

PORT PHILLIP COMMUNITY GROUP

ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23

We've been here for 50 years,
and will be for 50 more



PORT PHILLIP
COMMUNITY GROUP // EST. 1973

50 YEARS

OF PPCG
AND 50 MORE

Welcome

Port Phillip Community Group (PPCG) started its operation in 1973 as the St Kilda Community Centre. It has been providing services in St Kilda from the corner of Carlisle and Chapel Streets for 50 years.

PPCG had humble beginnings as a Citizen's Advice Bureau, a community centre for isolated community members to have a chat, and a place for volunteers to assist low-income earners.

Across the decades, the services have been expanded to South Melbourne and Port Melbourne sites as its reach grew to the broader community of Port Phillip.

Many things have changed, but the core of the service has remained the same. It is now mainly funded by local government while our community centre and emergency assistance are still supported by volunteers.

We have expanded to deliver education programs and financial counselling services to build individual and community capacity.

We support individuals, families and communities to live with dignity and self-determination by providing responsive and inclusive services that build community connection.

PPCG remains committed to advocating for assistance for disadvantaged communities. We have participated in projects that address food security and built social cohesion across the inner metropolitan suburbs, as well as coordinating the Inner South Rooming House networks to build sector capacity.

This commemorative edition of PPCG's annual report celebrates the achievements of the past 50 years. It also positions us for the next 50 years as we face challenges of rising living costs, housing affordability and environmental impacts which will disproportionately impact on our local communities.

Port Phillip Community Group Ltd. 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).

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A copy of this report can be downloaded from ppcg.org.au by calling (03) 8598 6600 or emailing info-support@ppcg.org.au

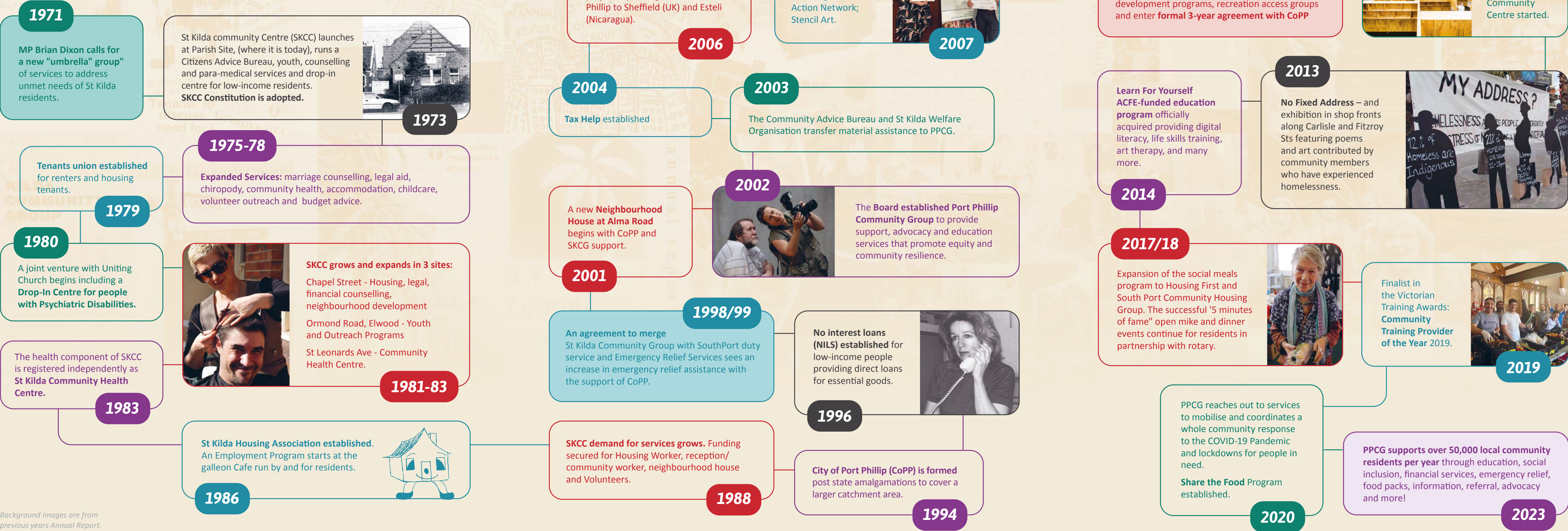
Acknowledgment

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, volunteers and community members, and believe this makes our teams, services and organisation stronger and more effective.



Our proud history over 5 decades
of serving the community: 1973-2023



Background images are from previous years Annual Report.

A message from our Chair

This year marks our 50th year Annual Report and an opportunity to celebrate a proud history and everything that has been achieved, from early beginnings in 1973 when the local community called for and organised 35 groups to start up the St Kilda Community Group.

