

Future Directions

The Benevolent Society's Strategic Plan 2006–2009: Year 3





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In 2004 we embarked on our Future Directions journey, a process that helped us identify our purpose of **creating caring and inclusive communities and a just society**.

Our current three year Strategic Plan 2006–2009 brings this purpose to life through the following four strategies:

- 1. Create and deliver leading edge programs and services**
- 2. Grow knowledge and intellectual capacity about social issues in Australia**
- 3. Advocate and influence on key social issues and solutions**
- 4. Build a thriving organisation.**

Year 1 of the Plan (FY 06–07) involved developing and testing new models and systems, while Year 2 (FY 07–08) activities targeted implementation.

Our Year 3 (FY 08–09) activities, outlined in this document, will see us consolidate our efforts, with a particular focus on organisational growth and diversification in service delivery.

We will be working in a number of communities in regional New South Wales and in Queensland which are new to us, and delivering Out of Home Care (foster care) services for the first time.

To help us meet these challenges more effectively, we have reconfigured our operations to a regional

structure, we are building up our advocacy work and implementing a new approach to fundraising and innovation. As we begin the final year of our current Plan, we are also looking ahead to our next Strategic Plan (effective July 2009).

We will continue to focus on quality service delivery, research that informs practice and advocacy to address the social issues that impact on people and communities. Strategies to support innovation and achieving national influence and growth will take a central role.

We have learned a great deal from the first part of our **Future Directions** journey and we believe this process has made us a more effective organisation, with an even greater contribution to make to creating social inclusion in Australia.

Bill Webster
President

Richard Spencer
Chief Executive Officer





Some Year 2 highlights (FY 2007 – 2008)



Our **significant growth** in rural NSW and Queensland has established The Benevolent Society's presence in many new areas. Consolidating our partnerships with other organisations and communities has helped to integrate our approach. We were successful in securing **Out of Home Care** funding across four NSW regions, taking us into a new area of service delivery. Our **social leadership** programs are flourishing, and now include partnerships with the National Australia Bank, indigenous women and NSW Premier's Department.

We have put much of our energy this year into considering one of Australia's most pressing social challenges – ageing well and the social inclusion of older people. Our **Apartments for Life at Ocean Street** model of housing, support and care offers an innovative approach that will enable older people to live in their own homes throughout older age, connected to and contributing to their communities and supported by services when needed.

As part of our **evaluation** work, we undertook a client satisfaction survey which has given us important feedback for service improvement. The survey revealed that our clients are very positive about the care they receive from our staff and volunteers.

Our **research** and **advocacy** agenda is leading to new partnerships and research opportunities, including work on children's resilience (with Barnados UK, Stirling University, Scotland, and The Australian Centre for Child Protection); a study on children's experiences of poverty (with the NSW Commission for Children and Young People and RMIT); and an investigation into the social inclusion of children in community life (with the Australian National University, the University of Western Sydney and NAPCAN). We are entering into a partnership agreement with The Brotherhood of St Laurence to conduct research on social policy in ageing.

Building our **profile** and **influence** has involved making connections with key decision makers, submissions to inquiries and securing membership on a greater number of high-profile state and national committees. Meetings with politicians, their advisors, and senior government officials who are key influencers have been strategically targeted in the area of our four priority social issues.

The **Voice Project**, a staff survey undertaken in October 2007 demonstrated that our employees have a high level of understanding of, and alignment with, the organisation's mission, values and purpose.





What we do



Our approach

We aim to create communities that are healthy and safe, connected, productive and participatory, rich in cultural and recreational activities and that are just and fair. We believe that building stronger communities will lead to a more socially inclusive Australia.

We take pride in delivering effective services and are constantly looking for new and better ways of working. We listen to the needs of our clients and the communities we work with and we work in partnership with them to create change by building on existing strengths. We collaborate with community, government, business and academic sectors.

Who we help

We help the most vulnerable people in society; children, women, older people, carers and disadvantaged communities. We provide services in metropolitan, regional and rural areas across NSW and Queensland to more than 16,000 children and adults each year.

