



PORT PHILLIP COMMUNITY GROUP

ANNUAL REPORT 2015 TO 2016



Contents

*This report contains
information about our work
and partnerships 2015/16*

Money matters

Funding and reporting; assisting clients with their personal/family finances.

Information, support and referral

Providing immediate assistance, material aid, food vouchers and a wide range of referrals.

Recreation activities

Promoting social inclusion, connectedness and better health.

Creative education

Boosting creativity, confidence and employment opportunities.



*Fresh food supplies are
distributed each week.*

Acknowledgements

Port Phillip Community Group respectfully acknowledges the Yalukit Willam Clan of the Boon Wurrung. We pay our respects to their Elders, past and present. We acknowledge and uphold their continuing relationship to this land.

We appreciate and welcome diversity in all its forms, including staff and community members, and believe this makes our teams, services and organisation stronger and more effective.

A **full copy of this report** with the 2015/16 financial details can be downloaded from our website ppcg.org.au/about-us or by calling (03) 8598 6600 or emailing info@ppcg.org.au

PPCG's new strategic plan is available on our website.

Chair/EO Report |

Helen Fallaw Chair
Karen Sait Executive Officer



PPCG Executive Officer, Karen Sait (right) assisting client Peter with his paper work.

For 45 years PPCG has been assisting our community through service delivery, advocacy and social action.

Starting as a neighborhood house in St Kilda in the early 1970's, the group organised recreational and educational activities. Soon it became evident that marginalised and isolated members of the community needed more direct help, so programs providing information, support, referral and community outreach were introduced.

Port Phillip Community Group's innovative, responsive nature also seeded many other organisations which are now flourishing organisations in the City of Port Phillip, including health and housing services.

Now, we operate from four sites across Port Phillip and provide a variety of centre-based and outreach programs. New programs have added to our capacity to strengthen support for individuals through emergency relief, personal advocacy and financial counselling, and to extend our community development and education services.

The board is pleased to report that PPCG has had a successful year to 30 June 2016. There have been many achievements this past year and the key ones are outlined in this report. We would like to draw your attention to our new Strategic Plan to 2019, highlighted in this report.

These past twelve months have also seen several changes in our volunteer board, with the retirement of our former chair, Jeff Lyons, and the Uniting Church Minister John Tansey, as well as the resignation of our Executive Officer David Atkins.

We thank each of them for their contributions and commitment to PPCG, and for their friendship around the board table. We wish them all the best.

We are pleased to welcome our new directors, Lisa Fitzpatrick, Tullia Gilarry and Michael McGann, and our new Executive Officer, Karen Sait. We would also like to acknowledge and thank our ongoing board members, Bernard Joffe, Anna Moo, Pam O'Neil and Jane Garrow for their commitment and work throughout the year.

Our core commitment continues to be the provision of accessible services targeted to those most at risk and marginalised.

At PPCG our staff, management and volunteers are our most valuable resources and we thank them for their work and passion. We are united by our mission to encourage and support positive change, to promote inclusion and acceptance of marginalised individuals and communities, and to contribute to the ongoing development of a healthy, liveable, diverse, vibrant community for all.

As a local place-based organisation, PPCG has always been strongly supported by local government, with further support from state and federal governments. On behalf of the clients who benefit from PPCG's services, we acknowledge with sincere appreciation their support as well as the support of our collaborators, partners and friends in the community.

Gratitude for tireless workers

Not long before he retired - after 28 years as PPCG's chair - Jeff Lyons espoused his attitude as 'We're all in this together'.

Every day, he brought that attitude to helping improve the lives of Port Phillip residents living with disadvantages, and to his dealings with staff, volunteers and supporters of the group.

It's an incredible effort to work with the Port Phillip Community Group for almost three decades, Jeff, and we salute you.

Also, it was with much sadness that we farewelled the Uniting Church in Australia, St Kilda Parish Mission's Reverend John Tansey.

A tireless campaigner for social justice, he joined our board in 2001. Throughout the next 15 years, he was a committed, active board member who was an integral part of our success and achievements. His dedication, enthusiasm and knowledge have been of immense benefit to us and the wider community.



PPCG staff member, Maz Fox (left) and volunteer Sue, working at the St Kilda front desk.

Thinking of volunteering?