Today the board remains just as committed to Port Phillip Community Group’s (PPCG) mission to bring about a more inclusive and equitable society in the City of Port Phillip. We have responded to the current economic challenges through listening to the community and championing partnerships to provide relevant services to our local community.

In April, we welcomed our new Executive Officer Veena Mishra after the remarkable achievements of our past Executive Officer Karen Sait, who after seven years earned a much-deserved retirement.

In the third year of our Strategic Plan, we honour and build upon the many generous contributions and achievements of our current and past staff, volunteers, consumers, partner organisations and members.

As a board we continuously seek to add and renew the skill sets that are needed to lead the organisation for the next 50 years.

This year we welcomed two new board members Philip Eggleston and Kelly Ralph to strengthen the governance of the organisation. We farewelled David Weinberger who volunteered his legal expertise over four years and Peter Giles who was invaluable for his marketing expertise.

I would like to thank the past Chair, Michael McGann who joined the board in 2016 and was instrumental in informing our 2021-2025 strategic plan.

Looking forward we are committed to revitalising our membership base to reflect the changing demographics of Port Phillip and to reach a wider segment of the community. We will continue to measure our impact and build on our successes to ensure we are responsive to our community’s needs and advocate for a shared future together.

PPCG extends its appreciation and gives thanks to all our supporters who have ensured our mission to make significant contributions in people’s lives is ongoing. We look forward to celebrating together.

Gina Fiske, Chair



Photo: Veena Mishra, Julie Margetts and Gina Fiske

Special thanks to our Board of Directors Gina Fiske (Chair), Elizabeth Jennings (Treasurer), Susanne Birks, Claire Edmanson, Julie Margetts, Philip Eggleston and Kelly Ralph.



Photo: Susanne Birks



Photo: PPCG Board (L-R) Kelly Ralph, Claire Edmanson, Julie Margetts, Philip Eggleston, Elizabeth Jennings, Gina Fiske and Veena Mishra (EO).

A message from our Executive Officer

It is my pleasure to present the 50th commemorative edition of PPCG's annual report. I acknowledge the immense effort of my predecessor Karen Sait towards the achievements of this year. It has been a year of many changes for our staff and clients as we settle into a post COVID world with hybrid working and service delivery models now embedded as normal business practice.

This year PPCG has resumed its open-door policy and revived the Alma Road Community House. We continue to seek alternative venues to resume services in South Melbourne and aim to reopen our Port Melbourne offices by December 2023.

This year has seen increasing levels of financial hardship across the community. We have responded by providing additional services to assist residents to access power saving bonus and energy assistance programs alongside our emergency relief program.

PPCG has continued to benefit from the continued support of our volunteers who are the backbone of our organisation and without whom programs such as Share the Food and Social Meals would not provide the exceptional value for funders. We were privileged to partake in the Addressing Food Security and Building Social Cohesion project across the inner metropolitan regions of Victoria. We continue to advocate for food security and sustainable supply options for all residents in Port Phillip.

City of Port Phillip has the largest cohort of people living alone with a high risk of loneliness and social isolation. Ongoing support from the City of Port Phillip enables PPCG to provide a continuum of services from prevention and early detection to engagement, crisis management and on-going support.

Our education programs build capability, whilst our recreational programs enable social connections. Financial counselling is our flagship prevention program that assists residents to proactively manage their situation to prevent housing insecurity. Valuable support from Good Shepherd and CISVic have enabled us to continue to deliver financial capability and emergency relief services

I would like to acknowledge our donors who provided material and financial aid that enabled us to assist the residents of Port Phillip. Organisations such as the Uniting Church, Rotary Albert Park, SecondBite and the many individuals who donated through our fundraising page helped make a positive difference.

Lastly, I would like to thank all PPCG staff for their warm welcome and invaluable support. As we approach the midpoint of our strategic plan, we look forward to strengthening connections with our community health services and building new connections with the local businesses in the area.

Mishra

Veena Mishra, Executive Officer



Our Strategic Plan 2021-2025

Our vision, mission and values

Vision: A fair, just and inclusive community

Purpose: We support individuals, families and communities to live with dignity and self-determination

Mission: We provide responsive services in partnership with individuals, families and communities to empower people to achieve their goals

Underpinning all of the work that we do are our **five key values:**

- > **Respect:** we treat all people and each other with dignity and respect
- > **Equity:** we promote fair and equitable access to all of our services and resources
- > **Inclusiveness:** we embrace diversity, celebrate difference, and encourage participation
- > **Empowerment:** we work with individuals, families and communities to build on their strengths and to achieve their goals
- > **Accountability:** we approach our work in open and transparent ways and encourage feedback to improve our services and resources

PPCG Service Model



Our Financial Reports

Summary of income and funders

For the year ended 30 June 2023 our total income was \$1,599,370 a 1% decrease on last year. We obtained this from grants, donations, interest and fees. This comprised of contracted and new funding of \$1,493,091 and other income of \$106,279.

