention

Through specialist leadership, including Dr Jennie Hewitt, Whiddon is advancing evidence based reablement and falls prevention practices that support mobility, independence and confidence, while reducing avoidable harm.

### Dementia & Palliative Care Expertise

Specialist leadership in dementia and palliative care ensures compassionate, relationship based approaches are underpinned by best practice, clinical excellence and dignity at every stage of ageing and end of life care.

Expert-led Care reflects our commitment not just to providing care, but to leading care - thoughtfully, responsibly and with purpose.

### Occupational Therapy

Our Occupational Therapist focuses on developing programs to increase our clients' & residents' abilities to participate more fully in activities that matter to them. They focus on emotional, social, physical and mental health and work with the person to design programs that help them reach goals they feel are important. Our dedicated OT, Amanda Lobb is currently implementing and testing Cognitive Stimulation Therapy and Hydrotherapy programs, as well as setting up scalable OT services for clients in Home Care across all our regions.

### Specialist Dietetics

Dietitian, Farah has joined our team to help strengthen nutrition, dining and hydration across our services - supporting wellbeing, clinical outcomes and enjoyment of everyday life, while informing innovation in food, texture modification and reablement.



**Jennie Hewitt**

General Manager, Clinical  
Research & Reablement



**Amanda Lobb**

Occupational Therapist



**Farah Shaghi**

Dietician



**Cathy Strachan**

Dementia & Palliative Care CNC

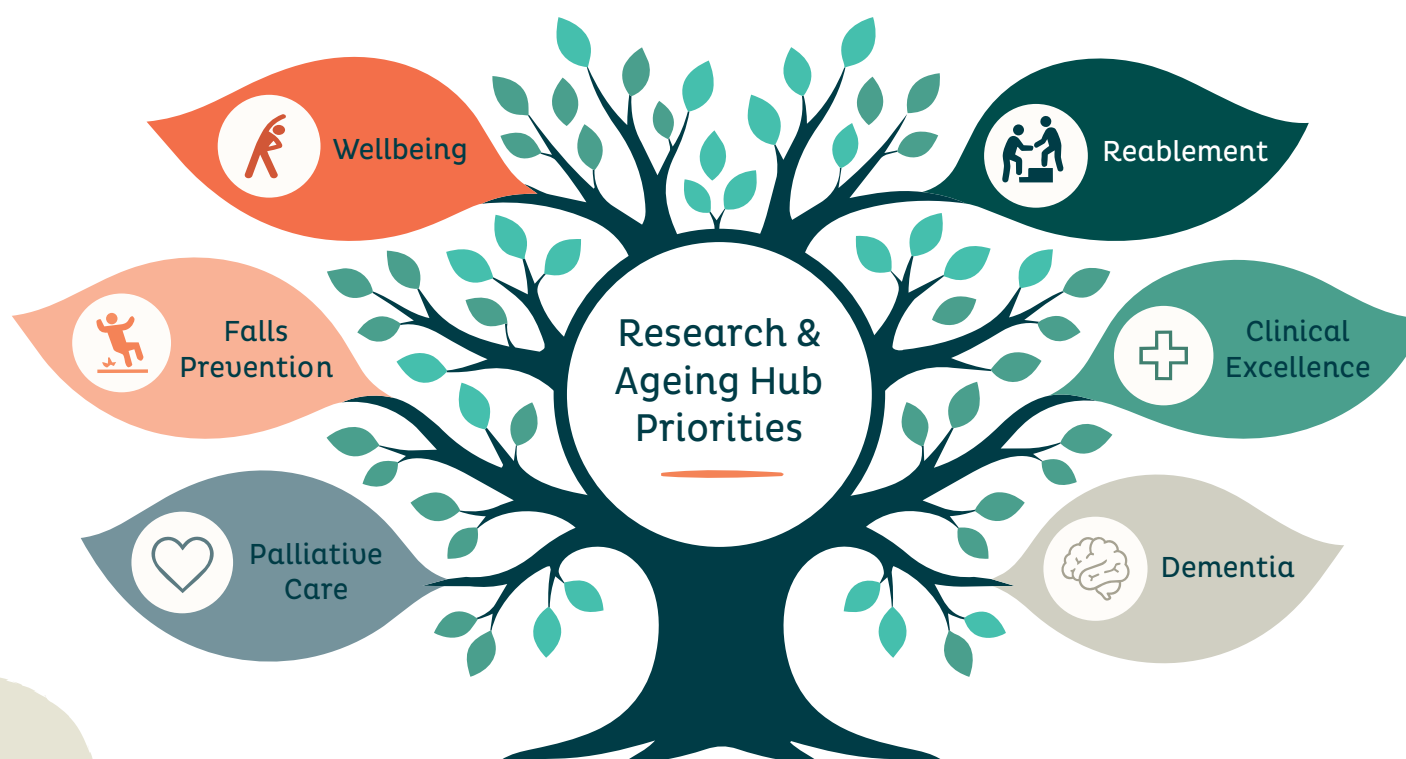
# Whiddon's Research & Positive Ageing Hub