We are always on the lookout for people wanting to contribute to our activities. Drop into one of our offices, call 8598 6600, or email us for details volunteers@ppcg.org.au

A helping hand

PPCG volunteers tell us they volunteer for all sorts of reasons, but mostly they want to give back to the community they live in. Volunteers have various roles across PPCG.

At the St Kilda site our volunteers provide much needed support and assistance to our information, support and referral staff through assisting clients face-to-face, answering the phone, distributing food supplies, and appointments for finance, food voucher and legal issues.

Volunteers work across programs, including education, creative, recreation and financial programs assisting clients across Port Phillip.

We pay tribute to our longest serving volunteer, Garry Mannix, who retired this year after working with PPCG for 15 years.

We thank our volunteers for their time and commitment to the organisation.

– PPCG BOARD, MANAGEMENT AND STAFF

Money matters

For 2015/16 our grant and other funding was \$1,193,770.

We gratefully acknowledge the support from our funders and community partners, in particular our primary funder the **City of Port Phillip**.

Our other key funders -

- Community Information and Support Victoria
- Department of Education and Training, Victoria
- Department of Health and Human Services, Victoria
- Department of Social Services, Australia
- Good Shepherd Australia
- St Kilda Community Housing

In addition we received a number of one-off grants, project funds, donations and other assistance from philanthropic trusts, businesses and individuals. We extend our appreciation for each of these as they have enabled additional supports and services to our clients.

Treasurer's report

The financial information below is from our Annual Financial Report - year ending 30 June 2016.

Total income for the year ending 30 June 2016 was \$1,193,770 obtained from grants, donations, interest, fees and other income sources.

Total expenditure in this year was \$1,231,701. This resulted in a net deficit of \$37,931.

Although there was an accounting deficit of \$37,931, PPCG achieved a cash surplus of \$150,749 for the year.

Bernard Joffe Treasurer



Income \$1,193,770
Expenses \$1,231,701
Deficit \$37,931



The full financial report is available on our website.

Tax Help

Tax time can be confusing for the best of us, so for more than a decade, PPCG has been providing free, expert financial assistance for low income earners to file their tax returns.

In this financial year, we assisted 81 clients with their tax returns, showing an 18% increase on the previous year. This is a shared community initiative supported by the City of Port Phillip and the Australian Tax Office which trains and supports accountants and financial advisors who volunteer their time. Our treasurer, Bernard Joffe, has volunteered in this role for the past 12 years.

Rent assistance

With escalating private rental costs across Port Phillip we are seeing many low income individuals and families forced to leave the area. This has significant negative impacts on social connectedness and well-being.

For many people escalating rental costs, combined with unforeseen life situations or crises, mean that they are often only a pay check away from becoming homeless.

As one measure to prevent this, PPCG provided one-off financial assistance to a small number of residents living in private rentals, who were experiencing difficulty paying their rent and facing imminent eviction.

During the past year we assisted 23 clients to avoid eviction with individual rent assistance averaging \$550 per payment.



PPPG staff member Shayne Barns (left) helping a client access the No Interest Loans Scheme.

No Interest Loans Scheme

This scheme provides affordable loan options of up to \$800 for clients on low incomes.

It provides much-needed funds, without interest and with very low repayments as alternatives to high-cost loans. This is what makes the No Interest Loans Scheme so important. Clients have the option to repay without interest, \$20 or \$30 each fortnight, when larger repayments and interest rates create debt and/or financial stress.

We allocated 33 NILS loans. This money was used to buy essential goods and services, such as refrigerators, washing machines, televisions or to undertake necessary household or car repairs.

From 1 July 2016, Good Shepherd Microfinance will be providing valuable behind-the-scenes services, such as preparing loan documentation and managing loans and receipts, allowing PPCG to continue engaging directly with clients to prepare applications and budgets and to provide ongoing support to ensure that NILS loans are managed and repaid.

Back to school

The company developing and operating Webb Dock in the Port of Melbourne, Victorian International Container Terminal, provided \$10,000 for this initiative, to assist families with school expenses.

We assisted 100 children and their families in Port Phillip to cover school expenses.

Feedback from parents is that this is a real boost for their budgets, as when one child gets a new uniform, there's a flow-on effect which benefits other children.

As the financial year ended, we were thrilled to receive the Victorian International Container Terminal's confirmation that they had committed another \$15,000 for 2016/2017. In addition we also received a commitment of \$10,000 for this initiative from the Hazel Peat Perpetual Charitable Trust (through Equity Trustees).



