

Media Release: Donors enable Barnardos to install interest-free solar system

28 August 2023

Highlights:

- National charity CORENA is calling on the local community to help Barnardos South Coast to install solar.
- Barnardos South Coast Children's Family Centre will soon have a new rooftop solar system.
- The project cost will be funded by an interest-free loan from climate action charity, CORENA.
- The \$23,795 interest-free loan is sourced entirely from community donations. Fundraising is now underway to fund the project and reduce emissions.
- CORENA has given \$1.17 million in interest-free loans for 50 separate community emission reduction projects.

A grassroots organisation that finances climate action projects is calling on donors to help Barnardos South Coast Children's Family Centre install a new 25.73 kW rooftop solar system.

National charity, Citizens Own Renewable Energy Network Australia (CORENA), is fundraising to help the children's charity, Barnardos, to reduce their energy consumption and carbon emissions. CORENA's funding is sourced entirely from ordinary Australians who donate to their revolving climate fund which assists community organisations to install renewable energy and reduce their carbon emissions.

CORENA has committed to fund two new projects - this NSW Barnardos project and a larger project in South Australia. CORENA already has the majority of the funds to finance both projects and fundraising is underway to raise the remaining funds. For details of the upcoming Barnardos project and the opportunity to assist with a tax-deductible donation, click here <https://corenafund.org.au/53-barnardos-south-coast-childrens-family-centre/>

The soon to be installed solar system is expected to avoid an estimated 32,040 kWh of grid electricity/year, which is equivalent to 5.7 average homes using zero-emission renewable energy instead of grid electricity. It's expected that solar will reduce Barnardos electricity bills by approximately \$6,044 per year - and once their loan is repaid, the charity can divert these energy bill savings towards their core purpose of supporting vulnerable children and their families.

Barnardos South Coast Children's Family Centre Manager Maria Corsiglia states *"The benefits of solar energy for Barnardos are two-fold as it creates environmental benefits for our community whilst also ensuring we reduce our overall operating costs into the future. This means we can dedicate more funds to support local children and their families. Moving away from coal fired energy to clean energy sources is the way of the future and I'm proud that Barnardos and CORENA are leading by example. The children are also enjoying learning about solar power and sustainability and are excited to see this project unfold"*

CORENA operates Australia's longest running donor-driven revolving fund for practical climate action. CORENA offers interest-free loans to not-for-profit, community and social-enterprise organisations for projects that reduce their carbon emissions. Citizens who want to help reduce emissions make donations to collectively crowd-fund these community climate projects. These donations are then returned to the fund in the form of loan repayments, and these funds, plus new donations, are then used again to fund future projects.

CORENA offers interest-free loans to community focused organisations to fund the following project types:

- Solar installations
- Energy efficiency upgrades (including LED lighting, building insulation etc)
- Replacing gas appliances (including water/space heating, cooking) with energy efficient electric alternatives.
- Purchasing electric vehicles
- Any combination of the above - or talk to us about any other project type that will reduce emissions.

To date, CORENA has provided over \$1.17 million to finance 50 completed climate action projects. These projects have avoided 4,484 MWh of grid electricity which equates to 808.7 average households having switched to using 100% renewable energy instead of grid electricity for a year.

CORENA's Head of Operations, Sarah McCabe, states "After recent electricity price increases, it is fantastic to be able to support Barnardos and their vital work with the local community, reducing their carbon emissions and their operating costs".

Other community organisations are encouraged to apply for a CORENA interest-free loan. CORENA provides technical advice and assistance and hosts monthly online Q&A sessions to assist community organisations who want to learn more about CORENA loans - full details are here <https://corenafund.org.au/apply-for-a-project-loan/>

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About Barnardos

Barnardos Australia is here because every child needs a champion. We listen, we act, and we advocate for the safety of children at risk of abuse and neglect, providing family support programs and services that empower children to reach their full potential. When it comes to protecting vulnerable children from abuse, we never give up. We are dedicated to the prevention of trauma in children, and support families to be the best parents they can be. We help children to recover and thrive, and we find safe homes for them through foster care and open adoption.

- **Photos for media use** are attached (with permission):
- CORENA's 53rd project webpage: Barnardos South Coast <https://corenafund.org.au/53-barnardos-south-coast-childrens-family-centre/>
- Barnardos website - <https://www.barnardos.org.au/centres/south-coast/>

CORENA has the following social media accounts:

[Website](#)

[Facebook](#)

[Instagram](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

[Twitter](#)