We support people from all backgrounds including indigenous Australians and people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

- We work to ensure that **children** are nurtured and safe with their families, free from abuse and neglect.
- We help **women** make positive futures for themselves and their families and support them to move on from domestic violence.
- We help **older people** to age well and live independently for as long as possible with dignity and respect. We are also committed to developing new models of support for older people and to seeing them implemented.
- We support **people who are carers** for a loved one, be they older people with dementia, or children with a disability.
- We create opportunities through our **social leadership** and **community development programs** for people to lead change in their own communities.





Social issues we are addressing



Our direct service delivery contributes immensely to the wellbeing of the communities where we work. But we must do more to bring about the positive social change that creates caring, inclusive communities and a just society. We need to influence policy and practice and secure access to resources across a range of social and political arenas.

We do this by:

- drawing on the breadth of our experience
- using research to inform and provide evidence
- engaging with government and key opinion leaders
- raising awareness, public commentary and making submissions.

Our Social Issues and Advocacy Agenda identifies 12 broad issues that impact on economic and social inclusion. We will take direct, focussed action in the four areas where we have a strong track record and there is a clear correlation with our services and expertise. In the eight remaining areas identified, we will develop partnerships to seek change and take a leading role where we have expertise and an informed voice.

Our Research Agenda aligns closely to our four focussed areas, and contributes to building our knowledge so we can call for change more effectively. For example, our Families on the Fringe research with the Universities of Queensland and Sydney, Mission Australia and Queensland Treasury, examines families who leave major cities for regional towns, and the impact of the relocation on their social and economic participation and wellbeing.

The four areas for focussed action are:

- **Health and social inclusion of young children**
- **Ageing well and social inclusion of older people**
- **Community safety and social inclusion**
- **Leadership, democracy and the role of non profit organisations in promoting social change**





Our identity

We are social pioneers and innovators

Our purpose

To create caring and inclusive communities and a just society

The Benevolent Society has an important role to play in creating caring and inclusive communities and a just society. This means communities that are:

Healthy and safe

People have access to clean water and air, adequate food, shelter and housing and good life expectancy, low infant mortality and good general mental and physical health. There are low levels of violence and injury and people feel their community is safe.

Connected

People have strong family, social and support networks, good levels of trust and community and civic engagement.

Productive and participatory

People are involved in employment, education, training, local politics, volunteering and contributing to community life.

Rich in cultural and recreational activities

People can pursue their interests and feel a sense of connection, pride and achievement from their involvement in these activities.

Just and fair

People are in a position to make choices about their lives and are involved in decision-making processes.





Our values



Optimism

We are hopeful that even the most complex social issues can be solved and we work towards the best possible results for clients and their communities.

Integrity

We are an ethical, trustworthy and responsible organisation. Those who come into contact with The Benevolent Society will experience us as open, fair and reliable.

Respect

We show regard and appreciation for people from all walks of life and honour human difference and diversity.

Collaboration

We work jointly with others as we believe that together we can tackle the things that prevent communities and society from being caring and just.