PPCG staff member Tracy Ibrahim (right), working with a client to help manage their family finances at the South Melbourne office.

Financial counselling

Financial counselling is provided from our St Kilda office and at Inner South Community Health Service, South Melbourne. **We assist clients to address their financial issues and help them develop the skills so they can better plan their future finances.**

In this period, we responded to 3,300 contacts, and assisted more than 300 clients, advocating with banks, energy providers and other creditors. We also advise clients on making submissions to the Ombudsman regarding unreasonable billing charges and practices from some lending institutions, and in some situations we help clients file for bankruptcy. The financial counsellors are seeing more people who are fully employed, in need of financial advice and assistance. In addition, we provided our expertise and support to help build financial capacity for key service providers in Port Phillip who work with low income clients including Launch Housing, Inner South Community Health Service and Allinta Energy.

Family finances assistance

Financial counselling case study

‘Jan’ (early 50s, from Elwood) ran her own, successful business, her three kids were in private schools, she lived in a nice house, had a good car plus financial and relationship security. That was then.

Now she was seeing a PPCG financial counsellor as a single mother with an ATO debt of \$65,000 and other debts of \$35,000. Her previous clients owed her \$55,000 and her ex-husband owed \$18,000 in child support. Her business was no longer viable and she didn’t have any success looking for work. She felt overwhelmed.

Over time, through several meetings, creditor negotiations and collaboration with legal advisors, ‘Jan’s’ financial position improved. The outstanding client fees were never recovered; some of the outstanding child support was. Her own outstanding debts were managed through payment plans and ‘Jan’ began to respond positively.

Due to the support of the financial counsellor she began to feel more in control of her situation, she found employment and met her obligations to her creditors.

She sometimes still checks in with her financial counsellor, but she and her family now are in a much-improved situation.

- PPCG FINANCIAL COUNSELLOR

Information, support and referral

By far the greatest demand for assistance is for goods and resources that the general community takes for granted.

Clients often present in crisis and with multiple, complex issues often as a result of low income or poverty.

Immediate assistance in the form of food or food vouchers, public transport cards, and use of a phone are daily requests. Through addressing immediate needs, staff and volunteers learn about clients' daily lives and struggles, and how to best assist them in the longer term.

The provision of emergency relief during this year has been a significant challenge as the federal government's contribution via CISVIC, was reduced by 50%. However, through ongoing support from the City of Port Phillip and other in-kind supports including Foodbank and SecondBite, we have continued this support.

Fresh fruit and veg

Day to day, it is often difficult for many individuals and families in Port Phillip to access affordable fresh food.

In partnership with SecondBite, we provided fresh fruit and vegetables weekly at our St Kilda site. Families with young children are among the dozens of people who use this service on a weekly basis. In addition we collaborated with the City of Port Phillip, Foodbank and others, to build ongoing and sustainable food security for our clients.

In addition to the fresh food distribution, each year PPCG distributes about 1,500 food vouchers through our three offices. Also, packaged food is provided to clients on most days.

It's great to see our fruit and vegetables being appreciated so much...

- BOB TOSCANO, TOSCANO FRUIT AND VEGETABLES,
HAWKS BURN – SECONDBITE CONTRIBUTOR



Client Elizabeth talks about fresh food with PPCG manager, Rose Paduano (right).

Quality of life

Emergency relief case study

'Rita', 35, cried when the PPCG worker told her we could fund her storage arrears so she could retrieve her belongings and take them to her new home.

She had stowed everything when she had to go into transitional housing, but her Newstart payments did not give her enough money to pay her storage costs.

She was denied access to the belongings she had built up over a lifetime, even though she said she had sold some to pay the arrears.

"It was a vicious cycle, she couldn't see any way out."

- PPCG CASE WORKER

In funding the arrears, PPCG was able to greatly improve Rita's quality of life and restore her hopes for the future. Through our support, she set up a comfortable home and was able to prepare to look for employment.



PPCG clients accessing nourishing meals and friendly company at community meal.

Community meals

These lunches are the highlight of the month. It's a chance to get together and to meet newcomers. The food's bloody good too!

- BEN, WELLINGTON STREET

We provided 1,450 community meals across various programs, during this financial year.

Among these programs is one where we join rooming house residents across Port Phillip as part of a social inclusion model, based on a shared meal. In partnership with St Kilda Community Housing, we used the communal kitchens in several rooming houses in St Kilda to assist residents to prepare, cook and share a meal together.