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 are:

- > Department of Education and Training, Victoria
- > Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, Victoria
- > Department of Health, Victoria
- > Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources on behalf of the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications, Commonwealth
- > Department of Justice, Consumer Affairs, Victoria (via Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand - GSA NZ)
- > Department of Social Services, Commonwealth (via Community Information & Support, Victoria - CISVic)



Elizabeth Jennings,
Treasurer

In addition to contracted funding, we received additional one-off grants, donations and fees from philanthropic trusts, businesses, and individuals. We extend our appreciation to each of these as these funds have enabled services to continue to be delivered to our clients and the community.

We received grants from:

- > Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions: received grant for Living Local Fund Minor refurbishments and program equipment
- > Housing First: Additional social meals provided to Housing First
- > St Kilda Community Housing: delivery of social meals
- > Uniting (Vic & Tas) Ltd: Office space hire at 161 Chapel Street
- > Good Things Foundation: Get Online Week 2022
- > Rotary Club of Albert Park: Donation – Share the Food
- > South Port Uniting Church: Donation
- > Estate of Henry Herbert Yoffa: Donation
- > Magistrate's Court of Victoria
- > Lakeside Community: Lakeside carols at Bridport St fundraising event
- > Live Nations Australia Venues PL (Trading as the Palais Theatre) – Event Grant
- > South Melbourne Community Chest
- > The Queen's Fund

Treasurer's Report

PPCG continues to operate in a challenging financial environment, as a small Not for Profit organisation.

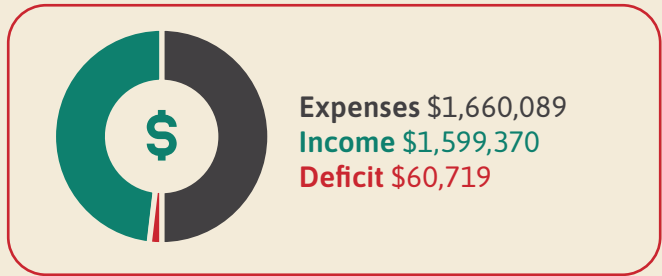
We gratefully acknowledge the funds we receive which enable us to deliver essential services within the City of Port Phillip and beyond. This year our income was 1% lower than last year at \$1,599,370.

Despite this, for the 2023 financial year, our expenses were \$1,660,089, a 10% decrease compared from last Financial Year.

This resulted in an overall deficit of \$60,719 indicating that PPCG slightly reduced its budgeted deficit.

Due to past surpluses, we were able to fund this deficit, however, we recognize that with both increasing need and demand for our services and the challenges of securing additional funding to meet these costs, we will need to continue to develop and explore different ways of working.

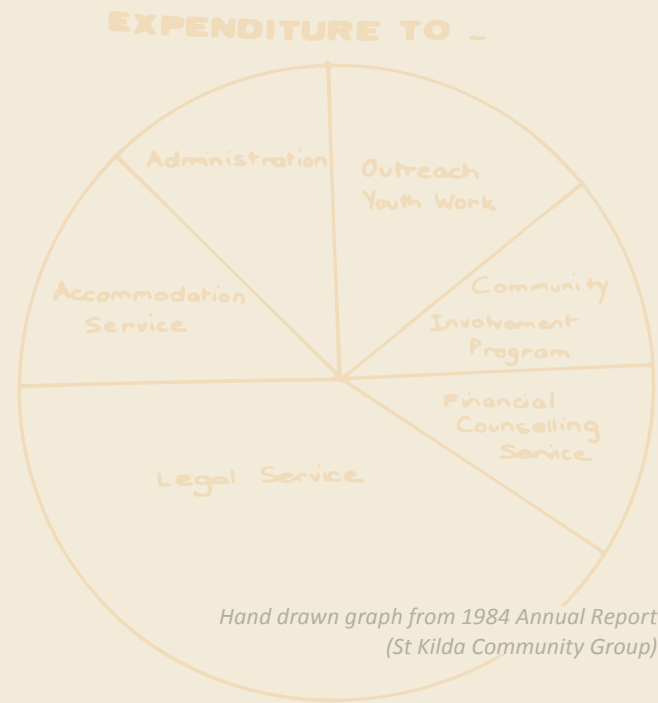
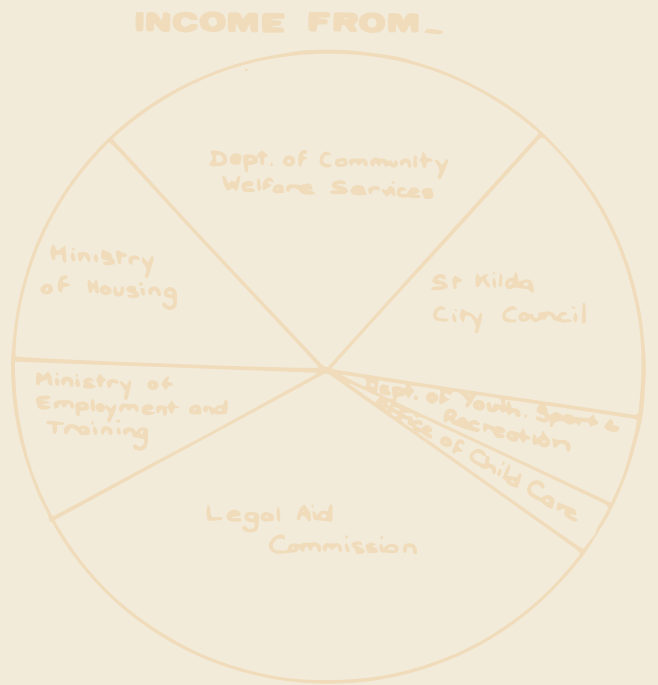
We will continue to closely monitor our expenditure and proactively explore ways to increase our revenue to continue our commitment to provide responsive services to individuals, families and communities.



