



Annual Report 2024-2025



Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge the Aboriginal land in which we live and practice and the cultures that here gather; our ancestors and future generations.

We embrace anti-oppressive feminist practice, holding the hope of creating safety-centred positive change.

The beautiful artwork featured throughout this report was created by several of our clients. In respect of their privacy, their identities have not been disclosed, and we extend our sincere gratitude to them for permitting us to include their artwork to illustrate their journeys.



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Vision

A future where all women and girls live safe, stable and fulfilling lives.

Purpose

Empowering women and girls through the delivery of trauma-informed safe places and tailored programs, to reduce the incidence of homelessness.



Organisational Structure



Board of Management

Monique Purcell - Chairperson

Kyle Westgarth - Treasurer

Davanah Inthachanh - Secretary

Evrithiki Diinis - Board Member

Kristin Stanleick - Board Member

Tari Makanda - Casual Board Member

Sophia Lacey - Board Observer
(The Observership Program)



About Detour House Inc

Detour House Inc. provides trauma-informed safe places and tailored programs for women and young people to stay and gain greater safety and stability in their lives. Our services are located in Sydney's Inner West and are delivered across two key services: **Detour House** and **The Girls Refuge**.

Detour House offers a specialist residential rehabilitation program. At Detour House, we equip people who are addressing substance use with knowledge, tools and strategies to successfully transition back into everyday life. Detour House is one of only a handful of alcohol and other drug treatment services in NSW that centres on providing a stepped care option to support transition back into community.

The Girls Refuge (TGR) is the only gender-specific crisis accommodation service in NSW for girls aged 13-17 years experiencing or at-risk of homelessness. We provide young people with person-centred support at their own pace. As part of our crisis refuge service, we support young people with access to transitional and long-term housing, development of life skills, access to legal advice, assistance with accessing income support, school liaison, employment assistance, career mentoring, and advocacy.

Detour House Inc. is overseen by a Board of Management consisting of professionals across the public, private and not-for-profit sectors.

Our services are funded by the NSW Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) as Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS) and supported by the generosity of valued donors and supporters throughout the community.

As a member of the Inner-City Services for Women with Complex Needs consortium, Detour House together with lead agency B Miles Women's Foundation and the Community Restorative Centre delivers services for women with specialised complex issues. Funded by DCJ, this partnership directs service provision towards women recovering from substance dependence, experiencing mental illness, or who have been exposed to the criminal justice system.

In recognising the need for gender-safe services, we believe in and value the work of specialist girl's and women's services. We thank the NSW Government and the broader community for recognising and supporting the important work that we do at Detour House Inc.

Our Impact



256

Women and girls were supported with specialist homelessness services



11,525

Client contact sessions were conducted



3846

Bed nights of accommodation were provided



20%

Proportion of clients who identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

Chairperson and CEO Report



This year, Detour House Inc. took a confident step into the future we've carefully planned, one defined by growth and expanded impact. At the same time, and despite an increase in costs, we maintained our unwavering focus on empowering women and girls through the delivery of trauma-informed safe places and tailored programs.

The operational success achieved in 2025 in delivering our strategic priorities starts at the top with CEO, Cindi Petersen. Cindi is supported by our leadership group Natasha Lo, Operations Manager (who joined DHI in August 2025) and our Service Managers, Kelly Fewtrell at Detour House, and Georgina Reid at The Girls Refuge. Your unwavering support and reliable backing are appreciated.

Thank you to our outgoing Operations Manager, Debra Ireson who retired in June 2025. Your tireless dedication and passion have made such a difference. Wishing you all the happiness in your retirement.

In the last 12 months, we have continued to strengthen our position in the market through renewed partnerships, stakeholder engagement and simplifying our processes to deliver better outcomes for clients. We have continued our funding arrangements with the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) and the Inner-City Services for Women with Complex Needs Consortium (led by B Miles Women's Foundation). We have also established new partnerships with schools and Metro Community Housing.