This initiative has enabled us to reach a greater number of isolated people, to encourage support and friendships over a shared meal and to provide information and referral to other services and supports.

Meals are also provided at Five Minutes of Fame events throughout the year, and for other activities.

Recreation groups

This year, more than 200 clients enjoyed gym, swimming, bush walks and tennis activities.

Our clients loved the chance to be active in ways which are often beyond their reach due to cost, access or support. Fitness First and the Melbourne Sports and Aquatic Centre allow free access to their services, and reduced fees to their expert trainers and staff, as part of their support for our sessions.

Our experienced bushwalk leaders encourage people to enjoy the outdoors, through guided and supported bushwalks on weekends, to places such as Sherbrooke Falls, Mount Macedon and Bushrangers' Bay.



PPCG clients enjoying a recent bush walk.



PPCG staff member Dawn Perry (top left) with clients and their dogs at a regular Walking Woof Club outing.

Walking woof club

Walking Woof Club is a facilitated dog-walking group proactively encouraging isolated and marginalised Port Phillip residents to connect through their love of dogs.

It has evolved into a highly-effective community-building model and has improved the psychological and physical wellbeing of many participants. It has progressed from owners and their dogs attending, to include participants without dogs who 'borrow' pets to walk with the group.

During the year dozens of clients and their pets met in offleash parks and beaches, where they enjoyed each other's company and spending time outdoors with dogs. Education and support regarding how to care for, socialise and manage their dogs was also provided. The Walking Woof Club has its own Facebook page.

Street parties

Season 2015/16 saw 32 street parties held across Port Phillip, which was up 9.5% on the previous year's total.

All our street parties are a focal point for residents to meet their neighbors, thereby boosting the feeling of safety and security. They contribute to improved health and well-being because these events are often the pathway to other community events.

This year, community-based street parties were also held by a number of other partnerships. These included the South Port Community Housing Group to acknowledge Homelessness Prevention Week in August 2015, and the Gatwick Hotel Christmas Street Party.



PPCG staff member
David Nicholas
(standing)
teaching computer
skills.

Creative education

This year our education and training programs ranged from digital communication and computer skills through to art classes and song writing workshops.

The majority of our 146 students used these courses to get back on track with their learning, make new friends, as a pathway to ongoing education and training, and to employment. We provided more than 10,000 hours of education accredited by the Adult Community and Further Education Board.

We facilitated education and skills training for a range of local services across Port Phillip, including Aspect Learners (Autism), Access Inc (disability support), Sacred Heart Mission, Ngwala Willumbong Co-Operative at Galiamble Men's Recovery Centre - St Kilda.

During this year we were extremely pleased to secure additional funding from the Department of Education and Training, Victoria, for an 18 month partnership project with Elwood and St Kilda Neighbourhood Learning Centre, and Port Melbourne Neighbourhood Centre to develop a shared model of education services across Port Phillip.

Wild At Heart

We use art and performance to develop skills and encourage participation at events which celebrate life, inspiration and creativity.

One of PPCG's partners in this area is Wild At Heart - one of Australia's leading community arts organisations supporting people who experience mental illness, disability and disadvantage, to find their voice and place in the community through music and art. Wild At Heart has been working in partnership with PPCG for several years to deliver songwriting workshops in South Melbourne every week. This year included a powerful songwriting program with Indigenous men and women in drug and alcohol recovery.

"I've built up my confidence, self esteem, skills and performance. I feel like I've got back to where I was 30 years ago."

- EDDIE, SONGWRITER AND PERFORMER



Rap performance at PPCG
Five Minutes of Fame event.

Five minutes of fame

Five Minutes of Fame is an evening event based on an 'open mic' or cabaret model for Port Phillip rooming house residents staged four times during the year.

It was supported by many people and organisations including South and Port Melbourne Rotary Clubs and held at the St Kilda Bowling Club. Between 80 and 90 residents enthusiastically joined in at each event, taking advantage of the chance to engage, socialise and steal the limelight. Some of the success stories from this event include participants gaining paid employment and career development opportunities.

*Groups like this give us back pride
in ourselves. We're all the same,
we all need this.*

– GLENN, FIVE MINUTES OF FAME PARTICIPANT

In this year, we also received a community grant from the City of Port Phillip to support music and performance rehearsal workshops prior to Five Minutes of Fame. Outcomes from these included street based 'flash dance' and choir performances across Port Phillip. These were key opportunities to showcase skills and to promote social inclusion and diversity.

