



Contents

This report summarises PPCG activities, partnerships and outcomes achieved from July 2019 to June 2020.

Service effectiveness and responsiveness

Assisting more people in need through immediate supports, advocacy and referrals.

Building (individual and community) capacity

Focusing on welfare, financial counselling and education for better outcomes, connections and future.

Partnerships, innovation and research

Strengthening relationships to support service delivery, connections and outcomes.



Cover photo: Wonderful PPCG volunteers who pivoted seamlessly into Share the Food: L-R Fiora, Sofie, Margaret, Sam



Acknowledgements

Port Phillip Community Group respectfully acknowledges the Yalukit Willam Clan of the Boon Wurrung. We pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging. 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 copy of this report can be downloaded from ppcg.org.au by calling (03) 8598 6600 or emailing info-support@ppcg.org.au

Port Phillip Community Group Limited ABN 34 844 707 349
PPCG is registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC). PPCG is endorsed as a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR).

Welcome

PPCG is a leading welfare, financial counselling and education provider primarily in the City of Port Phillip enabling more than 20,000 people in any one year to better connect to their community and to enhance their material, social health and financial wellbeing.

With a heritage dating back to the early 1970s, we continue to be a responsive and innovative service with skilled and professional staff and dedicated volunteers.

Whilst our core target groups remain the same – individuals and families with complex needs underpinned by poverty, lack of education, and opportunities for employment; the socio-economic gap between our clients and the general community has widened. This is reflected in the increasing numbers of people accessing our services due to lack of housing affordability and financial hardship.

Add in the COVID-19 pandemic and everything in the year 2019-2020 feels uncertain. **Except for the power of community.** With the pandemic we have seen and experienced firsthand hope, compassion, acts of random kindness, incredible generosity and glimpses of a better future at a local and global level.

Our purpose is to create a better future for our clients, service users and the community. By living our purpose, our decisions and actions help empower our service users to secure their future and place in the community with confidence.

Our vision and mission

Vision: A fair and just society that values all people.

Mission: Positively impact lives through fostering and improving equity, participation and inclusion.

We achieve these by:

- > Providing access to food, essential items, information, referrals and advocacy to housing, health care and specialised services
- > Listening and responding in purposeful, caring and respectful ways so people can take control of their lives
- > Welcoming and embracing difference, lived experiences, self-determination and participation to create better communities
- > Providing pathways to a better future through inclusion, education and employment
- > Engaging with our sector partners, governments, businesses, and the local community to leverage their time, expertise and resources

Strategic Achievements

At the end of our Strategic Plan 2019 it is pleasing to report that we have met and in some areas exceeded the milestones of our key strategic objectives.

- > Increased service contacts overall by 68%. Access by CALD communities by 18%;
- > Increased opening hours, new service models, site and operational improvements;
- > Stronger partnerships. Volunteer participation up by 180%; and
- > Greater capability and capacity of our most valuable resources – our staff.

We were delighted to receive a Partnership Award in 2019 from Star Health in acknowledgement of our collaborative work in the PORTogether series of projects over the past 8 years in storytelling, photography and film. These are all heartwarming and inspiring stories of people living in Port Melbourne.



Responses to COVID-19

Looking back at the past 12 months this has been a challenging time for all of us, and the most disruptive year for our staff, volunteers and clients since we opened our doors 47 years ago.

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in Australia in early 2020 has impacted every aspect of the way we live our lives now and into the future.

During this unprecedented time we continued to meet our funder and stakeholder obligations while also responding to rapidly changing client and community needs.

Key COVID-19 responses:

- > continuing to operate our **information, referral and support** from 161 Chapel Street;
- > proactive **welfare checks** on all our clients and community groups;
- > providing **financial hardship assistance**;
- > adapting our education and creative courses to **on-line learning**; and
- > establishing **contactless deliveries of food** and essential items for those in need.



Photo caption: PPCG staff Lou Campbell and Rose Paduano with Matt Preston for Share the Food contactless deliveries

Leadership reports

Chairperson

The past year has been another successful year for PPCG as it continues to offer a range of coordinated services that support our clients to live their lives with dignity and control.