In summary for the financial year ended 30 June 2023:

- > Total income was \$1,599,370 obtained from grants, donations, interest and fees.
- > Total expenditure was \$1,660,089.
- > This resulted in a net deficit of (\$60,719)

1984 FUNDING FOR COMMUNITY CENTRE SERVICES



Hand drawn graph from 1984 Annual Report
(St Kilda Community Group)

Responsive - Service Effectiveness and Coordination

We use coordinated and contemporary services and resources to assist people and communities with a focus on those who are most vulnerable and at risk, to stay well and connected with each other and their community.



Power Saving Bonus and Energy Assistance Program

The Power Saving Bonus (PSB) and Energy Assistance Program (EAP) are designed to offer an immediate payment to ease cost-of-living pressures for Victorian households and link residents with trained support workers who can offer detailed energy assistance.

During appointments, residents were assisted to check concessions, compare best offers, understand their bills, learn about energy saving measures and how to apply for hardship options like the utility relief grant.

In this financial year we processed 223 applications which equated to \$55,750 in assistance for community members. Of the applications, 74% were supported with information or direct support to apply for utility relief grants, which offer a further \$1,950 in support per household.

We knew that elderly residents were facing barriers to applying for the PSB. Lower digital literacy made it harder for them to apply online, and mobility issues made it difficult for some to travel to us for appointments.

In May we partnered with the City of Port Phillip's Linking Neighbours Program to offer an outreach session at the Port Melbourne Library. There was a second session at Emerald Hill Library in August 2023.

223 applications processed and \$55,750 in energy assistance secured



Alma Road Community House (ARCH)

An accessible place where the local community of St Kilda East and Port Phillip can connect.

Our ARCH space continued to house activities, special interest groups, support services, education classes, playgroups and gardening.

Activities and groups at ARCH included: art group; autistic book club; circle of friends; chess club; co-dependents anonymous; computer class; Islamic prayer group; parrot group; and playgroups.

To add to the welcoming atmosphere and to build her knowledge of gardening techniques, a volunteer at ARCH secured a donation from Bunnings for a raised garden bed in the backyard. Using this and other found objects, she created gardens with herbs, veggies and flowers. She shared the produce with people attending ARCH who, in turn brought in seeds and sprouts for the garden.

The little street pantry received regular top-ups of non-perishable food. It continued to be supported by Mazon Australia. It is well-utilised by community members who need access to a little extra support.

"St Kilda East and Caulfield Chess has used ARCH since 2011. We are very thankful to the management of ARCH to give an opportunity for approximately 60 players per week to use premises that have all facilities chess club needs"

- Michael Gluzman – Chess Club

Hire ARCH space for your next celebration. Proceeds will help provide more responsive services ppcg.org.au/room-hire/



Photo: PPCG Service Access team Elaine Wilkinson and Matt Inman restocking the little street pantry with non-perishable food items from Mazon Australia

Share the Food Program

Set up in response to the need resulting from COVID-19 lockdowns, the program provided emergency food relief to residents of the Port Phillip area at a time of significant crisis.

We adapted Share the Food to meet current need by shifting the focus to distributing food parcels to grass root organisations that provide meals to individuals in need.

Supported by City of Port Phillip we were able to customise the items included in the parcels to meet the culturally diverse needs of the community.

The program successfully supported activities including food relief through Neighbourhood Houses, community pantries, sit down meals, food vans, outreach to rooming houses and cooking classes to develop skills for simple and nutritious meal preparation for low income earners.

This year, Share the Food acted as a community connection hub for organisations and volunteers.