Alma Road Community House

On behalf of the City of Port Phillip PPCG manages Alma Road Community House (ARCH). This facility provides opportunities for people - with and without disabilities - to become involved in community activities.

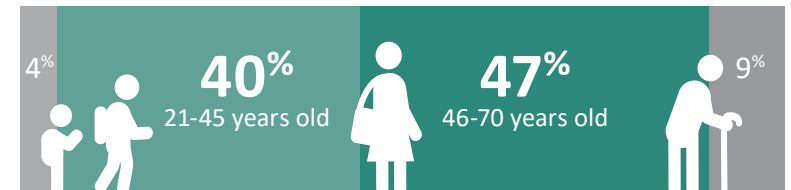
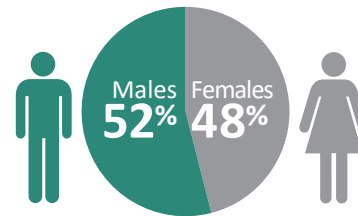
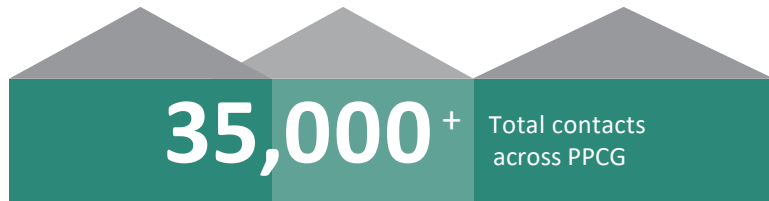
It is set in a large open space incorporating a children's playground and community garden.

An ARCH Open Day showcased the unique qualities of this facility and its diverse activities ranging from art, chess, yoga and education courses.

ARCH is regularly used for PPCG education and creative programs.

A Maternal Child Health Service is co-located at the facility.

PPCG by numbers 2015/2016 financial year



Information, Support and Referral

20,000+

client contacts

15,000 face to face contacts

29% Information support

11% Referrals

20% Advocacy/other

40% Emergency relief



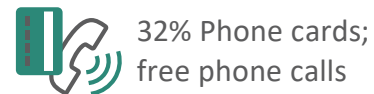
Nationalities in order: Vietnam, Russia, Somalia, China

* Culturally and linguistically diverse

Emergency Relief

8,000+

emergency relief client contacts



Education

10,000

hours with 146 clients



Financial counselling



Groups

2,500 Social meals and activities

1,800 Art, performance

950 Recreation activities

Groups help us reach a greater number of isolated people, to encourage support and friendships.

Tax Help

81 tax returns completed

18% Increase on previous year



38 Gov pension/benefit

36 Employment

7 Other



Private 56

flat 10

public 10

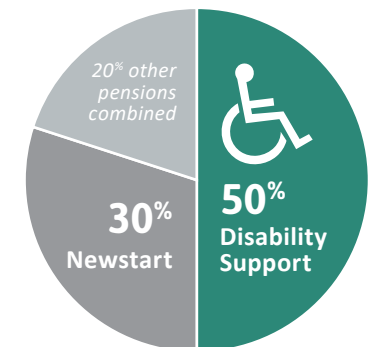
transitional 1,

buying house 1,

other 3

No Interest Loan Scheme

33 NILS loans approved



80% of NILS clients indicated they have lived in the area for more than two years.

Looking forward

Our new Strategic Plan builds on Port Phillip Community Group's achievements and resilience over the past decades. It maps the way forward for us to maximise our service effectiveness and responsiveness, to strengthen our strategic partnerships and to focus on shared innovation, research and outcomes.

Research and greater service responsiveness will provide evidence of PPCG's impact on our clients' lives and enable us to give clients, funding agencies and our supporters, essential information on the effectiveness of our work and identify areas where we can do better.

The community's need for our services is not declining. In Port Phillip approximately 16% of households could be classified as low income, with more than 7,000 Port Phillip residents estimated to be living in poverty.

Through partnerships, stakeholder engagement and community development we will continue to provide opportunities and supports that both enable and contribute to inclusion and participation for all people. This includes a greater focus on families, as well as personal and social advocacy that builds individual and community resilience and capacity.

