



DIAMOND VALLEY  
community support

# ANNUAL REPORT 2023

# Working to support people through crisis

We bring the community together to connect individuals with the support they need.



**DIAMOND VALLEY**  
community support

## Main Office

### DIAMOND VALLEY COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Shop 378a Level 3 Greensborough Plaza,  
Greensborough, Vic. 3088

(03) 9435 8282

[info@dvsupport.org.au](mailto:info@dvsupport.org.au)

[www.dvsupport.org.au](http://www.dvsupport.org.au)

 @DVCSI

### DVCS VOLUNTEERS HUB

(03) 9435 8282

[volunteershub@dvsupport.org.au](mailto:volunteershub@dvsupport.org.au)

[www.dvcsvolunteershub.com.au](http://www.dvcsvolunteershub.com.au)

 @dvcsvolunteershub

## Op Shops

### DVCS OP SHOP MACLEOD

44 Aberdeen Road Macleod, VIC,  
Australia 3085

(03) 9456 9817

 @DVCSOPSHOPMACLEOD

### DVCS OP SHOP DIAMOND CREEK

37 Chute Street, Diamond Creek,  
Vic. 3089

(03) 9438 5656

 @DVCSOPSHOP

## Markets

### DVCS MARKETS

0455 826 599

[dvcsmarkets@dvsupport.org.au](mailto:dvcsmarkets@dvsupport.org.au)

[www.dvcsmarkets.com.au](http://www.dvcsmarkets.com.au)

 @DVCSMarkets

### KINGSBURY DRIVE COMMUNITY MARKET

Every Sunday. 9.00am - 1.00pm

La Trobe University, Car Park 3, Kingsbury  
Drive, Bundoora.

 @kingsburydrivecommunitymarket

### HURSTBRIDGE MARKET

1st Sunday of the month. 9.00am - 2.00pm

Hurstbridge Primary School,  
961-989 Heidelberg-Kinglake Rd,  
Hurstbridge.

 @hurstbridgemarket

### MACLEOD MARKET

3rd Saturday of the month. 9am - 2.00pm

Macleod College - May St, Macleod.

 @Macleodmarket

### LIBRARY PLACE MARKET

3rd Sunday of the month. 9.00am - 2.00pm

Library Place, Eltham.

 @LibraryPlaceMarket



ABN 36 239 032 321

Registration No. A0000594R

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# HISTORIC MILESTONE SYNOPSIS

- 1971** Diamond Valley/Eltham Citizens Advice Bureau (DVECAB) formed on April 16 with donations of \$4.42 collected to cover expenses such as stationery and postage  
First volunteer training undertaken
- 1972** Official opening DVECAB office at 83 Main Street, Greensborough on February 2nd  
Election of Board of Management, DVECAB on March 7th
- 1973** Emergency Relief begins with receipt of \$250 State Government grant
- 1975** Marriage Guidance Counselling service commence  
Employed part-time Social Worker to manage the DVECAB Services  
DVECAB moved into shared accommodation at 113 Main Street, Greensborough
- 1978** Another change of location to Shop 201 Greensborough Shopping Centre
- 1980** Legal Referral Service begins
- 1981** Weekly counselling sessions commence
- 1982** DVECAB receives stallholders' fees from the Diamond Valley Community Market
- 1984** DVECAB is incorporated in the State of Victoria
- 1989** DVECAB takes over management of the Diamond Valley Community Market
- 1992** DVECAB celebrates 21 years of Service
- 1993** Diamond Valley Foodshare opens its doors. DVECAB refers clients for food parcels  
Tax Help service commence
- 1996** Shop 201 was completely renovated with DVECAB taking possession of the entire space  
DVECAB changes its name to Community Information Diamond Valley Inc. (CIDV)
- 1999** Change of Diamond Valley Community Market name to Greensborough Community Market
- 2002** CIDV extends operating hours to include Saturday mornings  
Gamblers Help and North East Housing Service provided services from CIDV
- 2008** Greensborough Community Market relocates to Car Park 1 and 2 La Trobe University, Bundoora, and market is renamed the Kingsbury Drive Community Market
- 2010** CIDV changes name to Diamond Valley Community Support Inc. (DVCS)
- 2012** Opportunity Shop at 44 Aberdeen Road, Macleod opens December 1st
- 2015** DVCS moves to new premises—Shop 378a—Level 3, Greensborough Plaza
- 2016** DVCS Legal Service closes down
- 2017** Opportunity Shop opens at 37 Chute Street, Diamond Creek
- 2018** Macleod Op Shop Volunteers win the Banyule Volunteers Community Group Award  
KidsAssist pilot launched
- 2019** DVCS expands Emergency Relief assistance to support all people in Nillumbik  
KidsAssist program expanded to all of Nillumbik  
DVCS takes over management of the Hurstbridge Farmers Market  
Case support program launched  
Diamond Valley Gift Appeal piloted
- 2020** In response to the COVID-19 crisis, DVCS office stays open for Emergency Relief Services and starts the Food Collective Project, Legal Advice services and Volunteers Hub
- 2021** Macleod Market, Elder St. Reserve Market and Library Place Market commence  
DVCS starts providing Warm Referrals to other agencies.
- 2022** DVCS celebrates 50 years  
The Food Collective Project expands to meet a significant increase in demand  
DVCS expands to a new office space in the Plaza.
- 2023** Kingsbury Drive Community Market relocates to Carpark 3, La Trobe University. Elder St Reserve Market closes  
Client advocacy pilot starts.

# WHO WE ARE

## Committee of Management

Sonia Gilderdale—President  
John Blackman—Vice President  
(Retired Nov 2022)  
Lesley Daniels - King - Vice President  
(Elected Nov 2022)  
Bob Tully—Treasurer  
Gemma Sprague—Secretary  
Sue Lewis  
Fred Nemeth  
Ratilal Pranjivan  
Mike Kelly (Elected Nov 2022)  
Ivana Kovacevic (Elected Nov 2022)  
Valerie Spark (Elected Nov 2022)

## Staff Members

### Office Staff

Gavin Watson  
Kerri Wellington  
Emma Harvey  
Vangie Kealey  
Lynne Murray  
Marcela Santos

### Market Staff

Ruth Wookey  
Ashlee Bodger  
Angela Bonadio  
Kelly Burns  
Paul Campobasso  
AnneMaree Chapman  
Monique Crowe  
Nishant Dougall  
Carolyn Jones  
Gordon Reinecker  
Caitlin Sharman  
Rodney Sharman  
Indigo Slinger - Van Der Zec  
Tilly Stott  
Maddy Tan  
Chloe Tizeid