As we reflect on 2019-2020, we are pleased to report that we have met and in some areas exceeded the objectives of our Strategic Plan through new service models, stronger partnerships and increased service responsiveness.

I am most proud of PPCG's work in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our staff demonstrated skill and commitment in supporting PPCG clients at a time of incredible uncertainty. Since the beginning of COVID-19 they have increased their support and referrals from 161 Chapel Street and we established a successful new program – Share the Food directly in response to the pandemic.

Our financial counselling continued by phone and our education courses have been adapted for online learning. Our commitment to advocacy, welfare checks, food and essential items for those most affected by the pandemic never wavered.

Most importantly **we thank our wonderful volunteers, supporters and the community.** In this time of significant upheaval we have experienced firsthand incredible generosity, and glimpses of a better and more compassionate future.



Board of Directors: Karen Sait, Peter Giles, Bernard Jaffe, Tullia Gilary (resigned October 2020), Michael McGann, Susanne Birks, Gina Fiske, Claire Edmanson, David Weinberger (not in photo)

On behalf of the Board, I warmly thank Karen Sait and every one of our staff for striving to make a difference in these unprecedented times, and for their agility and ability to innovate to meet the challenges of COVID-19. We look forward to ongoing COVID-19 relief and a transition to recovery and renewal.

I commend to you our Annual Report 2020.

Michael McGann Chairperson

Executive Officer

Early on in COVID-19 we established a successful new program - **Share the Food**. We did this as we knew that our partners would have reduced capacity, that those with the most need would have increased risk of hunger and a loss of their daily connections through receiving and sharing food.

It is a testament to the leadership and responsiveness of the City of Port Phillip that quickly provided us with their expertise and key contributions. **Between April – June 2020 Share the Food has distributed over \$300,000 worth of food and essential items to individuals and 45 agencies.** This has meant that PPCG has gone from feeding hundreds of people a week to feeding thousands and now includes the newly-unemployed, students, people on bridging visas, and people who are falling through the cracks of assistance programs.

I have been most impressed with the many local businesses, communities and individuals for their exceptional generosity, time, expertise and friendship and in embracing Share the Food.

Our staff and volunteers resolve, optimism, dedication and commitment has been outstanding in both continuing our core work and pivoting our services to meet the challenges of COVID-19.

PPCG has proven this year that despite our many and often overwhelming challenges, that we are a leader in the community sector in Port Phillip as demonstrated in our flexibility, adaptability, responsiveness and resilience.



Karen Sait Executive Officer

Gratitude for our retiring Treasurer

After 8 years as a Board Director and our Treasurer, Bernard Joffe has decided to retire from the PPCG Board and will not be standing for re-election at our AGM in 2020.

Bernard - the pleasure has been all ours. Bernard's financial skills, commitment and friendship as a key member of our Board are highly valued and he will be missed on our Board.

We are thrilled that Bernard will continue to volunteer in our Tax Help Program, as he has done for 15 years.

"It's been a pleasure and an honour to work with PPCG over many years." **Bernard Joffe**



Income

The financial information below is from our audited Annual Financial Report year ending 30 June 2020. PPCG is a Not-for-Profit Company for financial reporting purposes under the Australian Accounting Standards.

For 2019-20 our total grant and other funding was \$1,484,125.

We gratefully acknowledge the support from our funders and community partners, in particular our primary funder and partner the City of Port Phillip. Our other key funders and partners are:

- > Department of Education and Training, Victoria
- > Department of Health and Human Services, Victoria
- > Department of Social Services, Australia (through CISVic)
- > Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand
- > HousingFirst, SouthPort Community Housing Group, and St Kilda Community Housing

In addition we received one-off grants, project funds, donations and other assistance from philanthropic trusts, businesses and individuals. We extend our appreciation to each of these as they have enabled additional services to be delivered to our clients and the community, and to meet the increasing demand for our services.

Treasurer's Report

Despite the continuing and challenging financial environment that PPCG operates in as a small NFP organisation, **we are extremely pleased to report a surplus of \$71,387** against a planned and budgeted deficit of (\$53,421).