The success of the program has enabled us to actively address growing food insecurity within the community and reduce food waste from landfills.

Since the program was set up in 2020, Share the Food has distributed food parcels to 52 agencies in the City of Port Phillip and beyond.

4774 food parcels distributed, each including essential items, meals, fresh and non-perishable food valued at \$237,528



Photo: CoPP visit to Share the Food



Photo: Pack a snack

Share the Food organisation feedback

“Our service is indebted to PPCG for the regular and generous supply of foodstuffs and a range of other materials we have been receiving. We provide breakfast and lunch daily and we believe that these are opportunities to improve the physical and mental health of our participants as they share meals with others. Many of our participants have poor diets... healthy items supplied by PPCG such as yoghurts, juices, milk and health drinks are greatly appreciated by our participants as they are items they might not purchase for themselves.”

- Community Service Organisation



Inner South Rooming House Network

The Inner South Rooming House Network (ISRHN) has been around in one form or another for over twenty years, with a mission to improve the quality of life and be a voice for change for rooming house residents of the Inner South.

The network brings together information and service delivery, nursing, community and allied health, outreach and community development professionals working within the Inner South along with people with lived experience of living in a rooming house.

Following the COVID pandemic and lockdown period fewer members attended, reducing the capacity for creating the outcomes the network was established to achieve.

In 2023 a review, including a survey and focus group, was conducted to gather insights and recommendations to steer the ISRHN’s approach and future direction. The focus group workshop was attended by consumer representatives and representatives from Better Health Network, Peninsula Community Legal Centre, Mental Health and Wellbeing Local and the City of Port Phillip.

A list of recommendations were drawn up including revision of the network’s objectives, adjustment to the meeting structure and a new inclusion of a social contract for members. The full report can be requested via info-support@ppcg.org.au



Photo: 5MOF

Inclusive - Building Individual and community Capacity

We deliver best practice services, supports and resources, and influence key funders and decision makers to reduce inequity and inequality in our community.



Back to School Program

Our Back to School program supported families experiencing crisis and on low income to meet the rising costs of schooling. Uniform fees can cost families hundreds of dollars per year, and it's a common occurrence for parents who speak with us to be washing garments daily, because they can't afford to buy a second pair. Single mothers make up 90% of the families who sought support from the Back to School program this year.

With a generous donation from South Melbourne Community Chest, we were able to distribute over \$4000 support to 55 primary and secondary school children living in the City of Port Phillip. Our additional partnership with the State School Relief Fund enabled us to almost double the value of this support through the provision of uniform vouchers to public school students. Our emergency relief program complements this program by providing breakfast and school lunch items to ensure that the children are getting the best out of their learning.

10% increase in families assisted
up from 50 in 2021/22 to 55 in 2022/23



No Interest Loans Scheme (NILS)

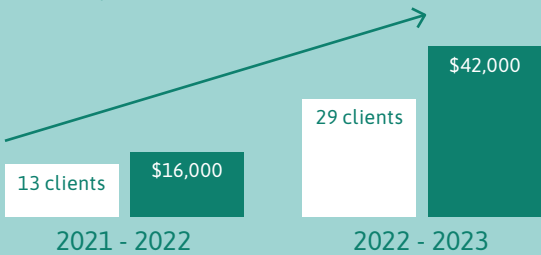
Since 1996, our NILS program has provided low income households with access to safe and affordable credit with no fees, charges or interest payable.

Loans of up to \$3000 can be used for items and services such as computers, whitegoods, furniture, car repairs, educational courses and medical services. Repayment amounts are set at an affordable level of \$20-\$60 per fortnight and loans are generally paid off over an 18-24 month period.

NILS experienced record growth, with \$42,000 in loans provided to 29 households 2022/2023, up from \$16,000 in loans provided to 13 households in the previous financial year.

This program was significantly supported by two volunteers Patrick and Liz. Both completed 12 hours of training with Good Shepherd Australia and New Zealand to better support community members.

Record growth up from 13 clients assisted with a value of \$16,000 in 2021/22 to **29 with a value of \$42,000 in 2022/23**



Rohani's Story

"I'm a single mum with 3 teenage boys. When my fridge broke down it was a disaster. Food has become so expensive and we can't afford to eat out – these days we struggle just to buy groceries. I applied for a NILS loan and in the meantime we got frozen meals from emergency food agencies such as PPCG to get us through. I saved \$150 off the retail price of the new fridge and got free premium delivery thanks to the Good Guys/NILS partnership which was amazing and totally unexpected. The loan was approved within 24 hours and the fridge was delivered 24 hours after that. This was my 4th NILS loan through PPCG and each time they have been life-saving – I love NILS!"
- Rohani *Name changed



Financial Counselling

- Since 1980's

Financial counselling, in partnership with Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand, continued to be a busy and highly in demand service, dedicated to supporting clients find solutions to unmanageable debts.