## Role of Research & Positive Ageing Hub

Whiddon's Research and Positive Ageing Hub brings together evidence, expertise and innovation to improve the everyday lives of older people - both within Whiddon and across the broader aged care sector.

The Hub exists to ensure that care is informed by the latest research, practical trials and emerging best practice, and that new ideas are translated into meaningful, real world outcomes. It focuses not only on clinical excellence, but on the full experience of ageing - wellbeing, independence, connection and purpose.

Through partnerships with universities, expert academics, clinicians, industry leaders and emerging researchers, the Hub enables Whiddon to test, learn and lead. Research findings are actively applied to service design, workforce capability and care models, ensuring that innovation does not sit on the shelf, but is embedded into everyday practice.





## Research & Positive Ageing Projects & Trials



### Meal Ed WSU

Improve nutrition  
outcomes for People  
living with Dementia

- Beaunesert
- Glenfield
- Belmont
- Moree
- Casino
- Wingham



### UTI Point of Care Testing

Rapid response testing for  
Urinary Tract Infections  
improving treatment  
outcomes

- Beaunesert
- Maclean
- Glenfield



### Sensory Space

Sensory Room to assist in  
relaxation, de-escalation  
and reduced agitation for  
Persons living with Dementia

- Belmont



### Sound Scouts

Access for all residents  
to accurate hearing  
assessments and  
prescription aids

- Bourke
- Narrabri
- Moree
- Jassie Hunt



### RBC Enrich

Improved Quality of Life,  
social engagement, emotional  
and health outcomes for  
people living with Dementia

- Glenfield
- Maclean
- Kelso



### ENABLE Wound

AI assisted virtual support  
for complex wound care to  
improve healing and reduce  
pain and complications

- Laurieton
- Maclean



### Balance Metrix

Testing new Balance  
mat for assessment and  
training

- Maclean



### Keep Dancing 2

Phase 2 of successful Keep  
Dancing – a tele-assisted  
dance-based exercise  
program

- Kelso
- Temora
- Kyogle
- Wee Waa
- Largs
- Wingham



### PGX

Uses targeted DNA analysis  
to personalise medication  
prescribing, aiming to improve  
treatment effectiveness and  
reduce adverse drug reactions.

- Belmont
- Largs
- Glenfield
- Redhead

## Whiddon Foundation

As a charitable entity aligned with Whiddon's purpose, we are excited to introduce the Whiddon Foundation, bringing together donors, partners, researchers and communities who share a commitment to enriching lives and advancing positive ageing.

Every contribution helps turn generosity into impact - supporting innovation today and creating better ageing experiences for tomorrow.

Through the Foundation, Whiddon raises vital funds to support research, trials and the development of new services and programs that enhance care, wellbeing and quality of life for older people in our care and the wider community.