During the past year we proactively improved our cash position by \$121,209 due mainly to new grant income. We also focused on and were able to contain our expenses during the 2020 financial year through the sheer hard work and commitment of all staff.

In summary for the financial year ended 30 June 2020:

- > Total income was \$1,484,125 obtained from grants, donations, interest and fees
- > Total expenditure was \$1,412,738
- > This resulted in a net surplus of \$71,387

We continue to closely monitor our finances and proactively explore ways to increase our revenue for the next and future years.

Bernard Joffe Treasurer



Income **\$1,484,125**
Expenses **\$1,412,738**
Surplus **\$71,387**

The full audited Financial Report for the year ended 30 June 2020 is available on our website: ppcg.org.au

Service effectiveness and responsiveness

Through engaging with and listening to, we learn about peoples' daily lives and their struggles, and how best to assist them through immediate support, advocacy and referrals.

Every day we make a positive difference to the financial, physical and psychological well-being of individuals and families on low income, those experiencing disadvantage or in financial hardship and those escaping family violence. In any one year we make thousands of referrals and answer a myriad of inquiries on a daily basis. We provide food vouchers, fresh food, pantry items, meals, targeted support funds, travel passes, pharmacy assistance and healthcare items, rough sleeping kits, access to a telephone and winter woollies. We also deliver case work, financial counselling, education courses and classes, social meals, recreational and creative groups, and lodge tax returns.

Information, Referral and Support (IR&S)

Tax Help 2020

We continue to provide an annual Tax Help service in partnership with the Australian Tax Office and City of Port Phillip, for those on low income without the skills or confidence to complete a tax return. **57 tax returns completed and average returns are \$200 - \$1,000 and are significant financial boosts for those on low incomes.**

Thanks to our skilled tax agent volunteers - Bernard and Marcus.

"The main aim of Tax help is to assist those who are a little intimidated about completing their own tax returns or who do not have the means to complete their tax returns by themselves."

Bernard Joffe, PPCG Treasurer and Tax Help Volunteer for 15+ years



Financial counselling

Financial counselling in partnership with Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand continues as a highly sought after service. We provided **7,517 responses to clients' financial inquiries**, resulting in up to 80% of direct advocacy on their behalf with banks, energy providers and other creditors. Whilst we received funds for an additional day a week of financial counselling, our requests for financial assistance increased by 49% on the previous year. We continued to work collaboratively with St Kilda Legal Service as many legal and financial issues are often intertwined.

People sought assistance for debts including credit cards, personal loans, utility bills, mobile phones, and mortgage and rental stress. Some sought help when interest only loans moved to principle and interest making these unaffordable, or when they became unemployed or ill. Others became overcommitted through using "Afterpay" on online purchases, or accessing payday loans.

Often there was no or an inadequate assessment of a purchaser's ability to make future payments. Once a payment is missed the late fees and interest quickly spiral and create unmanageable debt and distress.

"Suzy (PPCG Financial Counsellor) has mediated with financial institutions on my behalf over the last year. She negotiated repayments on two major debts in 2019... I am in a much more realisable financial situation. Consequently, I am less anxious and able to manage my financial affairs. This comes at a particularly difficult shift in my life after retiring on disability grounds".

Lucy, Financial counselling recipient

Mary's story

'Mary*', a 37-year old victim/survivor of family violence, engaged with our financial counselling service for assistance with an unaffordable car loan. Mary had suffered emotional and financial abuse from her partner Steve* for many years. During the relationship Mary was coerced into taking out a secured car loan even though she did not have a driver's license.

Mary finally left the relationship and left without the vehicle. She remained however legally responsible for the loan repayments on a \$27,000 debt with Steve no longer making any financial contributions and retaining possession of the vehicle. Steve eventually returned the vehicle to Mary and our financial counsellor was able to negotiate for temporary hardship relief on the loan with no payments due for a period of time. Further negotiations eventually enabled the vehicle to be surrendered and sold by the creditor and a full debt waiver of the residual debt of \$9,500 was granted.