Our casework involved discussions regarding debt management options with clients and direct advocacy with banks, energy and telecommunication providers, local councils and other creditors. We continued to work collaboratively with other services including family violence support providers and community legal services.

We assisted clients with debts including credit cards, personal loans, utility bills and increasingly car loans, mortgages, council rates, owners' corporation, rental arrears and Buy Now Pay Later products where clients continued to present with multiple unaffordable loans.



Photo: PPCG Financial Counselling team - Maz Fox and Suzy Muir

With home loan interest rates rising and cost of living pressures mounting, we saw an increase in client's accessing our service due to housing related debts. Some of these clients made the difficult decision to sell their homes, whilst for others this decision was taken out of their hands as the number of banks commencing legal action to repossess properties began to rise.

We also saw an increase in car repossessions and clients applying for bankruptcy. Our financial counsellors and their colleagues at Good Shepherd secured debt waivers totalling \$1,087,556 for eligible clients, a truly life changing outcome.

We continued to build on our strong partnership with the wider Good Shepherd team and offered intensive one-on-one financial capability support both remotely and in person, an important extension to our holistic financial wellbeing program.

"You have been a lifesaver and made things a lot easier to manage. You have literally overhauled my situation in a matter of weeks."

- Financial Counselling Client 2023

"I am very relieved that such a service exists. I was in a real financial bind and couldn't afford any legal or financial assistance. So without this service I don't know what I would have done."

- Financial Counselling Client
Quote from 2003 Annual Report

Louise's Story

Louise*, a 53-year-old woman with two dependent teenagers and a long history of family violence engaged with our financial counselling service after experiencing increasing periods of mental health and addiction crisis since 2019, peaking in 2022 when she was admitted to an in-patient treatment program. On engagement with our service, Louise was largely in recovery, but with the occasional relapse, she was unable to work. Her debts totalled \$17,500 and included utilities, buy now pay later loans, payday loans and personal loans.

As her work instability continued, Louise was unable to afford to pay her rent in full and she began to build rental arrears and was eventually served with a notice to vacate. Facing the real prospect of homelessness, our financial counsellor was able to assist Louise with referrals to external agencies to secure funding to pay her rental arrears. Working with other support services also helped Louise's transition from Centrelink Job Seeker to the Disability Support Pension which relieved some of the financial pressures Louise had been experiencing.

Our financial counsellor advocated for debt waivers or partial waivers on all debts and worked with Louise to modify her spending, assisting Louise to create a budget that was both affordable and sustainable. This has led to an end to the cycle of debt and has given Louise a newfound level of confidence in her ability to manage her finances and changed her outlook on debt forever. Louise is planning to study in the future and hopes to one day transition back into the workforce so she can secure a more stable financial future for herself and her daughters.

**Name changed.*



Tax Help

PPCG offers free Tax Help to local residents with support from the Australian Tax Office and the City of Port Phillip.

This financial year we had three volunteers offering a mix of face-to-face and phone-based appointments to assist people living on a low income. Failing to submit tax returns can have serious implications for people, even those on income support. Loss of childcare subsidies is just one trend that we see through our IRS service.

This year, 34% of applicants identified as culturally and linguistically diverse and 3% were First Nations community members. 42% of applicants were new to the tax help program and 85% believe they will need support from the program again next year.

'I've been getting this service for over 10 years now and it has been exceptional!' 'Having this assistance has been so important to me over the last few years. Thank you so much for your support.' - Tax Help client

Increased support from 51 clients assisted in 2021/22 up to **54 in 2022/23**



Education programs

We created pathways to better lives through education, employment and social connections. Our Learn Local Education Hub continued to provide supported courses and classes to vulnerable and marginalised community members.

We had a resurgence of interest as classes went back to in-person with the option of online participation. Hybrid delivery increased social interaction opportunities and improved accessibility for clients.

We expanded our offering by investing in partnerships. This past year we worked with the following agencies: Access Inc. Wild@heArt; Christ Church Community Centre; City of Port Phillip; Galiamble Men's Recovery Centre; Inner Eastern Local Learning and Employment Network; Job Advocate Program; Park Towers Community Hub, Space2b; South Melbourne Community Chest; Star Health; St Kilda Library; 101 Engagement Hub; and Uniting Disability Employment Services.

Notable initiatives that progressed during 2022-2023:

- > Expanded **Work this Way** employment program with Christ Church Community Centre, Uniting Employment Services and the Job Advocate Program.
- > **Neighbours Seniors Program** collaboration with the City of Port Phillip providing digital literacy training to seniors across Port Phillip through a Crossword Club and workshops at the St Kilda Library.
- > Supported **Art Attack** participants to exhibit their art work at the 2022 Linden Postcard Show.
- > Added to our **Family in Focus series**. Developed training modules for **Parenting Skills program**. Delivered NEST **'Healthy Cooking on a Budget'** workshops by OzHarvest in conjunction with Christ Church Community Centre.