In January 2025, we extended our services to provide new transitional housing for women. Step Out House (SOHO) provides transitional housing for residents for up to 12 months and supports them to secure long-term accommodation while continuing their journey to recovery. It has been a huge team effort to get the house up and running and we could not be prouder to offer this service. We thank the NSW Government's Homelessness Innovation Fund (HIF) for making this possible.

The launch of SOHO (in April 2025) was attended by The Hon. Rose Jackson, Dom Rowe, CEO at Homelessness NSW, representatives from Bridge Housing, Homes NSW, and B Miles Women's Foundation.

In October 2025, we met with representatives from NSW Treasury, The Cabinet Office, Homes NSW, and the DCJ to advocate for additional funding. With compliance costs surging 274% since 2023 and no increase to government funding, we are concerned about the future of Detour House Inc. with no additional funding to provide our services.

Our success is directly linked to the hard work of our team. We have made excellent progress this year, and we would like to thank every team member for their energy, commitment, and reliability in driving our business forward.

We also extend our appreciation to our generous supporters and corporate partners within the community who make the work of Detour House Inc. possible.

I thank my fellow Directors for their continued support and acknowledge the hard work and commitment of all of Detour House Inc's people. Together, we remain committed to deliver favourable results for our clients and you, our stakeholders as we achieve our purpose, to create safe, stable, and fulfilling lives for all women and girls.

**Monique Purcell, Chairperson and
Cindi Petersen, CEO**

Introducing SOHO

Our highlight of the year would be the opening of SOHO (Stepping Out House). Detour House was fortunate enough to secure the 6-bedroom property next door to our Detour House service through our partnership with Bridge Housing.

We received funding through the Homelessness Innovation Fund (HIF) to establish the property and to employ an Outreach Case Worker to assist women to find longer-term housing.

Many women enter the Detour House program without secure accommodation to return to. Before the introduction of SOHO women would be consumed by concerns about housing, while trying to complete the drug and alcohol program. Additionally, these women would then have to resort to emergency accommodation or boarding houses making recovery near impossible.

Now women entering the rehabilitation program are made aware that they could reside at SOHO for 0-12 months upon completion of the program. Not only is this a great relief it is also a great incentive to graduate from the program.

SOHO has been a game changer for clients who may otherwise have experienced homelessness at graduation. This gives the clients space and time to continue to focus on their recovery in supported, safe and stable accommodation.

In the first 6 months of operation SOHO has housed 10 residents and 6 have been exited into longer-term housing. Twenty percent of residents identify as Aboriginal.

SOHO is funded until June 2026 and we are currently reaching out to our funders, donors and philanthropic partners in the hope of securing longer-term funding for this essential addition to Detour House Inc.

We will be launching a campaign whereby businesses or other donors can fund a bed in the SOHO house for a donation of \$50,000 per annum. If this is something you would like to discuss further please contact the CEO directly on 0451 769 101.



Number of clients - **97**

Number of bed nights provided - **1563**

Clients identified as First Nations - **19.5%**

VIRGINIA

Virginia* entered Detour House following a struggle with alcohol dependence spanning 20 years.

Her relationships with family had broken down and she was estranged from her mum.

Virginia worked her recovery program enthusiastically and was keen to address behaviour that did not serve her on her journey. It was noted that Virginia presented as 'having it all together' and struggled with vulnerability. Virginia struggled with opening up and sadly relapsed two weeks before her graduation, resulting in discharge from the program.

Virginia was strongly supported to continue her journey of recovery and was given referrals to other services. Virginia took on the advice of Detour House and recently celebrated two years of no longer using alcohol. She has maintained engagement with Detour House and has reconnected with her Mum. Virginia is currently completing her Nursing degree. She has received an offer from an AOD residential service and plans to join them as a registered nurse when she completes her training.

What our
clients say

'DH has changed my life, the way I look at things and how I handle my everyday life'.

'I'm just so grateful that I had the opportunity to take the 'Detour' in my recovery journey. It's the exact programme I needed to complete before going back into the community'.

'Amazing programme, so grateful I have taken the Detour'.

'I get a lot out of Case Management, and I like the structure of the programme'.

