



Dear FM Financial Group Pty Ltd,

Thank you for your generous donation to the bushfire appeal.

In October 2019, fires started burning across three States and by New Year's Day had extended south to beachside holiday towns. The immense scale of the fires and the images and stories coming out of these communities were so significant that coverage extended beyond Australia and had an impact on international audiences. Just as these communities started the long process of recovery and rebuilding, a global pandemic reached our shores and COVID-19 became the headline news.

In what have been uncertain times with businesses closed and people in self-isolation, we want to assure you that our work hasn't stopped. We have continued to engage with impacted communities and your donations are continuing to reach those in need.

We've always said disaster recovery is a marathon and not a sprint. We've made significant inroads but there is still much more to do.

Bendigo Bank, our Foundation and many of our partners are using knowledge and lived experience to guide the distribution of donations. We're committed to ensuring every single cent donated to this appeal is delivered to those in need.

Read on for examples of where your donations are making a difference.

David Impey

CEO

Community Enterprise Foundation™

Emergency support

In partnership with The Salvation Army we immediately released \$1.5 million for emergency housing payments. An additional \$3.75 million of bereavement payments was made to families who lost a loved one fighting fires, fencing aid for farmers and support for temporary accommodation for people with damaged or lost homes.



\$10 million for housing support

Further relief payments of \$25,000 are available for Victorian households who have lost homes, already \$6.9 million has been distributed through Windermere Child and Family Services. This will ensure people continue to have a roof over their heads and can replace household and personal items.



Rebuilding fences across three states

More than \$1 million has been directed to the volunteer group BlazeAid. Camps continue to be set up and once COVID-19 travel restrictions are lifted, volunteers will again come from everywhere to help rebuild fences, one property at a time.

Image: ©Monique Satchell



We've been here before

Working with communities is what we do. It's our point of difference and it's why our foundation and our Bank is trusted to do the right thing.

At some point, in every Australian state and territory, we've been there for our partners and communities and that's something that will never change.



It's a marathon, not a sprint

Our natural instinct is to hand out money but that's not how it works. Although \$16 million has been distributed we must continue to be guided by communities. What do they need and when do they need it? Locals in our fire impacted areas are working closely with not for profits on their needs. When they're ready, the funds are distributed.



Keeping you connected

Your donations are hitting the ground. We will be working with impacted communities long after the cameras have left and will continue to share their stories of recovery and rebuilding. As a generous donor you are now one of us. Welcome to our Bendigo family and again, thank you!