**not her real name*

The faces of homelessness

Over 60% of people who come to us for assistance identify as homeless, in insecure housing, or unable to find housing. They usually also have several other complex issues impacting their lives.

Being homeless is incredibly difficult, and the longer people wait for a home, the more complicated their lives become. Mental health issues, illness, addiction, poverty and unemployment can often be the outcome rather than the cause of homelessness.

Frequently people who are homeless need food, referrals, or just a listening ear.

Most importantly we prevent people from becoming homeless. We all see the increasingly visible people who are homeless and living rough on our streets. Research shows that these people are often the 'canaries in the coal mine' and for many people homelessness has many faces including frequent moving and losing possessions, staying with family and friends or couch surfing. Homelessness affects all socio-economic groups and is increasingly only a pay packet or critical issue away for this to become a scary reality.

An alarming trend is women (usually with children) that get behind on their rent after their violent partner has left taking all the family income, or who flee family violence situations. This leads to housing eviction or a cycle of short term and emergency housing. The ramifications of this are illustrated by Sally's Story.

"It often feels like a conveyor belt with homeless people returning daily to our offices or getting into strife, because they don't have anywhere to stay. It's also about the right services at the right time, connections to reduce isolation and loneliness, or just time away from living rough on the streets"

Karen Sait, PPCG Executive Officer

Sally's Story

Sally* a young, single mother with a range of physical and mental health issues, and three young children - with one child regularly hospitalised, was referred to us in crisis and on the verge of being evicted from her housing. Our staff provided Sally immediately with food and essential items for her and her family. Further priority assistance included:

- > Advocacy: re her current housing
- > Utility bills: assisted with a utility relief grant
- > Parking fines: contacted SouthPort Legal Fines Clinic
- > Lack of heating: advocacy re associated health concerns for the family
- > Lack of furniture: submitted a Queens Fund application and contacted Rotary
- > Outstanding debts: referred to our financial counsellor
- > Other immediate items (such as mattresses and bedding): contacted St Kilda Mums and also lodged a NILS application

With our practical assistance, case work and advocacy, and her own hard work, Sally retained her housing and her life is now back on track. Most importantly she reports that she has regained her "dignity and control", and that she feels more optimistic about her own and her children's future.

**not her real name*

Extreme heat response

It is known that extreme heat causes health and harm related issues that are sometimes fatal. These issues tend to impact more isolated and vulnerable community members who often live in small or substandard spaces without adequate cooling or respite from the heat, and of course those most at risk are people sleeping rough.

During the extreme heat of the summer of 2019-2020 we packed and distributed 3,000 extreme heat packs to over 60 local rooming houses, special residential services, community clubs and agencies (for example Launch Housing, Gatehouse, PCYC), plus provided packs from our offices, council sites and to those sleeping rough.



PPCG Volunteers making heatwave packs

Building (individual and community) capacity

No Interest Loans Scheme (NILS)

This year we assisted 33 people to obtain loans totalling more than \$36,000, an overall increase of 50% on the previous year. Loans of up to \$1,500 are available for items such as whitegoods, laptops, furniture and education. Repayments range from \$20 - \$60 per fortnight and are usually paid off over 12 months with the ongoing support from our staff.. Several people have successfully repaid more than one loan and are living more comfortably and building their social capital

"PPCG helped me to get a loan for a washing machine which I could never afford to save for on a pension. For me at this time of my life it means no more laundromats and I feel safer being able to do my washing at home"

Anne, NILS recipient

Back to School Fund

\$9,114 was provided to assist families with school uniforms, books and school trips. We are grateful to Victorian International Container Terminal (VICT) and to the South Melbourne Community Chest for their generous donations to this much needed and valued program.

"Being a single mum with a minimum income it continues to ease the pressure [off], making sure my children meet the requirements needed for a fresh start of the school year."

Jessica - recipient parent



Volunteers and supporters

Volunteers are the backbone of PPCG and are invaluable to our organisation and community.