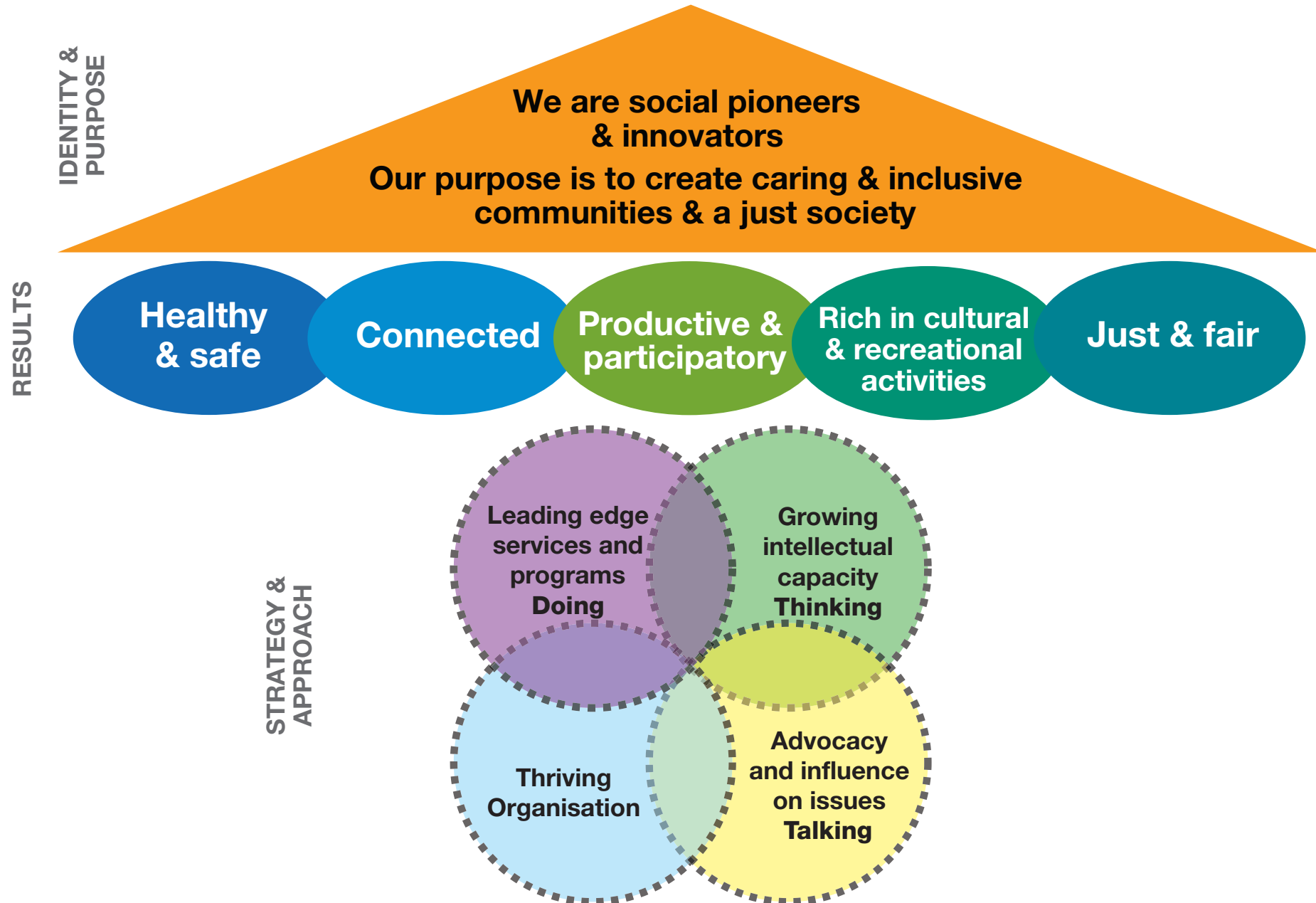
Effectiveness

Our efforts result in us reaching and fulfilling our organisational purpose.





Strategic Framework





The strategies to achieve our purpose



Strategy 1

Create and deliver leading edge Programs and services

Our Programs and services are creative and pioneering. This means they are flexible, aligned with purpose, informed by research and evolving to meet changing community needs.

Strategy 2

Grow knowledge and intellectual capacity about social issues in Australia

We are a knowledgeable and informed organisation, good at learning and sharing ideas. We are aware of emerging social trends and our research agenda contributes to society's understanding of these issues.

Strategy 3

Advocate and influence on key social issues and solutions

We have a clear and coordinated approach to advocacy and influence and are recognised as a significant voice on important social issues.

Strategy 4

Build a thriving organisation

We have systems and mechanisms in place that support our work and enable us to implement our strategies effectively.