## Life Members

Chery Bahen  
John Blackman  
Rosie Bray  
Benita Ewings  
Stuart Fraser  
Lorna George  
John Gluyas  
Judith Jennings  
Chris Livingstone  
Betty Matthews  
Joyce McNamara  
Lorraine McSweeney  
Janet Oppy  
Anne-Marie Primmer  
Marjorie Rowe  
Joy Skellern  
Ellen Smiddy  
Angela Snow  
Richard Tonkin  
Trevor Wilson

## Volunteers In roles of: Op Shop Worker, CSW, Administration, Marketing, Drivers & Tax Help:

Chiha Afif  
Karen Alen  
Anne Armstrong  
Penny Armstrong  
Mandy Au  
Cheryl Bahen  
Zoe Beck  
John Blackman  
Judy Blackman  
Phil Bourke  
Andrea Brazis  
Rosemary Brown  
Heather Castelletti  
Maxine Catherall  
Carol Cole  
Pamela Collins  
Carmel Crane  
Lily Crimmins  
Josie D'Alesandro  
Lesley Daniels-King  
Liz Deehan  
Veronica Dobson  
Nishant Dougall  
Beth Dower  
Kayleen Dunn  
Kellie Fraser  
Vikkie Fraser  
Gabriella Frediani  
Andrew Fudge  
Patrick Garritty  
Rebecca Gibbs  
Sonia Gilderdale  
Lisa Goodison  
Colin Gould  
Margie Hammond  
Mary Hansen  
Fatma Hasan  
Rosie Hassett  
Jan Hollingsworth  
Judy Houston  
Nikki (Mary) Isaks  
Lina Italia  
Loris Kannas  
Debbie Keech  
Mike Kelly  
Jill Keyte  
Denise King  
Kim King  
Ivana Kovacevic  
Gwen Lakin  
Sue Lewis  
Kathleen Marsh  
Loris (Laurie) Mazzocato  
Heather McCarthy  
Garry McIntosh  
Dorothy McKeown  
Lenard McMillan

Maureen Meaney  
Elizabeth (Liz) Milburn  
Lisa Morris  
Tammy Nates  
George Neale  
Fred Nemeth  
Van Ngyuen  
Carolyn Norman  
Carolyn Nowatzky  
Margaret Ong  
June Ooi  
Joanne Osborne  
Roberta Parish  
Jade Parsell  
Margaret Paul  
Annette Pedersen  
John (William) Pedersen  
Joyce Pendock  
Marina (Priya) Perera  
Ahira Perez  
Kathleen (Kat) Phillips  
Ratilal Pranjivan  
Mary Presta  
Anne-Marie Primmer  
Lorraine Raymond  
Christine Reynolds  
Leanne Riddell  
Sandie Roughsedge  
Guadalupe (Lupe)  
Schmidt  
Ally Scott  
Samantha Sexton  
Rodney Sharman  
Jennifer Sinclair  
Angela Snow  
Kurukulasuriya W.F.S  
(Kanchana) Sovis  
Valerie Spark  
Gemma Sprague  
Christine Stewart  
Coleen Supple  
Nedal Tahan  
Sherry Tay  
Richard Tonkin  
Nancy Tsaklakis  
Robert Tully  
Christine Ulrich  
Zoi Vaughan  
Leigh Villanti  
Amanda (Mandy) Vis  
Christine Vu  
Anthea Ward  
Lynette Watt  
Michelle Webb  
Raymond (Ray) Weeks  
Ash Wettatsinghe  
Trevor Wilson

## Students

Shannon Boyd  
Kristien Brodie  
Lily Crimmins  
Nishant Dougall  
Vikkie Fraser  
Debbie Keech  
Jade Parsell  
Ahira Perez  
Cathy Petroulis  
Priyanka Priyanka  
Anojan Raveendran  
Samantha Sexton  
Cassie Steel  
Kerrie Theodorikakos  
Zoi Vaughan

# FROM THE PRESIDENT

■ **Sonia Gilderdale**

## **Supporting the Community more than ever**

While reflecting on the past twelve months at DVCS, I have noted that our services have become even more relevant to the community than ever before. With an increasing number of people experiencing cost of living pressures, caused by the rise in the cost of food, housing, power and other essentials, many people have sought assistance for the first time. In addition, the problems that they are facing have become increasingly complex. To address these issues, we have started offering an advocacy service and also added to our referral pathways to further assist people. Staff and volunteers do a very professional job to improve outcomes for all those who are experiencing hardship. We gratefully acknowledge the financial support from Federal and State Governments, Banyule and Nillumbik Councils, a range of organisations (both community and commercial) and many generous individuals, which enable DVCS to provide ongoing support to our community.

DVCS markets and op shops continue to provide both social and financial benefits to local people, many of whom visit these venues on a regular basis. Thank you to all the volunteers and staff who keep these enterprises flourishing and provide a welcoming experience for all visitors.

The Committee of Management (COM), which meets monthly, ensures that DVCS fulfils its financial, statutory and workplace obligations, in an environment when requirements are not constant. I would like to thank them for their hard work, professionalism and dedication. During the year we farewelled our Vice-President, John Blackman, who has moved away from the area, and we thank him for his service to the COM over several years, his contribution to setting up op shops, his 20 years of volunteering, and we wish him all the best for the future.

This year we also said goodbye to Gavin Watson, our Executive Officer (EO) for the last 3 years, who has moved to another not-for-profit organisation. Gavin steered DVCS through the Covid period, responding to all the government-imposed regulations, and we thank him for his service. We welcome the appointment of our new EO, Jeff Hallyburton, and look forward to harnessing his experience for the next phase of the DVCS journey.

In June we farewelled Vangie Kealey, our Finance and Administration Coordinator, who had been with us for seven years. We thank her for her hard work and wish her well for the future.

In conclusion, my special thanks to all the people in the DVCS community, as I have been unable to mention each of you in this short report. Many people have provided support to the organisation in a variety of ways over its long history. We value your ongoing interest and contribution, as it enables us to continue to grow and serve the people of the local area.

# FROM THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER

■ **Jeff Hallyburton**

I would like to congratulate and thank all the Committee of Management, the Staff, Volunteers and Students, and all Funders, Supporters and our Government Representatives for their contribution to Diamond Valley Community Support in the 2022-2023 year.

Having arrived after the year-end I have only scratched the surface in understanding and marvelling at the great work being done by DVCS for our community.

Whilst complex and varied, the organisation's structure and networks are impressive. The social enterprises (markets and op shops) provide a very sound income base which is supplemented by the additional contributions from the Banyule and Nillumbik councils, State and Federal governments and a number of special organisations and people, to create a constant income stream which allows our significant Emergency Relief programs to help those in our community who are in need.