'This service (DH) is one of its kind as far as rehabilitation services go and goes to lengths to address the issues of at-risk women in addiction, homelessness, DV, Mental Health and the alike'

DANNI

Danni is a 38-year-old woman who called our service after completing 5 months at another facility and then relapsed. Danni had a long history of alcohol dependence. Danni was interested in the educational aspect of the DH program which would increase her recovery toolbox and provide the skills she needed to no longer use alcohol, rebuild relationships, and develop coping strategies to avoid relapse and codependent relationships.

Danni embraced all aspects of the program and quickly became a trusted member of the community. She learned about her co-addictive behaviours and embraced the self-regulation strategies to guide her through times when she felt triggered. Danni's life skills improved, and she was able to be more assertive in her communications and demonstrated a willingness to implement boundaries with her peers. Danni has grown from strength to strength, has started TAFE doing photography, secured transition housing and has recently commenced part-time work.

the girls refuge

Number of clients - **159**

Number of bed nights provided - **1724**

Clients identified as First Nations - **20%**



LUNA

Luna (15) was referred to TGR, following a breakdown in her medium-term accommodation placement, which resulted in a loss of safe and stable housing. Luna was already known to TGR, having previously engaged in a three-month stay where she achieved a successful transition into medium-term accommodation, maintaining that placement for seven months.

The breakdown in this placement appeared to stem from a period of disconnection and disengagement from supports and responsibilities, impacting her ability to sustain her case plan goals. During this time, Luna also withdrew from social and mental health supports, leading to increased isolation.

Upon returning to TGR Luna was initially displaying emotional dysregulation, distrust to service provisions, including staff, and completely isolated herself from other young people. Through the implementation of trauma-informed practice and an individualised support plan, staff focused on creating safety, predictability, and consistency in engagement. Case management work prioritised rebuilding trust, addressing barriers to engagement, and re-establishing key external supports.

Throughout her three-month stay, Luna began demonstrating significant progress across multiple domains. She re-engaged with her mental health supports, attended school consistently with strong academic outcomes, and developed positive social connections with peers and staff. These outcomes reflected her increasing stability, resilience, and confidence in navigating supports.

Through collaborative case management, TGR supported Luna to strengthen her social and professional support networks and develop transition readiness skills. Staff worked closely with the new medium-term accommodation provider to coordinate a supported transition, ensuring Luna was familiar with staff, routines, and expectations prior to exit.

This case represents a strong example of trauma-informed, strengths-based practice and effective case coordination resulting in a secondary successful exit to stable medium-term accommodation.

Step Out House (SOHO)

Performance over 6 months

Number of clients - **10**

Clients exited to longer-term housing - **6**

Number of bed nights provided - **559**



AMY

Amy is a 54-year-old Indigenous woman who struggled for 24 years with amphetamine dependence and was escaping a DV relationship. Amy's goal was to stop using drugs rebuild relationships and develop coping strategies to avoid relapse and codependent relationships. At Detour House Amy embraced the educational workbooks, she learned more about her co-addictive behaviours and embraced the self-regulation strategies to guide her through times when she felt triggered. Amy's relationships with her children and grandchildren thrived. Her life skills improved, and she was able to be more assertive in her day-to-day communications.

On exiting DH, Amy returned to her mother's home but often spoke to staff about her struggle, living in an area where she had used for many years. Amy was offered and accepted further support in the Transition program. Some months later, Detour House was successful with a grant and a property for clients who remain homeless on exiting. It was unanimously agreed that Amy was a perfect candidate to occupy a room in the SOHO property. After a few months Amy was nominated through Metro Housing for ongoing transitional accommodation and was accepted. Amy is settling into the community and continues to be a valuable part of Detour House as a transition client.

What our clients say

'All aspects of my physical, mental and emotional health have improved in leaps and bounds since participating in the programme. The provision of both supported living and independent living is ideal and the proximity of the location to the NA/AA fellowship is ideal'.

Highlights, Workshops and Activities



Aftercare Brokerage Program

In the past year, 21 transition clients have received brokerage funds to assist them in establishing their new homes and achieving other Case Management goals.



Life Coaching with Shannon

The clients thoroughly enjoy the workshops with Shannon a Psychotherapist. Shannon supports the clients to reconnect with their bodies, regulate their nervous systems and live with more ease, authenticity and joy.