Our board of directors

Anna Moo, Bernard Joffe, David Atkins (resigned), Helen Fallaw, Jane Garrow, Jeff Lyons (retired), John Tansey (resigned), Karen Sait, Lisa Fitzpatrick, Michael McGann, Pam O'Neil, Tullia Gilarry.

Our community partners

101 Engagement Hub - Uniting Church in Australia, Access Inc, Aspect – Autism Spectrum Australia, Australian Tax Office Community Assistance Team, Centrelink Community Outreach Team, City of Port Phillip, Elwood and St. Kilda Neighbourhood Learning Centre, Foodbank Victoria, Fulton Hogan, Galiamble Men's Recovery Centre, Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand, Hospitality Employment and Training Catering, Inner South Community Health Service, Port Melbourne Neighbourhood Centre, Roomers, Sacred Heart Mission, SecondBite, SPARC Theatre, St Kilda Community Housing, St Kilda Parish Mission Uniting Church, Wild at Heart Community Arts.

Our supporters - *in kind, donations, resources*

Avalon Foundation, Bunnings Port Melbourne, Captain Fracassa Café, Elwood Toy Library, Estate of Henry Herbert Yoffa, Fitness First, Grill'd, Garage Espresso, GJK Facility Services, Knit One Give One, Launch Housing, Lions Club of Melbourne, Melbourne Magistrates' Court, Melbourne Sports and Aquatic Centre, Nappy Collective, Pay A Sack Forward, Port of Melbourne Corporation, Port Phillip EcoCentre, R.E Ross Trust, Rotary Club of Melbourne South, Rotary Club of Port Melbourne, South Melbourne Community Chest, St Kilda Bowling Club, St Kilda Courtyard, St Kilda Legal Service, St Kilda Mums, Victorian Dog Rescue Resource Group, Victoria International Container Terminal Limited.

Our staff and volunteers

Staff: Anthea Teakle, Caroline Murphy, Casey Fogarty, David Atkins, Di Constantinescu, Greg De Vere, Jane Garrow, Jeannette McNair, Karen Sait, Maggie Mildenhall, Marilyn Fox, Rose Paduano, Shayne Barns, Shona Haddon, Stanley Stork, Tracy Ibrahim.

Locum, project, casual staff: Ann Ades, Charlotte Browning, David Nicholas, Dawn Perry, Deb Craven, Ernie Austin, Geoffrey Thorsen, Jan Cosser, Katie Lockett, Liz Milsom, Nicki Leinert, Nicolette Forte, Olivia Whitlam, Peter Mildenhall, Sandi Post.

Volunteers: Aaron Ralston, Bernard Joffe, Charlotte Browning, Chris Donohue, Donald Wilson, Garry Mannix, Lenny Beashal, Lillian Baker, Lisa Bauer, Natalie Wirth, Philippa O'Donnell, Shaitarna Stella, Sharon Trebese, Sue Henderson, Tim Brosman, Yanina Gonzales.

Report design and support by Albie Colvin, ACGD Creative Services.

Help us make a difference

Give now and make a donation.
Drop in to our offices, call 8598 6660
or email info@ppcg.org.au for more details.

Our Locations

St Kilda (main office)

161 Chapel St, St Kilda Victoria 3182
T. 8598 6600 E. info@ppcg.org.au

South Melbourne

220 Bank St, South Melbourne Victoria 3205
T. 9209 6830 E. southmelbourne@ppcg.org.au

Port Melbourne

333 Bay St, Port Melbourne Victoria 3207
T. 9209 6350 E. portmelbourne@ppcg.org.au

Alma Road Community House (ARCH)

200 Alma Rd, St Kilda East Victoria 3183
T. 9525 8746 E. arch@ppcg.org.au

For more information and opening hours
visit ppcg.org.au

*Back cover photo: Participants relaxing with
a barbecue at the end of an exhilarating bush
walk, as part of the recreation programs provided
each week.*



*Hairdresser to the homeless, Angela, sets up
her barber's chair each year at the PPCG
homeless pop-up, conducted as part of
Homelessness Prevention Week.*



Disclaimer: This report is provided for information. It is intended as a reflection of our work throughout the year. While care has been taken to ensure the content in the report is accurate, we cannot guarantee it is without flaw of any kind.



**PORT PHILLIP
COMMUNITY
GROUP** // Working for
Social justice