Strategy 1 Create and deliver leading edge Programs and services

Outcomes	Success Indicators (2006–09)	Year 3 Activities (2008–09)
1.1 All Programs and support services striving to be leading edge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and processes in place to deliver leading edge services • Leading edge initiatives reflected in all Business Plans • External & internal awards recognise achievements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyse the impact of evidence-informed practice strategies implemented through Business Plans • Evaluate the impact of the Aboriginal Employment Strategy • Investigate award opportunities for industry recognition • Include an internal award ceremony at the annual all staff event • Implement phase one of the Out of Home Care program
1.2 Stronger strategy and Program direction setting and alignment with purpose and values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Case processes for new initiatives and existing Programs tested and implemented • Programs effective and closely aligned with purpose and values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine programs and services in line with organisational priorities and implement necessary changes • Implement organisational growth strategy • Evaluate and refine the business case model • Analyse the results of community connectedness strategies implemented through Business Plans
1.3 Innovative services explored and implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three significant initiatives in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue implementing the Apartments for life at Ocean Street initiative • Evaluate Homeshare NSW and report on findings • Conduct the Bridging the Gap (social inclusion) project • Develop child and family care initiative
1.4 Partnerships established with government for innovative service delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for innovation with government identified • Approaches made to/received from government for innovation • Partnerships in place • Annual growth in partnership dollars 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pursue partnership opportunities with Government for Bridging the Gap project • Investigate the viability of the Thank Q model as a relationship tracking tool • Build stronger networks with Federal Government





Strategy 1 continued

Outcomes	Success Indicators (2006–09)	Year 3 Activities (2008–09)
<p>1.5 New models of support for older people developed and implemented</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New care models being planned or implemented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to build stakeholder support and act on community engagement opportunities during the approval phase of the Apartments for Life at Ocean Street project (OSP) • Develop a draft operations framework for OSP • Pursue collaborative partnerships for OSP
<p>1.6 New social leadership initiatives established in communities across Australia</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three new social leadership initiatives underway • Social leadership impact quantified and doubled 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the recommendations of the Sydney Leadership Program evaluation • Continue to expand and grow programs
<p>1.7 Client needs better understood and client participation increased</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clients and/or communities actively participating in service planning and improvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document existing internal client/community participation best practice models • Research and develop a client/community participation model for Out of Home Care • Implement findings of the client satisfaction survey
<p>1.8 Rigorous evaluation of what we do (service by service and as an organisation)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systems in place to evaluate service delivery and outcomes for clients/communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyse evaluation results • Implement changes based on recommendations • Use evaluation findings to inform organisational strategy





Strategy 2 Grow knowledge and intellectual capacity about social issues in Australia

Outcomes	Success Indicators (2006–09)	Year 3 Activities (2008–09)
<p>2.1 Increased capacity to contribute to the social issues agenda</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social issues agenda and strategy set annually • Growth in organisational resources and effort • Improved response to emerging social issues • Mechanisms in place to record and evaluate internal/external contribution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase organisational participation in external committees, forums, networks and conference panels • Host two events that promote our social issues agenda • Identify internal content experts and support/equip them to promote our social issues agenda • Develop mechanisms to track and evaluate our contribution to Australia’s social issues agenda
<p>2.2 Continuous learning across the workforce about contemporary social issues and practice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning opportunities created across the organisation • Workforce involved in external forums and groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit current attendance at external forums and committees • Develop an organisation-wide strategy for attendance at external forums • Evaluate the process and impact of the learning opportunities strategy
<p>2.3 Our research agenda influences policy and improves practice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research outcomes applied internally and externally to improve service delivery and contribute to social policy • Research Program integrated with advocacy activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a strategy to translate our research findings into practice internally, and evaluate its success • Integrate our own research findings into the business planning process • Develop a plan to communicate our research findings outside TBS • Develop partnerships with Universities in our research projects