We could not provide the range of services particularly at 161 Chapel Street in the heart of St Kilda, or more recently for Share the Food without the commitment and support of our dedicated volunteers that work alongside and support our staff each shift, Monday to Friday and often after hours.

Volunteers provided over 7,000 hours of direct support, time and expertise during the year, conservatively valued at \$200,000 - which is double the amount contributed in the previous year. Their contributions are integral to our ability to offer and deliver the range of services needed in our community. Volunteers supported recreational and social activities, food services, social meals, tax help, and our reception and administration staff.

Our volunteers come from a wide range of backgrounds. From local and international students to currently employed and retired professionals, we are proud of the volunteer culture at PPCG.

In this unprecedented year new volunteers included the newly unemployed, those on JobSeeker payments, and those from the creative, arts, and music industries. For our Share the Food program alone volunteers contributed approximately 3,000 hours during April - June 2020.

For several volunteers their time volunteering has led to employment both with PPCG and in other organisations due to greater confidence and the development of new skills, as well as to career changes or further training and study.

"I volunteer every week with PPCG because I feel valued and appreciated for my efforts whilst also feeling satisfied that I have an opportunity to contribute to the well-being, safety and happiness of others. I get to meet people in my community that I likely would never cross paths with otherwise."

Aaron, PPCG volunteer



Photo caption: PPCG staff Tracy Ibrahim and volunteer Amy Xmas 2019



Thinking of volunteering?

We would welcome your interest. Give us a call on (03) 8598 6600, or email us at info-support@ppcg.org.au

Partnerships, innovation and research

Underlying all that we do at PPCG is maintaining and strengthening relationships and partnerships, and identifying opportunities for innovation and collaboration to better assist clients, service users and the community.

Storage Lockers

With the support of the City of Port Phillip, we have installed 24 document size lockers at 161 Chapel Street. These lockers will provide the opportunity for people who are experiencing homelessness to safely store their documents and other small valuables whilst they seek secure accommodation. We recognise that lack of identification can be a barrier to securing a home, and that the loss of important documents causes additional stress and financial burden for people already facing significant hardship.

The design of the program was informed by a Feasibility Study conducted by PPCG in 2019, in collaboration with key homelessness agencies across Port Phillip. This report is available at ppcg.org.au



Pathways to Education and Employment

Those who are vulnerable or marginalised often have poor education which frequently results in limited career choices, job insecurity and financial hardship. As a Learn Local Education Hub we facilitate courses and classes that provide pathways to better lives through employment or further education.

Our place-based and dynamic education partnerships continue to grow and include Access Inc., Aspect, Wild at Heart, Alpha Autism, Galiamble Men's Recovery Centre, Uniting 101, Space2b, Christ Church Community Centre and Star Health.

40 targeted courses of 20-30 hours duration each were delivered* in computer and digital literacy, art therapy, film making, photography, podcasting, gardening, hospitality, financial literacy, songwriting and music production, resulting in:



191 students
497 enrolments
12,425 hours of training

**These outcomes are a slight reduction on the previous year due to COVID restriction that prohibited any face to face training in the March to June quarter of this reporting period. During this quarter however we successfully moved up to 70% of our face to face education courses online, provided one to one additional support, plus rolling welfare checks with all our students.*

New initiatives

- > An **ACFE Capacity and Innovation Grant** established a new partnership with Christ Church Community Centre, Uniting Employment Services and an Industry Working Group to provide an employment pathway program called '**Work this Way**'
- > A **Family Learning Program Grant** established '**SARA – Financial Wellbeing for Women**'. This course and online modules continue to enhance financial literacy and independence for women
- > **Be Connected (Good Things Foundation) Grants** improved the digital literacy and confidence of people 50+ years.