Our "clients" coming to our door are experiencing more complex issues than ever before and unfortunately this is anticipated to get worse. The number of people (and families) needing help continues to grow.

At the end of June 2023 our financial position was very sound and we are well placed to meet the challenges of the new financial year, which I am very excited to be a part of.

Thank You and keep up the great work.

# TREASURER'S REPORT

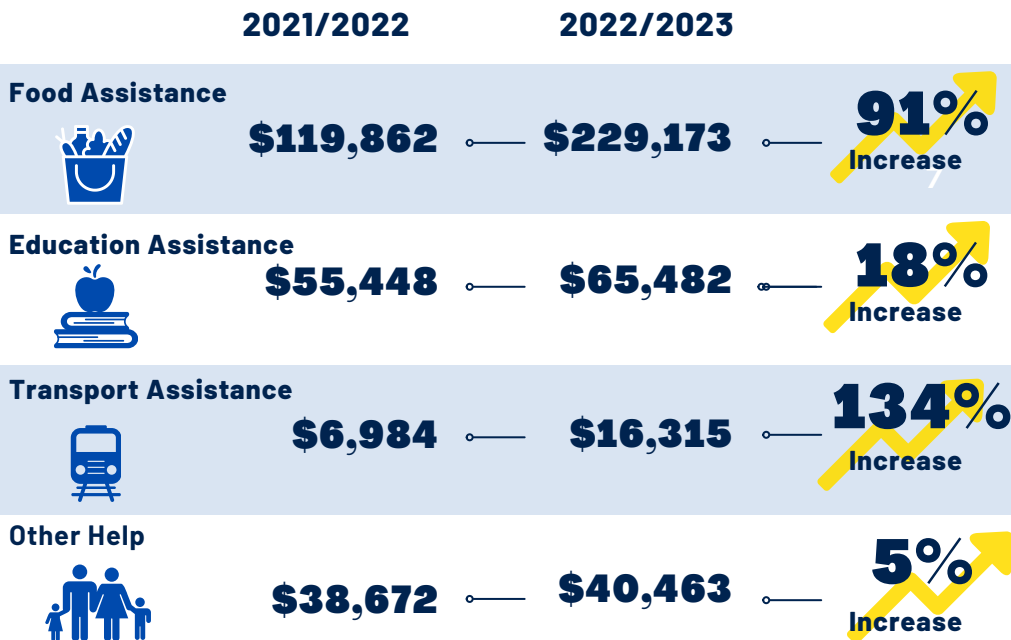
It is very disappointing that our Treasurer, Bob Tully ACA, has had to resign his position in October 2023 however his work during his term of office has ensured he leaves DVCS in a strong financial position.

The result for the financial year was a small profit of \$2,881.

Income increased by \$195,376 (28%) primarily due to our markets and shops returning to pre-Covid levels along with new project grants from governments and other sources. This enabled us to expand our Emergency Relief efforts across all areas, especially food, education and transport assistance.

The Balance Sheet remains strong and will ensure that we can meet any future challenges and confidently commence new initiatives.

## Increase year on year

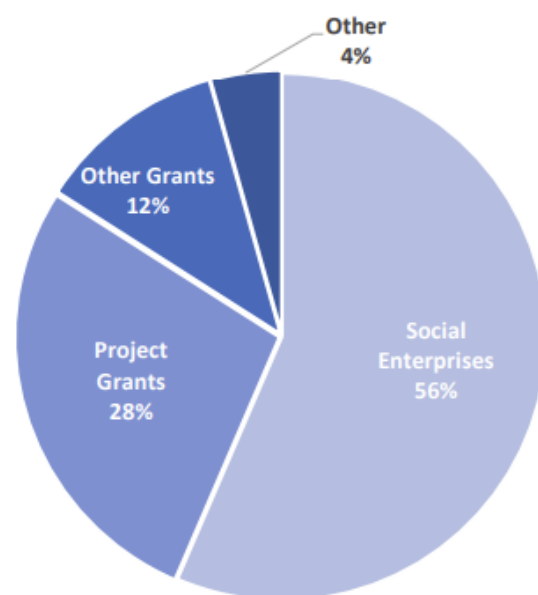


# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

## FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30TH OF JUNE 2023

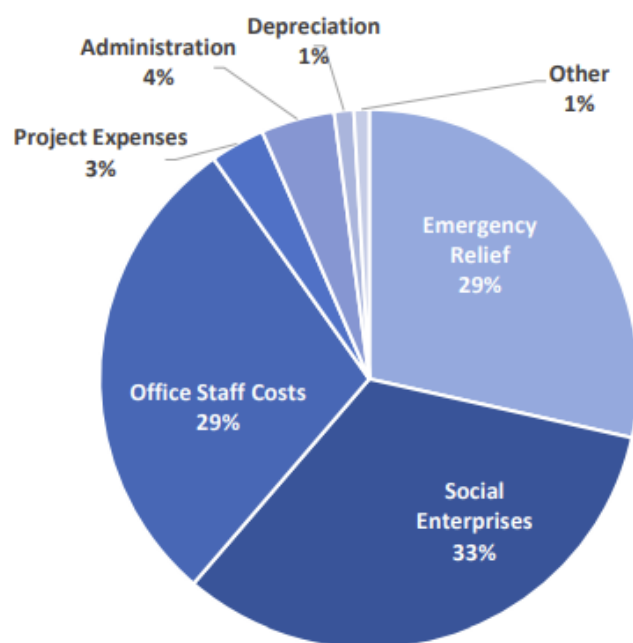
### PROFIT AND LOSS STATEMENT

	22/23	21/22
<b>REVENUE</b>		
Social Enterprises	\$ 510,075	\$ 413,007
Project Grants	\$ 248,891	\$ 155,744
Other Grants	\$ 105,000	\$ 90,539
Other	\$ 39,346	\$ 47,914
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$ 903,312</b>	<b>\$ 707,204</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Emergency Relief	\$ 256,543	\$ 173,337
Social Enterprises	\$ 295,246	\$ 286,062
Office Staff Costs	\$ 260,567	\$ 268,961
Project Expenses	\$ 29,575	\$ 45,473
Administration	\$ 39,741	\$ 33,329
Depreciation	\$ 10,548	\$ 10,634
Other	\$ 8,211	\$ 23,582
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ 900,431</b>	<b>\$ 841,378</b>
<b>NET PROFIT / (LOSS)</b>	<b>\$ 2,881</b>	<b>-\$ 134,174</b>



### BALANCE SHEET

	22/23	21/22
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 349,282	\$ 385,469
Other Current Assets	\$ 12,848	\$ 535
	<b>\$ 362,130</b>	<b>\$ 386,004</b>
<b>Non-Current Assets</b>		
	<b>\$ 23,320</b>	<b>\$ 34,262</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 385,450</b>	<b>\$ 420,266</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
<b>Current Liabilities</b>		
Trade and Other Payables	\$ 52,962	\$ 16,286
Prepaid Revenues	\$ -	\$ 43,778
	<b>\$ 52,962</b>	<b>\$ 60,064</b>
<b>Non-Current Liabilities</b>		
	<b>\$ 22,797</b>	<b>\$ 53,392</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>\$ 75,759</b>	<b>\$ 113,456</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 309,691</b>	<b>\$ 306,810</b>





# STRATEGIC PLAN

## OUR IDENTITY

We are proud of our past (50 years strong and volunteer led) while always taking future opportunities that present to us, being agile to adapt to change; and always doing it well, being sustainable and conducting ourselves with respect to others.