A Sound Life

Our weekly yoga and meditation sessions with A Sound Life continue to be instrumental for the women in the house by teaching them relaxation skills, mindfulness and by helping them maintain a sense of calm. The clients appreciate the flexibility of the teachers who lead the classes to work with them where they are at.



House Outings and Activities

House outings and activities are a fun way for our clients to bond and create healthy relationships. Some activities that the clients have done in the past year are; Chinese Garden of Friendship, the Belvoir St Theatre, an escape room and the movies and continuing our much-loved lunches out at Ozharvest's Refettorio restaurant.



NA Women's Retreat

With thanks to brokerage, the clients at Detour House and SOHO were able to attend the weekend NA Women's Retreat, the event was held over 3 days and gave the women opportunity to attend meetings, network, meet new peers and camp in cabins in the Royal National Park.



Art Therapy

Art Therapy continues to receive positive feedback and is run weekly at Detour House with our Case Manager Kelly. Clients enjoy participating in the therapeutic space using a non-verbal way to express emotions and process what comes up for them, some activities include the emotion wheel, the masks we wear and the mind/body connection.

'My experience with Art Therapy at DH has been wonderful. At times I have found it hard to express how I feel verbally and Art Therapy has helped me connect with, understand and express my feelings. It has also in my opinion connected the peer group and helped us to understand and empathise with each other. I have also found it a nice creative break from the written work'

'Art Therapy - In all honesty at first I wasn't impressed. After the first session with Kelly, my opinion changed. I am so grateful to have participated in the program as it has made me see things from a different perspective. Kelly is amazing at what she does'



Girl Zone Outreach Program

The Girls Refuge continued our partnership with Glebe Youth Service to provide outreach support to 11-17 year old girls who have been identified as homeless or at risk of homelessness.

This early intervention outreach program enables outreach case managers to identify girls at risk and intervene immediately to engage them in case management support and offer respite accommodation where necessary.

The outreach program aims to introduce the girls to the service system through a living skills program and a tour of local youth facilities and exploring education and training opportunities to prepare them for independence.

This program runs in six-week blocks through the school year.

“What our partners say

The team at Detour House are a wonderful part of our network and are always available to discuss support needs and referrals. The feedback we hear from shared clients is always very positive. On visiting the service you can feel the sense of community and support for each other from the residents and the team is always welcoming and knowledge.

The Girls Refuge have been an excellent partner to the City of Sydney, always proactive in seeking collaboration and supporting young people at risk. Their staff are consistently professional, welcoming, and responsive to our requests, making it easy to work together. They have provided strong support and resources to run successful girls' programs, while also giving City of Sydney staff valuable insight into the services they offer. Their commitment to creating safe, supportive spaces for vulnerable young people is clear, and we greatly value the this service.

Detour House has responded promptly and efficiently to our referrals, demonstrating a high level of responsiveness when contacted regarding client transfers to their service.

Caretakers and the Girls have a good symbiotic relationship which serves our clients well. Our teams work well together and are mutually supportive.

We love the support you give to clients and are disappointed that we can no longer offer the voucher support due to funding changes on our end but are happy to welcome your clients for other support. All the best, the GAPP team.

Amazing service, work extremely well collaboratively to best support our young people and clients.

Detour House is a wonderful service that complements Guthrie House's model by providing a continuum of care for some of our clients after their time with us.

Great to work together under Cindi's leadership- as she works on continuous improvement strategies at Detour House via the HIF and implementation of SOHO. Well done team.

Treasurer's Report

It is my pleasure to present the Treasurer's Report for the financial year ended 30 June 2025.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with applicable accounting standards and mandatory professional requirements and have been independently audited by John Shute of JS Accounting Group.

The financial position of Detour House Inc. remains strong. I am pleased to report that we have successfully recovered from the deficit recorded in the previous year, achieving a surplus of \$112,208 for 2024–2025. This has increased our accumulated surplus to \$1,127,895, providing a solid financial foundation.