Strategy 3 Advocate and influence on key social issues and solutions

Outcomes	Success Indicators (2006–09)	Year 3 Activities (2008–09)
<p>3.1 Better co-ordinated organisation effort in how we advocate and influence externally</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy and influence strategy in place • Pro-active systems in place to drive social issues agenda • Mechanisms in place for responding to opportunities for influence on social issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decide on a specific advocacy campaign for the health and social inclusion of young children or ageing well and the social inclusion of older people • Write an action plan for the campaign • Gather early activity and impact data
<p>3.2 Advocacy efforts focused on reducing violence and social isolation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy strategy in place • External stakeholders participating in advocacy projects • Influence and impact on key external decision makers measured and tracked • Organisational profile associated with finding solutions to identified social issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • see 3.1 activities above
<p>3.3 Increased capacity and resources to deliver advocacy and influence strategy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased organisational focus on advocacy and influence • Increased resources to support delivery of advocacy strategy • Formal mechanisms operating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and support internal champions to build advocacy capacity • Implement regional advocacy plans through the business planning process • Review and refine tracking and monitoring mechanisms

Strategy 4 Build a thriving organisation

Outcomes	Success Indicators (2006–09)	Year 3 Activities (2008–09)
<p>4.1 Increased funding secured to deliver new ideas and existing Programs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total non government funding increased annually • Growth in corporate funding / support and individual philanthropy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write proposals for a donor audience for a range of major gift asks • Establish an internal committee to access and cultivate relationships with major donors and corporate supporters • Invest in donor acquisition programs for annual donors • Roll out a donor awareness strategy for TBS managers • Evaluate the impact of the Trusts & Foundations Strategy
<p>4.2 Business systems support implementation of Strategic Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All organisational support systems improved • Better approach to strategy and business planning and implementation • Quality of decision-making improved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan and implement systems that support growth • Scope and develop a knowledge-sharing framework • Refine and evaluate the quality and clarity of our decision-making processes • Develop systems to support the internal communications strategy (e.g. Intranet redevelopment)
<p>4.3 People working collaboratively across the organisation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Teams established and assisting in delivering organisational results • Increased cross-organisation collaboration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyse and report on the effectiveness of working groups that involve a cross section of staff • Implement strategies for cross-functional collaboration and learning
<p>4.4 Workforce culture aligned with purpose and values</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisational values translated to behaviours • Increased collaborative opportunities across the organisation • Strengthened leadership connection and engagement with staff • Cultural goals achieved • External and internal awards recognise achievements (from 1.1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct leadership development activities for managers • Implement the action plan for priorities identified in the all-staff survey • Evaluate the organisation's Performance Development & Review system and make recommendations for improvement • Develop ways to measure whether organisational values are reflected in behaviours





Strategy 4 continued

Outcomes	Success Indicators (2006–09)	Year 3 Activities (2008–09)
<p>4.5 Volunteer potential harnessed more effectively</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteers used more effectively • Volunteers have a positive experience • Volunteers have a beneficial impact on the organisation and the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue implementing the volunteer plan • Identify ways of increasing community engagement through community volunteers • Develop recommendations based on the volunteer survey results for the continued improvement of the volunteer plan • Document findings of the volunteer home visiting program evaluation
<p>4.6 Governance practices improved</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance compliance • Increased Board/stakeholder/client interaction • Board performance evaluated regularly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement strategies to engage company members • Evaluate levels of Board/stakeholder/client interaction and make recommendations • Report on the results of the Board evaluation and incorporate them into the organisation’s evaluation framework • Promote and share our governance model with the non-profit sector
<p>4.7 Stronger organisational profile and national recognition</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisational profile is strengthened and The Benevolent Society is recognised nationally across key audiences • Consistent marketing, branding and messaging across all Programs, materials and communication tools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the roll out of the new corporate identity, and analyse and report on its status • Develop systems to ensure the ongoing use of the new corporate identity across the organisation • Conduct brand awareness tracking to evaluate our national profile • Develop and implement a brand awareness campaign • Refine and implement the communications and media strategy



The Benevolent Society
Level 1, 188 Oxford Street
Paddington NSW 2021
PO Box 171
Paddington NSW 2021
t 02 9339 8000
f 02 9360 2319
mailben@bensoc.org.au
www.bensoc.org.au
ABN 95 084 695 045

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