Our identity is founded on being empathetic, compassionate, non-judgemental, non-discriminatory, and honouring people's self-determination.

We believe in providing a safe, enjoyable and progressive place to work. Everyone should feel supported and valued to work productively so we are invested in treating everyone with respect and consideration.

The agency provides a service to our clients that is: Free, Confidential, Impartial, Independent, and respects clients' rights to make their own decisions. Clients are at all times respected as individuals who are encouraged to make choices and informed decisions.

## OUR MISSION

### STRENGTHENING OUR COMMUNITY

DVCS will be a leading provider of community information, referral, and support services to the people of Banyule, Nillumbik, and surrounding areas; empowering individuals and their families to become resilient and self-sufficient members of the community.



## SERVICE SECTOR DOMAINS WE WORK IN

### EMERGENCY RELIEF



### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



### COUNSELLING, ADVICE AND INFORMATION



# WHAT WE DO



## CLIENT IMPACT

We provide information, support and referral services to address our clients' often complex needs, empowering them to build resilience and self-sufficiency.

## LEADERSHIP

We strive to maintain DVCS's standing within the Community Information & Social Services sector and actively promote the interests of clients and other service providers.

## SUSTAINABILITY

DVCS will be financially strong and operationally efficient, with the resources required to support innovation and growth. We will adapt when required and always be able to support each other to complete our operational activities.

## PEOPLE

We empower our people with the skills, expertise and resources to best meet the needs of our clients. We commit to ensure **equality** and promote **diversity** in the workplace and ensure everyone feels supported and valued. We are all part of the team and will take ownership for our roles.

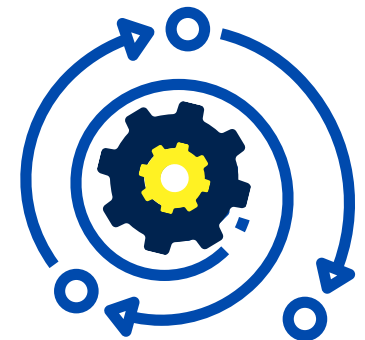
## GOVERNANCE AND COMPLIANCE

We champion and model good governance, management, leadership, excellence and accountability.

## GROWTH

We will explore expanding our existing services, collaborations and partnerships in line with our values and strategic goals as the community needs. We will continue to be more accessible and responsive to clients and their needs.

# OUR IMPACT



To provide support and assistance in the City of Banyule, the Shire of Nillumbik and surrounding areas, to people who are in need of relief from poverty, sickness, distress, misfortune, disability or helplessness.

To assist in solving the problems that beset many of the disadvantaged by the provision of relevant information regarding rights, privileges, support services and help available. To support those in need of further supports with counselling and advice services and through partnerships and referrals with other complementary service providers.

To provide and support opportunities for community members to take collective action and generate solutions to address community needs, and to provide opportunities for social inclusion and participation to create stronger, more empowered and more connected communities. To also support other community groups in working towards these common goals.

# 2022/23

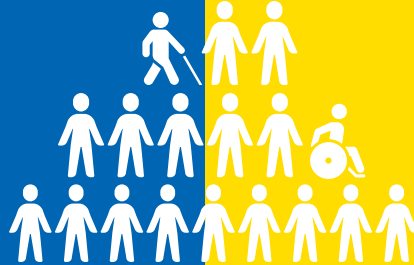
## IMPACT STATEMENT



DIAMOND VALLEY  
community support

# 2,567

Emergency  
relief visits

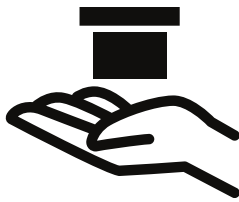


# 9,100

People  
assisted

# \$351,500

## Support Provided



Support provided includes:

- Food support
- Education assistance
- Transport assistance
- Healthcare assistance
- Material goods
- Utility bill assistance



# 2,109

## Referrals



# 308

## Gift parcels

## Volunteers Hub supported



# 508

## People

# i 321

## Advice and counselling appointments

# OUR PROGRAMS

**Kerri Wellington**

## EMERGENCY RELIEF & MATERIAL AID SERVICES & PROGRAMS

DVCS partnered with a number of agencies and groups in the 2022-2023 period, to expand the variety of material aid and emergency relief items we could provide to people experiencing hardship. We continued to receive amazing support from organisations like Street Smart, Pinchapoo and Share the Dignity with items like hygiene support and toiletries, towels and linen. Other partners like Footscape and Thread Together continued to provide countless items of clothing and footwear, Big Group Hug and 3081 Angels assisted with toys, clothing and baby /young child related furniture and equipment (prams, car seats etc).

Where possible, DVCS has contributed by supporting these partners with donation drives and promotion of their fundraising. Partnerships like these are essential for DVCS to be able to extend as much support for people who come to us for assistance. Thank you to all of our partners!

During the 2022-2023 period, Our Emergency Relief Services included:

- Food Vouchers, Food Parcels, Fresh Bread, Ready-made Meals
- Health Care Prescription Assistance
- Transport Assistance
- Mobile Phone Recharge and Telstra Assistance
- Education Assistance
- Christmas Gift and Hamper Appeals
- Hygiene & Personal Care Support
- Swags, Tents, Blankets and Winter Woollies
- Clothing, Manchester, Household Goods
- Footscape Footwear and Supports
- Escabags

Additionally, DVCS collaborated with fantastic partners to support the community by providing complimentary and holistic counselling and advice services including Financial Counselling, Legal Services, Tax Help, Jobs Advocate and the Client Advocacy Program.