While our financial position remains stable, we continue to experience rising costs associated with compliance, accreditation, and reporting requirements. These obligations, while critical to maintaining accountability and service quality, place increasing pressure on our resources. It will be essential to monitor these costs carefully to ensure we maintain our financial sustainability while continuing to deliver the highest standard of care and support to the women we serve.

We extend our sincere thanks to the Department of Communities and Justice, which continues to provide the majority of our funding, and to our industry partner B Miles, through the Inner-City Women with Complex Needs Consortium. We also acknowledge our new and ongoing donors, whose generous contributions totalled \$167,347 this year. Your support is fundamental to our ability to deliver life-changing programs—thank you for your continued trust and commitment.

This year also marked an exciting milestone for Detour House with the opening of SOHO, our new transitional home for women recovering from

addiction. SOHO provides a safe, supportive, and empowering environment for women rebuilding their lives after substance use. Its establishment represents both the growth of our remit and the strength of our commitment to providing long-term, person-centred support. We are incredibly proud of this addition to our services, which reflects the compassion, respect, and practical change that define Detour House.

I would also like to express my appreciation to our dedicated staff and fellow Board members for their time, expertise, and unwavering commitment to Detour House. In particular, I acknowledge the CEO and Operations Manager for their leadership throughout the accreditation process and their diligent work in strengthening our financial management systems to ensure full compliance with government policies, reporting requirements, and accounting standards.

After more than five years serving on the Board of Detour House Inc. and The Girls Refuge, I am incredibly proud of how far we have come. Together, we have built a stable, resilient, and values-driven organisation, one that continues to evolve to meet the needs of women on their path to recovery and independence.

Kyle Westgarth
Treasurer

Income	2025	2024
Grant income	1,791,632	1,534,786
Client contributions	45,574	54,382
Donations	167,347	86,669
Sundry income	197	668
Interest received	44,402	22,012
Dividends - franked	-	-
Total	2,049,152	1,698,517
Expenses	2025	2024
Administration and office expenses	173,530	181,147
Audit fees	8,500	10,134
Depreciation	6,900	7,131
Employment expenses	1,562,846	1,485,532
Household expenses	72,905	73,423
Program related expenses	112,263	41,250
Total	1,936,944	1,798,617
Surplus before tax	112,208	(100,100)
Tax expense	-	-
Surplus for the year	112,208	(100,100)

Our Supporters

We continue to be grateful to the many organisations, businesses and individuals who have supported Detour House and The Girls Refuge. Our heartfelt thanks to:

Australian Dental Health Foundation

A Sound Life

Aesop

B Miles Women's Foundation

CAOS

Charter Hall

City East Community College

City Of Sydney

Community Restorative Centre

Department of Communities and Justice

Dress For Success

GAPP

Glebe Artisan Markets

Glebe Family Medical

Glebe Youth Service

Glebe Op Shop

Glebe Police Station

Good Shepherd

Grill'd Leichhardt

Haymarket Foundation

Heaps Decent

Homes NSW

Infrastructure and Development Consulting

Justice Connect

Launchpad Youth Community

Leichhardt Marketplace

Leichhardt Women's Community Health Centre

Lemonaid Coaching

Lillian Howell Project

Metro Community Housing

Monte School

MLC School

Munificent Foundation

Narcotics Anonymous

Alcoholics Anonymous

OzHarvest

Rotary Five Dock

Rowing Australia

Share the Dignity

Social Alchemy

The Glebe Society

The Tar-Ra Fund C/- Australian Philanthropic Services

The Lewis Foundation

The Ordinary

Two Good Co

VGI Partners Foundation

Wesley Mission

Youth Block

How you can help

- Make a donation, donations over \$2 are tax deductible
- Host a fundraiser or toiletries drive for us
- Become a corporate sponsor
- Give new and unused bed linen, towels and household items for women and girls who are moving into new homes and a new life
- Volunteer your time and utilise your talents
- Leave a bequest



Contact us for more information

Ph: 02 9660 4137
PO Box 253 Glebe NSW 2037
E: manager@detourhouse.org.au

Connect with us

www.detourhouse.org.au
www.girlsrefuge.org.au

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