Improving the digital literacy and confidence of people 50+ years

Addressing Food Insecurity and Food Poverty during COVID-19

Andrew delivering fresh meals donated from Jerry's Milkbar each week

Meet Mohan from Hare Krishna food for Life. He picks up food to cook delicious vegetarian meals for the community

Share the Food: food parcels and essential items

The onset of COVID-19 has seen a significant increase in the number of individuals and families contacting us for support due to increased hardship and isolation as a direct result of the impacts of the pandemic. As people struggled to navigate unemployment, housing insecurity, financial hardship, health issues and isolation from support networks, we quickly pivoted how we delivered much needed relief and support and **used the power of food to stay connected with individuals and communities.**

We established a successful new program - **Share the Food** and set up a central Food Depot in Port Phillip. We received key support from the City of Port Phillip and Second Bite as well as numerous other supports from a multitude of organisations, individuals and the community. From April to June PPCG distributed \$300,000 worth of food parcels, cooked meals, bulk food and other essential items through contactless deliveries. This comprised:

- > Making up hundreds of food parcels
- > Delivery of food parcels directly to our clients, DHHS clients and to local housing and agencies requiring emergency food due to COVID-19. Deliveries included after hours and on weekends
- > Tons of bulk non-perishable food and fresh food collected by community organisations such as the Hare Krishnas, that in turn made up hundreds of food parcels and cooked meals for those in need.

3,499 food parcels packed according to family size, need and dietary requirements

2,073 fresh meals delivered between 25 May - 30 June 2020

400 restaurant quality meals each week lovingly prepared and donated by Quat Quatta staff on JobSeeker payments (pictured below are Chef Alex from Quat Quatta with CoPP Mayor Bernadene Voss at Share the Food).



"At my time in need, and such an uncertain and lonely time, you gave me not only meals, but also friendly, caring people to deliver them and to ask how I was managing."

Dan, Share the Food recipient

Multiple agencies and businesses - too many to mention by name in this report, generously donated food and items that included fresh fruit, vegetables, non-perishable food, freshly prepared meals, toiletries, hygiene packs, baby products and pet food. We purchased additional items such as protein foods, special need dietary foods, and other essential items.

The impacts of COVID-19 meant the organisation went from feeding hundreds of people a week to feeding thousands.

Share the Food is a great example of community engagement with local government; community, health and housing agencies; local businesses; food agencies; and the many generous community donations of resources, time and funds. Most importantly are the 80+ people who generously volunteered their time to make up food parcels, deliver these and support our staff.

"We are finding that newly-unemployed, students, people on bridging visas, and people who are falling through the cracks of assistance programs are coming to us for help".

Karen Sait, PPCG Executive Officer

Prisha's Story

Prisha* is a single mum on a bridging visa, estranged from her abusive husband, and in hiding with her 8 year old son. As her cultural background is Indian, by leaving her husband (even though he is abusive) she has shamed her family and they will not help her.

She is alone with her dependent child with no Centrelink, confused by COVID-19, and no other support in Australia with the exception now of PPCG.

Her feedback on receiving a priority delivery of a food parcel: "Thanks a lot for yesterday's delivery of various goods. I was not expecting that vegetarian meal to be so delicious and healthy. I and my son got plenty to eat. I emailed Catrina (PPCG staff) too yesterday regarding delivery of things, housing, Myki and food vouchers. Thanks a lot for your support in this difficult time. Really appreciate your efforts."

*not her real name



Community Engagement and Development

We continued to be an active voice in our community including through:

- > **The Inner South Rooming House Network** resulting in the **Go To Guide** and paid consumer consultants
- > **Homelessness Prevention Week** and **Anti-Poverty Week**
- > **Our Christmas Market** that provided gifts and food for 100 adults and 45 children
- > **Active Sharing 2019** that captured heartwarming and inspiring stories of people living in Port Melbourne. This was another successful collaboration with Star Health as part of the Social Health and Inclusion (SHIP) Project. This is our eighth shared project of community storytelling, photography and film since 2014



Photo caption: Karen Sait, PPCG, Susanne Birks, Alfred Health, Paulo Reid, Uniting 101, and Angie Jamieson, Star Health connecting at Anti-Poverty Week

Social Meals

During the year we provided **over 3,000 social meals to local rooming house residents in partnership with HousingFirst, South Port Community Housing Group and St Kilda Community Housing**. This initiative has enabled us to reach people who are isolated and to encourage support and friendships over a shared meal. Several residents have joined our bushwalking, computer and art classes, and attended community events.