## ADVOCACY PROGRAM

In August 2022 DVCS launched the Client Advocacy Program. Staffed by community support worker volunteers, the program has enabled more time to be spent with those clients who have complex needs and require greater support in terms of needing application forms completed and advocating with housing, family violence and NDIS agencies. While emergency relief addresses immediate needs, advocacy offers a more comprehensive and tailored approach to helping individuals and families escape cycles of disadvantage. By addressing the underlying causes of financial hardship and empowering clients to build their resilience and resources, these services contribute to more sustainable and positive long-term outcomes.

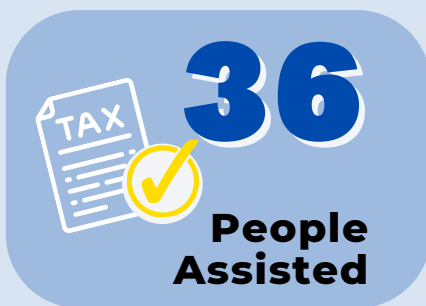


In the 6 months since the Program was launched, 56 individuals were assisted in over 80 sessions spanning 87 hours of face to face support. This is not inclusive of the time spent outside of appointments completing grants, researching and doing paperwork on behalf of clients. Also in that six-month period, the advocacy team applied and were successful in obtaining 22 Queens Funds Grants, with an average \$380 for each one totalling \$8,360. Additionally, there were 3 Artists for Kids Culture Grants awarded for 5 children, totalling \$7,500 for activities including music lessons, drama and art classes.

## TAX HELP

Our Tax Help team again provided an incredibly valuable service to those needing help managing their tax affairs in the lead up to the October 31st, 2022 deadline. Providing valuable assistance and support to individuals navigating their tax affairs is crucial, and our team did an outstanding job with enthusiasm and a friendly approach. This year, the team continued the partnership with Rosanna Fire Station Community House to provide outreach one day per week in Rosanna and extend support across Banyule.

Handling various tax-related inquiries and helping people in crisis access the funds they need, whether through online, offline, phone-based or in-person services, demonstrates a high level of dedication and expertise and whose efforts undoubtedly made a significant difference in the lives of many individuals.



## KIDSASSIST - EDUCATION ASSISTANCE

The financial burden of school costs is a significant concern for many families. This issue can place substantial stress on households, as the cost of school uniforms, school fees, text books and extracurricular activities, can add up quickly. The increasing reliance on technology means the cost of IT devices such as laptops or tablets can add to the load on families already struggling financially.

In the 2022-2023 financial year, the KidsAssist Program delivered more than \$65,000 to families in need of help to cover the costs of educational items and activities for children attending schools across Banyule and Nillumbik.



## LEGAL ADVICE

Provided in partnership with Tonkin Legal Group and Horsley, Ryan & Associates, the DVCS Pro Bono Legal Advice Service continued to deliver a valuable service in the 2022-2023 period. This phone-based service offers free legal advice to local residents needing assistance, but cannot afford a lawyer. Covering a wide range of topics, including family law, criminal law, intervention orders, consumer law and neighbourhood disputes, the service plays a crucial role in supporting the community.

The Pro Bono Legal Advice Service is a shining example of how organisations and professionals can come together to make a positive impact on the lives of those less fortunate.



## FINANCIAL COUNSELLING

In October 2022, DVCS embarked on a new partnership with Uniting Vic & Tas to provide an on-site co-located Financial Counselling service. Financial counselling plays a crucial role in helping individuals and families navigate financial difficulties.

Financial Counselling can support people to reduce their expenses through budgeting, accessing grants and concessions, advocating with utilities and other companies to access payment plans, waiver late fees and more. By providing guidance, support and advocacy, financial counsellors empower people to take control of their finances, and work towards financial security and resilience. This service has become an integral part of the DVCS assistance suite that can help people experiencing hardship.



## GIFT APPEALS

DVCS was an integral partner in delivering two Christmas Gift Appeals in December 2022, the Banyule Children's Gift Appeal and the Diamond Valley Gift Appeal.

The Gift Appeals source community donations of new gifts, toys, gift cards and food hampers and distributes them to local children aged up to 16 years of age whose families are experiencing financial hardship during the Christmas season.

Banyule Children's Gift Appeal has been delivered for over 20 years and was delivered again this year in partnership with Banyule City Council, 3081 Angels, BANSIC and Banyule Community Health. The Diamond Valley Gift Appeal was delivered in partnership with the Lions Club of Nillumbik and the Vine Baptist Church. More than 45 volunteers are involved in the delivery of the Gift Appeals, and more than 15 referral agencies supporting hundreds of children benefit from these projects. Many donation partners, supporters and individuals donate their time, effort, financial donations and gifts to the appeals to make these projects possible. These include local schools and child care centres, community groups like Rotary and Lions clubs, local businesses, churches, councils, financial institutions and more.



## JOBS ADVOCATE

The partnership with Banyule City Council and the Jobs Victoria Advocate Program commenced in February 2022 and was hugely successful until funding ceased at the end of June 2023.

The friendly and knowledgeable team provided a weekly on-site service to help people looking for employment, education and training support.

Many of our clients and community members benefited from this partnership accessing assistance with resume writing, referrals to employment services and education providers, inclusive pre and post-employment support, career planning and goal setting, education, training and employment advice. We are disappointed to see such a valuable service go and are hopeful that something similar may again be available in the near future.



## POWER SAVING BONUS

The Victorian Government has provided a \$250 Power Saving Bonus to eligible Victorians to assist with the rising costs of energy. In the 2022-2023 period the Government decided to partner with agencies in the community sector to roll out the program to all Victorians and DVCS joined this partnership. Through CISVic, we held 8 weeks of outreach application stations in the Greensborough Plaza and with our Food Collective Partner CareNet in Templestowe. These Pop-ups were a huge success, with hundreds of applications being submitted for community members by our incredible team of volunteers.

It was a great opportunity to provide extra support to people who have struggled to navigate the PSB application system, particularly for those who may be less technologically savvy, without access to a computer or with English as a Second Language.

We also received a financial reward from the undertaking, which went back into our emergency relief program to help our clients.

# OUR VOLUNTEERS

The dedication and resilience of the DVCS volunteer team and the positive impact they've had on our organisation and community in 2022 -2023 is incredible. Volunteers play a crucial role in supporting various DVCS initiatives, and it's evident that our volunteers have been instrumental in keeping our organisation's doors open and serving the community.

The expansion of roles and the inclusion of new volunteers in different capacities, from food collective drivers to data entry officers, showcase the flexibility and adaptability of our team in responding to the evolving needs of the community.

The challenges presented by the fluctuating state of services and increased demands on both our op shops and head office are indeed significant. Our op shop teams have risen to the occasion, managing increased donations and serving a growing number of customers, and the team at the head office has shown outstanding ability to adapt and meet the complex demands of our clients.