The Foundation plays a critical role in ensuring funding for Whiddon to continue to explore new ideas, test emerging approaches and invest in areas that matter most. These initiatives help shape not only Whiddon's services but also contribute to broader improvements across the aged care sector.

[Learn More](#)



[Donate Today](#)



# Accountability and Trust

Strong governance underpins Whiddon's ability to deliver on our purpose - today and into the future.

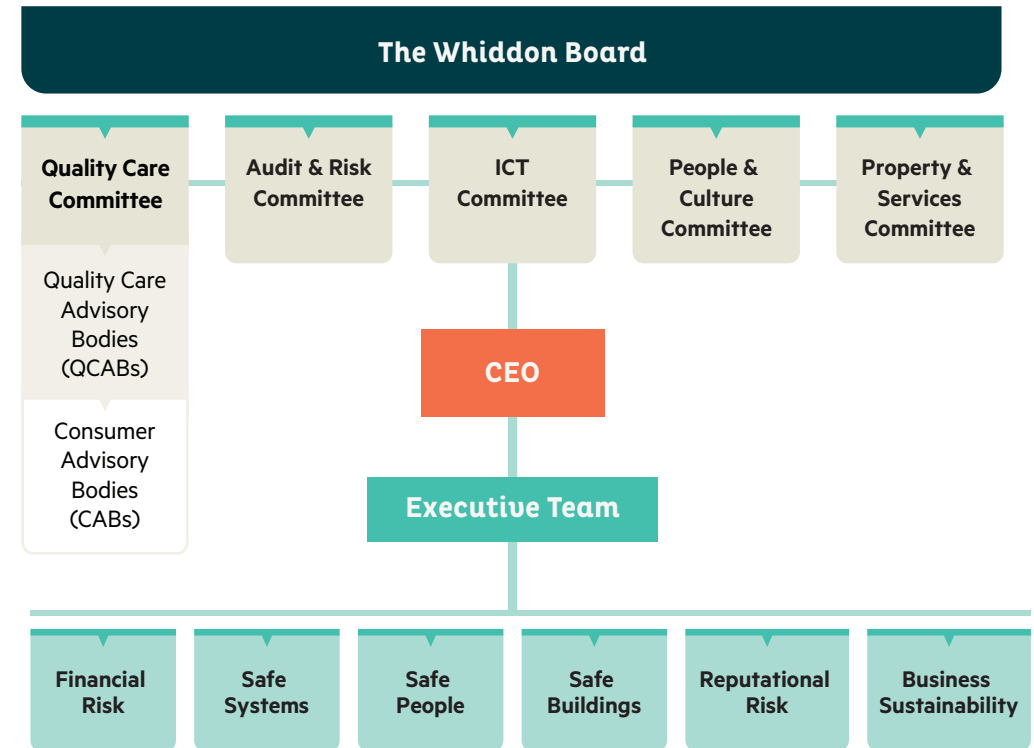
As a not-for-profit organisation, Whiddon's Board plays a critical stewardship role, ensuring our strategy is guided with integrity, responsibility and long-term focus. The Board is accountable for safeguarding Whiddon's mission, supporting sustainable decision-making, and balancing ambition with care, innovation with safety, and growth with purpose.

Working closely with the CEO and Executive Team, the Board provides oversight and strategic guidance while remaining connected to the lived experience of Whiddon's services. This connection is strengthened through regular visits to our homes and services, engagement with consumers, the QCAB, CABs, and ongoing dialogue with leadership.

Through a strong governance framework and dedicated Board Committees, Whiddon ensures:

- responsible management of risk and resources
- high standards of quality, safety and compliance
- ethical leadership and accountability
- decisions that protect and enhance the wellbeing of older people, our workforce and the communities we serve

The Board's role is not only to oversee what we do, but to protect why we do it - ensuring Whiddon remains trusted, resilient and purpose-driven.