"Today Michael (staff member at SPCHG) and I prepared and packed 46 meals for tomorrow's distribution. The containers were a little larger this week, so the numbers don't look quite as impressive as last week's 60 meals bonanza. The meals today comprised:

- a tomato, olive, feta and herb salad*
- grapefruit, basil and fennel salad*
- cucumber, tomato and pomegranate molasses salad*
- pumpkin, honey and coconut curry*
- potato and mushroom salad*
- lentil and lemon curry*
- carrot with green and yellow runner beans salad*
- a cauliflower, yellow bean and chickpea stew*
- and a bean stew"*

David, PPCG social meals staff member sharing the preparation of meals for delivery to SPCHG residents during COVID-19

Social engagement and connection programs

These programs provide low cost, supported access to activities that enhance well-being, social connections and inclusion for people of all abilities. They include gym, bushwalking, tennis, swimming, dog walking, and a performance event known as Five Minutes of Fame (FMOF).

173 group activities were attended by 498 people – with 50 new people. Several participants self-reported that these activities have increased both their social connections and physical fitness.

Two ever popular groups are the bush walks and FMOF. Our experienced and dedicated bushwalker Peter Mildenhall has continued to lead weekend bushwalks to beautiful spots such as the You Yangs, Daylesford, Warburton and Cape Schanck for up to 20 people each walk.

"The harmony that exists amongst the people themselves is the best aspect of Five Minutes of Fame".

John, long-time FMOF participant and performer (pictured above)

Warm thanks and appreciation to the St. Kilda Sports Club for the generous use of their venue, Rotary Club of South Melbourne for their fabulous volunteers, and welcome financial contributions from both Rotary and The Palais Theatre.



Connecting through creativity - Five Minutes of Fame (FMOF)-

We facilitate this free creative event with the support of local community agencies for local residents, the majority who have experienced homelessness and are now living in supported housing or rooming houses.

Most participants have limited access to entertainment due to poverty, mental health or disability. This cabaret-style event with a two course meal, is held regularly throughout the year and attended by up to a hundred people at each event. Several participants have talents such as singing, dancing, or playing a musical instrument. As well as a great night, the many positive outcomes include friendships, joining local theatre and art groups, and finding employment in the arts.

Alma Road Community House (ARCH)

ARCH in East St Kilda is a light-filled house surrounded by a playground and includes a 'little library', a barbecue, and garden beds with fresh produce. ARCH provides opportunities for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities to come together to participate in art therapy, computer and digital literacy, and special interest groups. ARCH is also frequently used for birthday parties and other events.

Neighbourhood Ngargee

Ngargee (pronounced "nar-gee") is an Indigenous word meaning "gathering for celebration."

On behalf of the City of Port Phillip PPCG facilitated 29 Ngargees with 3 being new. These promoted social inclusion and connectedness. Several residents have held an annual Ngargee each year for the past 20 years.

Consistent feedback is that these provide a safe and inviting space for neighbours including those who are older or isolated, to get to know each other.



Street Pantry

A welcome addition to the community landscape, the Street Pantry is a new and exciting community project at ARCH where people are encouraged to 'give what you can and take what you need'.

Initiated by Mazon Australia and in collaboration with us and a passionate group of local volunteers, the Street Pantry vision has become a reality to engage the community to prevent and alleviate hunger.

You can help make a difference

Give now - make a donation online ppcg.org.au/donation, email info-support@ppcg.org.au, call (03) 8598 6600, or drop into our offices.

Donations over \$2 are tax deductible.