Assisting the community through Volunteering is part of our Community Development Strategy that serves to support the community sector, as well as supporting our community members through increased participation opportunities in the community. With over 120 volunteers across diverse roles in our agency, we express our gratitude to the DVCS Volunteer Team for their unwavering support, dedication and hard work.

Jagajaga Community Volunteer Awards 2023. Celebrating our Amazing Volunteers! In early 2023, we had the opportunity to celebrate three of those volunteers who received this year's Jagajaga Volunteering Awards! Congratulations to our wonderful team members: **Loris** (op shop volunteer and data entry team), **Michelle** (data entry team) and **Mary** (food collective driver).



# GRANTS & FUNDING

In the 2022-2023 period DVCS was able to extend its crisis response support to people facing extreme hardship through a number of grants that went directly to support people by covering the costs of day to day necessities including food, accommodation, utilities, education costs, mobile phone top ups, medical costs, household goods, devices and more.

Grants and support were received from various government and community agencies. These grants played a crucial role in supporting the emergency relief program and community development projects, as well as providing quick response grants to assist clients with emergency utility and housing needs. This support enables organisations like DVCS to make a real impact in the community by helping those in need.

Continued collaboration with these agencies and partners is key to sustaining and expanding the important work that DVCS does in providing assistance and relief.

A snapshot of some of these grants included:

## **Banyule Chef2Home!**

Project funded by Banyule Charitable Fund and Lord Mayor's Charitable Fund. This grant allowed us to support local hospitality services, food relief services and local people in hardship with access to healthy, nutritious and culturally diverse meals along with fresh food items over a 12-week period. There were a combined total of 1,800 meals purchased from 3 local restaurants and 130 One Boxes (from the One Box) purchased and distributed during this 12-week period, across 4 food relief agencies.

## **Department of Families, Fairness and Housing – Access, Equity and Inclusion Grants**

Supported us by funding grocery cards, health care prescription assistance vouchers, toiletries and cleaning products, mobile phone top-ups and fuel cards.

## **Banyule City Council**

Continued to provide ongoing operational support through its Community Partnerships program to help ensure DVCS continue to deliver support to Banyule residents.

Banyule City Council – Equipment Grant: Enabled us to purchase much needed iPads for our community support workers to access information and make referrals and applications for our clients.

## **Eltham Rural Group**

Enabled us to purchase one month's supply of food and toiletry items for the Hurstbridge and Eltham Community Pantries.

## **Magistrates Court Funds**

Assisted with the purchase of grocery cards and fuel vouchers.

## **Nillumbik Shire Council**

The Nillumbik Community Fund assisted with funding the activities for the Diamond Valley Gift Appeal.

The Quick Response Grant enabled the purchase of a new community pantry for the Hurstbridge Community Hub.

## **Street Smart Community Grants**

Enabled the purchase of grocery cards.

## **Jagajaga Community Volunteer Grants**

Provided funding for petrol vouchers to give to our volunteer driving team who assist us in transporting food donations and parcels around the region to client facing services and the community pantries, along with transporting Christmas items for the Gift Appeals.

## **Sustainability Victoria Grant**

In October 2022, the Food Collective Project – Next Level Project was one of 39 successful projects in the second round of the Circular Economy Communities Fund. The Food Collective Project is a joint initiative founded in 2020, by DVCS and CareNet and in partnership with many other local groups and organisations. The Next Level project aims to support the needs for the organisations involved in The Food Collective Project for the period to April 2024 with items including food, staff coordination, freezers and shelving, petrol and other operational expenses.

The Food Collective Project creates opportunities for residents to participate in a circular economy initiative focused on food rescue, reducing food waste and diverting organic material from landfill. The project will also address food insecurity, building on the existing Food Collective Project model.





# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND PARTNERSHIPS

To extend our engagement with the community and strengthen relationships with other community groups, DVCS staff presented at secondary schools and Rotary and Lions Clubs, talking about the assistance available, how to get involved in volunteering or project work, and the importance of changing the dialogue around hardship and reducing the stigma of seeking help. We also did interviews with Plenty Valley Radio to raise awareness of the crisis of hardship in our community. These communications are important because many people are unaware of the need for help in their local area.

Collaboration and partnerships play a crucial role at DVCS, they enable us to pool resources and expertise, build on the unique strengths, experiences, and insights of different organisations, and achieve greater impact.

Community development strategies are valuable for DVCS because they focus on building resilience, which can have long-term positive outcomes for communities.

## DVCS VOLUNTEERS HUB

In February 2023, our Volunteers Hub team launched their pop-up/outreach service, visiting four locations every month in the Banyule and Nillumbik regions, as well as weekly sessions at the Greensborough Plaza office. The team helps community members find volunteering opportunities across the region and supports volunteer involving organisations with their volunteering needs.

Assisting the community through volunteering is part of our Community Development Strategy that serves to support the community sector, as well as supporting our community members through increased participation opportunities in the community. Volunteering brings people from diverse backgrounds together, promoting social cohesion and a sense of belonging within the community. It helps break down social barriers and encourages cooperation among community members. Volunteering plays a crucial role in strengthening communities by fostering a sense of unity and mutual support. By providing increased participation opportunities and promoting social cohesion, the DVCS Volunteers Hub are contributing to the well-being and resilience of our community. A huge thank you to our team and our partners including Rosanna Fire Station Community House, Yarra Plenty Libraries (Diamond Valley, Ivanhoe and Eltham) for making this project a huge success and making a positive impact on the lives of community members in the region.



## DVCS CHEER SQUAD

Throughout the past twelve months, the Cheer Squad team has been hard at work undertaking many projects focused on bringing more cheer to members of our community that are facing challenging times. These initiatives, such as the Father's Day and Mother's Day Pamper Packs, Easter Gifts, and Christmas Toy Hampers, play a crucial role in enhancing the well-being and sense of connection among community members.

By offering support and thoughtful gestures during special occasions, the Cheer Squad team is not only brightening people's days, but also contributing to the overall community development and strengthening strategy. These efforts align with the goal of fostering a sense of unity and support among community members, which can have a positive impact on their lives.

These projects, when coupled with emergency relief programs, create a comprehensive approach to addressing the needs of your community. Emergency relief programs provide immediate assistance during crises, while initiatives like the Cheer Squad projects focus on longer-term well-being and building a sense of belonging.

## FOOD COLLECTIVE PARTNERS

The Food Collective Project has now grown to include a great network of community partners, community pantries and growing pathways of food rescue from local supermarkets, bakeries and fruit and vegetable shops.