499 enrolments from **172 students** across **42 courses***

**Courses included: computer and digital literacy; art therapy; podcasting; gardening; hospitality and cooking; and song writing.*



Arthur's Story

Arthur is in his sixties. He started attending our education group with the goal of progressing his rehabilitation following a brain injury. For Arthur, learning simple digital audio editing skills was useful in regaining coordination of different senses, i.e. touch, sound and sight. He found the conversations interesting and opportunities for speaking useful for his recovery. He also formed new friendships.

**Name changed.*

Information, Referral and Support (IRS)

Since we opened our doors in 1973, providing a generalist, place-based service is something that remains integral to the Port Phillip Community Group ethos. As many organisations move to centralising, specialising, and phone-based services, we continue to provide a physical space of welcome, safety and connection for all members of our community.

Our Information, Referral & Support Service continues to be the main entry point for community members. It supports diverse people from varied life experiences for a range of reasons.

The rising cost of living is one of the major themes reported by community members this year, and we have seen an increase in presentation from people who may not have traditionally required assistance. The number of people who access our services and own their own home has nearly doubled from last year as people struggle to keep up with increasing mortgage repayments. This cohort also tend to be elderly residents who have little disposable income available for the essentials.

We saw a 12% rise in presentation from single households, with many dealing with the consequences of family breakdown, job loss and mental health decline. Single households have a lower resilience to increases in rent, mortgage repayments, utilities and food. We supported this cohort from slipping into debt, homelessness and greater mental health decline.

The complexity and need for ongoing support have increased in this last year with long appointments increasing by 5% and follow up appointments increasing by 4% from the previous financial year. We have also seen a significant increase in presentations for utility relief – a reflection of both our growing investment of resources in this space, and the increased cost-of-living pressures. Advocacy for utility related issues has increased by 11%.

This year we provided over \$105,000 worth of emergency relief to the local community, including food vouchers, groceries, hygiene products, health care assistance, transport vouchers, sleeping bags, winter knits, face masks, RAT tests and more. We develop strong partnerships with local organisations who generously donate to our emergency relief program. For every \$1 that we receive in funding, we deliver around \$5 worth of support.



Photo: PPCG IRS team - Catrina Sofo, Tracy Ibrahim, Jo McDowell and Danielle Clarke

Together, we provided over **\$105,000* of emergency relief.**

*For every \$1 of funding received, \$5 worth of support provided.



Rafael's Story

I went to PPCG after leaving a very dangerous situation where I was living. I wanted to be warm and have something to eat. I felt broken inside.

A week earlier I had been living in safe, secure accommodation for the past 11 years. Now I was staying in Emergency Housing with only the clothes I was wearing. PPCG listened to me carefully. They gave me a food voucher and pamphlets telling me about what was available in the City of Port Phillip. They organised some clothes for me that fitted.

I was starting to feel better as PPCG treated me with dignity, understanding which was important to me, and that someone cared. Since then, my life has begun to change. I now have stable, safe accommodation. Clean clothes and wearing shoes is helping me to look for a volunteer job in the City of Port Phillip. As I settle into a new routine, I then can start looking for some casual work building a better life after starting with nothing.

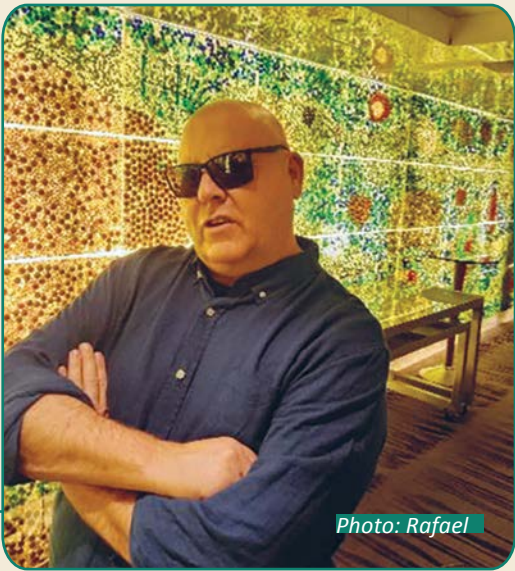


Photo: Rafael

Recreation Access Groups
and activities for connection

PPCG’s suite of accessible and affordable social inclusion activities continued to provide a welcome means for connection for community members from a range of ages and life circumstances.

Activities included weekly gym classes run in partnership with St Kilda PCYC, a monthly fishing group run in partnership with Fishability, and a bushwalking group venturing out once every five to six weeks to lovely natural locations outside of metro Melbourne.