# Whiddon Scholarship Program

At Whiddon, the growth of our people is a priority. We are committed to supporting our team members to reach their full potential, achieve their goals, and build meaningful, fulfilling careers in aged care.

The Whiddon Scholarship Program reflects this commitment by providing financial support for team members to pursue further study and engage in enriching educational opportunities that strengthen both individual capability and organisational impact.

## 1. Careers Scholarship

The Careers Scholarship supports Whiddon team members to develop their professional skills through funded vocational or tertiary study. Scholarships may be used for study in areas including health and nursing, diversional therapy, catering, human resources and management, enabling our people to grow their careers while strengthening care for the communities we serve.

## 2. Rees-Naughton Scholarship

Established in memory of former Whiddon Board members Bill Rees and Gerald Naughton, this scholarship honours their shared passion for seeing Whiddon people succeed. The Rees-Naughton Scholarship is designed to elevate learning beyond the ordinary, providing team members with innovative educational opportunities they may not otherwise have access to, and encouraging bold thinking that benefits individuals, Whiddon and the broader aged care sector.



**\$1.5  
million**

in total scholarship  
funding **awarded**

**157**  
**scholarships  
awarded**

supporting the  
**development of Whiddon  
team members**

The Whiddon Scholarships Program is an investment in our people, empowering growth, capability and leadership today while shaping a stronger, more sustainable future for aged care.

ETHEL

SYMONDS

CENTRE

## Acknowledging our Masonic History

Whiddon (named after prominent Freemason Frank Whiddon) has a long and proud history that began with our philanthropic Masonic founders back in the early 1920s. Since then, we have evolved into an award-winning care provider in regional, rural and remote communities across New South Wales and South-East Queensland.

In 1923, a small group of compassionate Freemasons began a mission to provide care and support to elderly Masons and their spouses within their local communities.

Mrs Ethel Easton Symonds played a defining role in shaping Whiddon's story and future in 1947, where her generosity helped lay the foundations for the organisation we know today, establishing a legacy that continues to influence how we care for older people across our homes and communities.

Her connection to this mission began through Bro. H. J. Daley and the work being undertaken to support ageing Freemasons. Recognising the importance of dignity, comfort and belonging in later life, Ethel made an extraordinary

contribution by donating 21 acres of her land at Glenfield for the creation of Easton Park. That decision did more than provide a site. It created the platform for Whiddon to grow into an organisation grounded in care, purpose and service.

Ethel's influence extended well beyond her initial gift. She was closely connected to the early development of Easton Park and remained personally involved as the vision took shape. Her presence during key milestones reflected her generosity and the belief in what Whiddon could become. From the beginning, she helped shape an organisation built on compassion and a deep respect for older people.

Today, Ethel's legacy remains woven through Whiddon's identity. Her vision helped shape a community that continues to strengthen our purpose and inspire the way we support older Australians.

What began with a small number of cottages continues to develop to this day, which is something we're incredibly proud of.

# Reimagining Ageing, Together

Our 2026/27 strategic plan is Whiddon's commitment to lead aged care forward - not only by improving services, systems and outcomes, but by helping change how ageing itself is understood.

For too long, ageing has been defined by limitations, decline and dependency. These narrow narratives shape expectations, influence decision making and too often overlook the individuality, capability and contribution of older people.

At Whiddon, we believe it is time to challenge these stereotypes.

Our strategy is grounded in a different belief: that ageing is rich, diverse and deeply personal - and that care should reflect the whole person, not assumptions about their age.

## More To Me: Our Voice for Change

More To Me is Whiddon's advocacy in action.

It is our call to reframe the conversation around ageing - within our organisation, across our communities, and throughout the aged care sector.

More To Me recognises that:

- every person has a story, an identity and a life beyond their care needs
- independence, purpose and connection matter at every stage of ageing
- care is most powerful when it honours choice, dignity and individuality

If you see age, you miss the person – look again!





## Contact us

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 [whiddon.com.au](http://whiddon.com.au)