It is estimated that this project will result in around 1,500kgs of food being rescued and redistributed each week, and the diversion of about 78 tonnes of food from landfill every year. This target was exceeded within the first three months of the project, and it's now redistributing between 3.5 and 4 tonnes of food each week across local government areas.

This work wouldn't be possible without the collaboration and partnership between the volunteers, groups and agencies within the Collective.

While this list isn't exhaustive, over the last 12 months this has included neighbourhood and community houses, school groups, churches, Lions clubs, Rotary groups, sporting clubs, libraries, childcare centres, local businesses, scouting and girl guides groups, U3A groups and many more. Every single contribution - big and small - has made a huge impact on the Collective and its ability to support local community members experiencing hardship.

Our food rescue and food sourcing partners include, Foodbank Victoria, Fare Share, Second Bite, Alex Makes Meals, Quintons IGA Warrandyte, Woolworths Heidelberg, IGA Templestowe, Bakers Delight Greensborough, Woolworths Templestowe, Warrandyte IGA, Fresh Market Templestowe, Bulleen Fresh Lettuce and Food for Change.

Based in Templestowe, CareNet is the main logistical and food receiving and distributing partner in the Project and has been integral in increasing the food rescue volume in the region.

## DIAMOND VALLEY FOODSHARE

A local volunteer-led and run food relief hub, Diamond Valley Foodshare has been an integral partner of DVCS for many years, helping address food insecurity challenges in the area. DVCS refers directly to DV Foodshare for clients to receive food assistance and to work together to support people through crisis.





## GREENSBOROUGH PLAZA PARTNERSHIP

Our partnership with Greensborough Plaza has grown significantly over the past twelve months with a more collaborative approach and support. The plaza has helped to promote our services and organise material aid drives including: Christmas Food, Winter Coats, Pet Food, Nappies and Toiletries. Through all these we have received an incredible amount of donations that have gone directly to those in need.



## JBE SIGNALLING PARTNERSHIP

A generous commitment of support from JBE Signalling commenced in late 2022. DVCS has been selected as a local charity to receive very generous, monthly support from JBE Signalling to support our KidsAssist Program, our ER Program and the Food Collective Project to support those families and communities in the project area of where JBE's current construction project in Greensborough is being undertaken.

The assistance from JBE has helped many families in hardship with their school costs (uniforms, books, excursions etc) helping to address growing food insecurity in the region and in assisting us in helping to respond to those in crisis. We can't thank them enough for this generous support.



## STUDENT PLACEMENT PROGRAM

During the 2022-2023 year, we teamed up with 17 enthusiastic students pursuing their Diploma of Community Services or Master of Social Work. Together, they clocked an impressive 4,600 hours with us.

Having these students around has been a game-changer. They've brought fresh ideas, loads of energy and enthusiasm to our work. It's like a constant brainstorming session where everyone is learning from each other. These students are the future of social work and their hard work and dedication inspires us to keep making an impact in our community.



The above snapshot is certainly not a comprehensive overview of all the amazing collaborations and partnerships that DVCS have had the privilege of being part of over the last 12 months. We thank each and every one of our partners in all the different ways they contribute in helping us to make the impact we do in the lives of those in our communities. We could not do it without them.

# SOCIAL ENTERPRISES



## MARKETS

### Ruth Wookey

In the 2022/23 fiscal year, we successfully managed four regular markets, with one of our notable achievements being the relocation of the Kingsbury Drive Community Market at La Trobe University to a new, on-campus location in mid-2023. This particular market consistently hosts up to 120 stallholders each week, and its popularity is evident through its bustling atmosphere. Additionally, we oversee three monthly markets, each accommodating up to 40 stallholders. These markets take place in Hurstbridge on the first Sunday of every month, Macleod on the third Saturday of every month, and Library Place in Eltham on the third Sunday of each month.

In addition to our regular markets, we organise various popup markets throughout the year, such as those held during the Hurstbridge Wattle Festival and the Diamond Creek Spring Market. Our commitment to community engagement and supporting the DVCS activities remains steadfast. We continually explore opportunities to expand our market locations and provide enjoyable, informative experiences to the community.

Undoubtedly, the COVID-19 pandemic and challenging economic conditions have impacted our social enterprises, including our markets. However, it's with great satisfaction that we can report that our total income has now returned to pre-COVID levels.

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to our dedicated team of market assistants. These individuals bravely face Melbourne's ever-changing weather conditions, arriving early to ensure a smooth setup process and adeptly addressing any unforeseen challenges throughout the day.

Despite the expected seasonal variations, our markets have managed to remain open during the winter months, thanks to the resilience of our team and the support of our stallholders.

Looking ahead, we are committed to innovation and are constantly searching for new, exciting activities and ideas to enhance our markets, making them even more engaging and enjoyable for our community.

## OP SHOPS

### MACLEOD OP SHOP

■■■■■ Carmel Crane

In December the Op shop celebrated its 10th anniversary, we had lots of balloons, colourful streamers, delicious cake and different specials for our customers. A huge thank-you to Gemma and her group for decorating and getting the shop into the party mood.

We started the year off with an invitation from Loyola College to a preview of their school production, 'Legally Blonde'. A number of our volunteers took up the offer and a great time was had by all. We partied for the whole week! It gave us the opportunity to mingle with friends that have been made over the 10 years and to take pride in how our little shop has helped the local community.

As we were still recovering from the effects of Covid, we made a conscious effort to keep our pricing low and affordable. We offered more special events, like: Star Wars, Retro theme, Queen's Jubilee celebration, and of course the Coronation of King Charles. We also had a number of '50% off everything' days, that proved very popular.

Also, during the 2022-2023 year we actioned over 60 Emergency Relief Forms. It certainly is a great feeling to be able to help our clients choose essential goods and to bring a smile to their faces.

The shop had to close for approximately two weeks in April due to a major flooding issue. This is now fixed, and we soon got back into the swing of things. Our total number of volunteers is around 30. Quite a lot of volunteers have taken off on extended overseas holidays or are committed to Grandparent duties. Thanks to the staff who have taken on extra duties to get us through. Our window displays are changed weekly, so a huge THANK YOU to Lupe and her Wednesday team for producing such fabulous displays.

Thanks also go to Annette, who organised a Christmas hamper raffle. She sourced donations from the local Macleod traders and put together over 20 Hampers. Customers were given a free ticket and all winners were extremely happy.

We continually receive messages from our customers commenting on the cleanliness of the shop, the variety of items, the low prices and the friendly staff that make them feel so welcome.

Thank you to each and every-one of you for your help, ideas and friendship. It is a privilege to oversee the running of the Macleod Op shop. Our two Op shops are a valuable income stream for DVCS with 100% of profits going back into the community. Well done to all.