PPCG by numbers

2019-2020 financial year

73,062 Direct Client Contacts



54,295
Information, Support
and Referral

7,517 Financial Counselling
5,750 Social Inclusion Activities
5,500 Education and Skills Development

\$300,000 Food Distribution for COVID-19 relief*

3,499

Food Parcels



2,073

Fresh Meals



45 Agencies
supported



**April to
June 2020*

\$131,707 Payments for Assistance



\$86,539
Emergency
Relief

\$36,000
No Interest
Loans Scheme

\$9,114
Back to
School Fund

Education



12,425 hours
with 191 students

Volunteers



7,000 hours
by 100+ volunteers

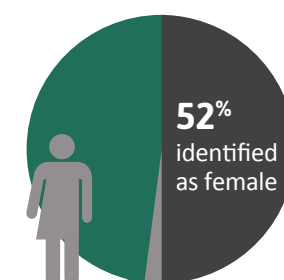
Facebook



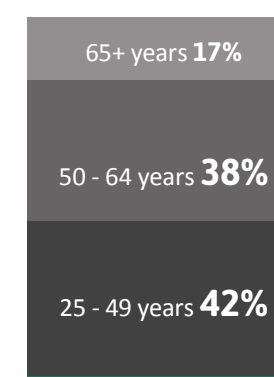
106,080 people
reached through our posts

Client Demographics (30% New Clients)

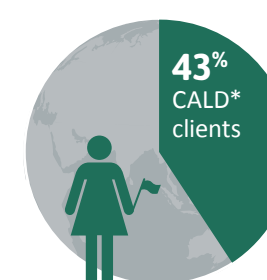
58% Single 42% Families 25% With dependent children



47% identified as male
1% identified as non-binary



< 25 years 3%



Top nationalities:
Vietnam, Russia, Somalia,
China *Culturally And
Linguistically Diverse



53% Public Housing
32% Homeless
13% Private Rental
2% Home Owners

Looking Forward

It feels difficult to comprehend a future post COVID-19, given the circumstances of the last three months of 2019-2020. In many ways it has felt slow; staying home or working from home as much as possible and being separated from friends and loved ones has given us the sense of being disconnected and alone. Yet in other ways, we look back and it feels like those last three months have disappeared at an unnaturally fast speed as we've worked to adapt to lockdown and infection control challenges.

We wonder what's still to come in the remaining months of 2020. No doubt this will be a year that no one will forget, but we continue to push forward and hope for a more positive and unambiguous 2021.

In a time when it feels like everything has moved online and we're all experiencing more and more email traffic and online meetings as never before, we're keen to re-connect face to face with each other and with our clients, and to get a better understanding of what COVID-19 and the lockdown and restrictions, have meant for everyone and how a post COVID-19 normal world could look and feel.

As the area in which we primarily deliver our services, the City of Port Phillip has a significant proportion of households living in social housing, a high incidence of rough sleeping, and is home to persons of ATSI origin, international students and persons on temporary visas. These are all cohorts that have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic and are our key client groups.

Whilst we do not know the future of JobSeeker and JobKeeper payments as of September 2020, we anticipate that these will change – the first to a lesser amount and the second to a tighter eligibility. With the unemployment rate at ~7.4% - the highest in Australia since 1998, with nearly 1 million people currently out of work, the foreseeable economic and social impacts are dire and will be felt for a long time.

As the pandemic grinds on, everything feels uncertain. Except for the power of community.

With the pandemic however, we have also seen and experienced firsthand hope, compassion, acts of random kindness, incredible generosity and glimpses of a better future. The scars of this pandemic won't just disappear when the virus goes away. It is therefore imperative that PPCG remains strong and steady in all of its many and diverse parts, and moves through this current crisis and into a brighter future.

As we head into unknown territory with COVID-19 our objectives as an organisation are clear. We will:

- > Continue to care and to provide relief and support in as many ways as we can;
- > Provide food and essential items to support our most vulnerable communities and those facing employment loss;
- > Continue to deliver innovative services to those with complex and overlapping needs to support them during this time and to alleviate their isolation and loneliness; and
- > Look to a future post COVID-19 to recover, rebuild and renew and strengthen individuals, families and their communities.

This is an opportunity to build the social and economic infrastructure needed to support individuals, families and communities, sustain local businesses and prepare for ongoing challenges, including climate change.

Disclaimer: This report is provided for information and it does not purport to be complete. While care has been taken to ensure the content in the report is accurate, we cannot guarantee it is without flaw of any kind.



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**PORTPHILLIP
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Working for
Social Justice