### DIAMOND CREEK OP SHOP

■■■■■ Cheryl Bahen

It was finally good to enjoy our first full trading year after the previous three years of repeated closures and lockdowns. The year has flown by in a whirl of seasons, sales, promotions and special holiday events.

My thanks go to Lisa and the Thursday morning team for the beautiful window displays throughout the year and keeping the shop fresh and topical whilst highlighting the wonderful wares to be found within. The pretty window displays really do help to entice locals into the shop. Thanks also to Val and Sue for our mini book displays near the counter, and Karen for her efforts and donations.

Thank you also to the supervisors and the volunteers for joining in the various activities and local Diamond Creek Festivities, including the Special days of celebration, such as the afternoon tea for King Charles' Coronation. Also. A special mention to everyone that took on extra shifts, often at short notice, so that the shop could stay open.

We once again hosted two students from Loyola College and a teacher from Parade College as part of their Christian give back to the community program. It is always enjoyable to have the young students working with us in the shop. Hopefully, they left us with a new appreciation of working within a team environment and learning retail skills.

We had two Supervisors' Meetings held in the last financial year, and they were a valuable opportunity for both shops to get together, enjoy each other's company and discuss mutual concerns and issues. The annual Volunteers' Afternoon Tea, and the Christmas Party, are also fantastic opportunities for everyone to mingle with other team members of DVCS.

My sincerest thanks go to the fantastic team of volunteers working at the Diamond Creek shop. It has been wonderful to watch the individual groups turn into friendships. This just highlights the positives that come from volunteering with an organisation such as DVCS.

We have slowly become a fixture within the Diamond Creek community, giving locals the opportunity to purchase cheap essential items and to recycle their unwanted goods.

# THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS DONORS AND SUPPORTERS

3081 Angels  
88.6 Plenty Valley FM  
Aldi (Lower Plenty)  
Alex Makes Meals  
Aligned Leisure  
All Saints Anglican Church, Greensborough  
Apollo Parkways Primary School  
Artist For Kids Culture  
Austin Health  
Back In Motion (Eltham/ Montmorency)  
Bakers Delight (Eltham)  
Banyule City Council  
Banyule Community Health Service  
Barry Plant  
Bendigo Bank (Eltham)  
Berry Street  
Big Group Hug  
Big W (Doncaster)  
Box Hill Institute  
Bright Sparq  
Boomerang bag  
Bunnings Warehouse (Eltham)  
CareNet Ltd  
Cave community and volunteers of Eltham  
Centrelink (Greensborough and Heidelberg)  
CentreView Cafe  
Christmas Hills Primary School  
Colin Brooks MP  
Community Information & Support Victoria (CISVic)  
Commonwealth Bank (Greensborough)  
Déjà vu  
Diamond Creek East Primary School  
Diamond Creek Memorial Kindergarten  
Diamond Creek Primary  
Diamond Creek Traders Association  
Diamond Hills Pre School  
Diamond Valley College  
Diamond Valley Food Share  
Diamond Valley Learning Centre  
Diamond Valley Special School  
Doreen Primary School  
Dysons  
East Ivanhoe Bowling Club Inc.  
Elite Dance Studio  
Eltham Chamber of Commerce  
Eltham Foodshare Inc.  
Eltham High School  
Eltham Rural Group Inc.  
Eltham Victoria Police  
Epping First Grammar Pre-School  
Escabags - Escape Bags  
F45 Lower Plenty  
Foodbank Victoria  
Footscape  
GIVIT

Glen Park Gospel Church  
GOFF Electrical and Security  
Good360 Australia  
Greenhills Neighbourhood House  
Greensborough College  
Greensborough Plaza  
Greensborough Primary School  
Greensborough RSL  
Grill'd Burgers  
Good Start Early Learning (Heidelberg)  
Hayden's Helping Hands  
HealthAbility  
HOYTS (Greensborough)  
Horsley Ryan and Associates  
Hurstbridge Community Hub  
Hurstbridge Primary School  
IDV  
Ivanhoe East Primary School  
Ivanhoe Grammar School  
Ivanhoe Grammarians Lodge  
Ivanhoe Ladies Golf Club  
JBE Signalling  
Jellis Craig Real Estate  
Jobs Advocate  
Jobs Victoria  
Kate Thwaites MP  
KOGO (knit one give one)  
La Trobe University  
LinC Eltham  
Link Community Transport  
Lions Club (Diamond Valley)  
Lions Club (Eltham)  
Lions Club (Nillumbik)  
Little Things Photography  
Living and Learning (Nillumbik)  
Living Faith Church  
Local Food Connect  
Lollipops Playland  
Macleod College  
Macleod Traders Association  
Macleod Village  
Mason White McDougall  
Manningham Christian Centre  
Melbourne Polytechnic  
Midas  
Montmorency Primary School  
MW Law  
NAB (Greensborough)  
Nappy Collective  
Nelson Alexander  
Nillumbik Girl Guides  
Nillumbik Shire Council  
Nillumbik U3A

North East Citizen Advocate  
Northern Community News  
Northern Knights  
OzHarvest  
Panton Hill Living and Learning  
Panton Hill Playhouse  
PayPal  
Pets of the Homeless Australia  
Pinchapoo  
Ray White  
Rosanna Fire Station Community House  
Rosanna Golf Links Primary School  
Rosanna Primary School  
Rotary Club (Diamond Creek)  
Rotary Club (Eltham)  
Rotary Club (Bundoora)  
Rrt Rapid Relief Team  
Safe and Equal  
Scouts Groups  
Second bite  
Share the Dignity  
Sherbourne Pre-school  
Sheridan/Sleep Safe  
Southern Cross Community Church Diamond Creek -  
Creativity for a Cause  
Springthorpe Retirement Living  
St Bernardette's Primary School (Ivanhoe)  
St George's East Ivanhoe Church  
St Helena Secondary College  
St Margaret's Anglican Church (Eltham)  
St John's Diamond Creek  
Strathewen Primary School  
Street Smart  
Sustainability Victoria  
Transit Safety Division North 04  
Thread Together  
Tonkin Legal Group  
The Cookie Zone

The Good Box  
The One Box  
The Patchwork Gallery Quilt Group  
The Queens Fund  
The Vine Baptist Church (Eltham & Hurstbridge)  
Thread Together  
United Minds Community Services  
Uniting Vic & Tas  
Viewbank Preschool  
Vine Baptist Church  
Vicki Ward MP  
Warrandyte Neighbourhood House  
Watermark  
Wattle Glen Primary School  
Watsonia Neighbourhood House  
Watsonia North Primary School  
Yarra Plenty Regional Library

**To all the Individuals who  
donated cash, time and  
goods.**