Group sizes continued to see steady growth with an average of 26 participants across the groups and an average of 15 new individuals joining throughout the course of the year. Participants consistently reported improvement in their social, mental and physical wellbeing as a result of attending these activities.

In feedback received, 100% told us they were either satisfied or very satisfied with the activity and 70-86% advised that they either recommended or planned to recommend these activities to someone they knew. 51% stated the activity enabled them to connect with other activities of benefit to them.



Photo: Fishing group 2023



Photo: Fishing group 2023



Photo: Bushwaking group 2023



Photo: Chatty Cafe group 2023

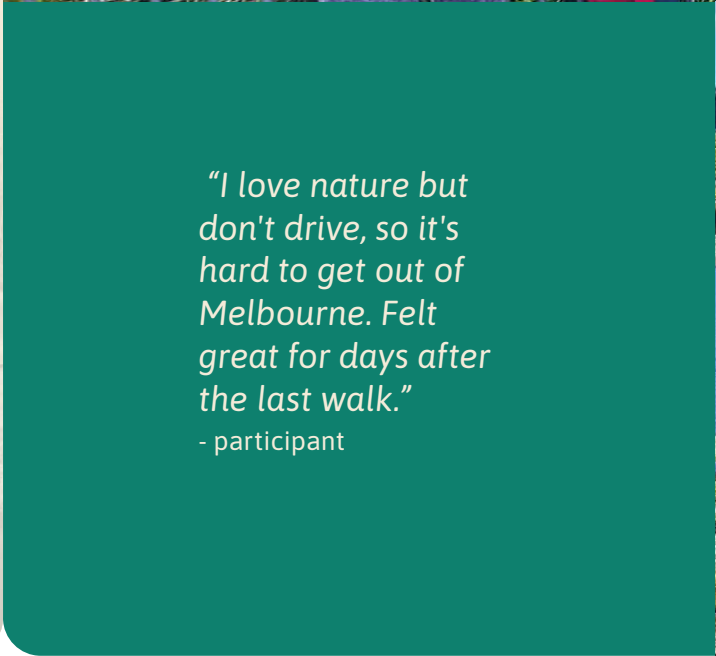


Photo: Bushwaking group 2023

Social Meals Program

The Social Meals program fosters connections between rooming house residents through shared meals, usually held in a communal space in their own house.

In partnership with Housing First, St Kilda Community Housing and South Port Community Housing Group, and with funding from the City of Port Phillip, the program delivered 1939 individual meals to 1338 residents.

PPCG staff and volunteers attended eight rooming houses a fortnight to prepare a nutritious social meal for the residents. Some residents also helped set up or clean after the meals, and provided ideas and recommendations for future meals, including specific dietary needs.

Aside from the benefits of the food and social connection, it was also an opportunity for sharing information and referrals to relevant recreational activities, health and community services within the area.

In feedback collected, 62% of residents told us that they met somebody new in their house through a social meal, and their rating of the quality of the meals was 100%. During breaks in the program, residents expressed how much they missed and appreciated the meals.

*“The shared meal and conversation.
Great quality food and safe environment.”*

“It gives me a sense of community.”

*“The lunch brings everyone together,
we all love it every fortnight.”*

*“The opportunity to eat healthy and
delicious meals with friendly people.
I can feel the love in the cooking.”*

- Social Meals program participants



Roy's Story

Roy is a visual artist who has been a resident of social housing for 10 years. He was commissioned by Housing First to paint a mural in one of their rooming houses and to encourage the other residents to participate. On the day he went there to paint the mural there was a Social Meal, where he got to meet the residents of the house. They were excited about the artwork and started sharing their own artistic endeavors. One resident turned out to be an artist as well and no one else knew that, even though he had been living there for 25 years. Another resident recited a poem she wrote, which Roy loved so much that he requested to include it in the mural. From then on, the project became a true collaboration between the residents.

The Housing First management was so impressed with Roy's engagement, abilities and rapport with the residents that they made him a part of their Community Development team. Subsequently, Housing First commissioned Roy for another mural in the courtyard of a different house and the painting was planned to coincide with a Social Meal, which turned into a BBQ. That helped to draw residents, even if they didn't want to or were shy about participating in the painting. These murals have become so famous amongst the organisation that other residents have requested to have them done in their houses too and Housing First is planning several more.

Ever since, Roy has been an integral part of the Social Meals at all the locations for Housing First, encouraging conversations, organising equipment and helping clean up. He believes the meals are crucial for fostering connections between the residents, but also between the residents and the Housing First staff.



Well-Governed - Strengthening our organisation

We operate with integrity and accountability, strengthening the foundations of our organisation to achieve our purpose.



Our volunteers

PPCG is proud to embody a strong community engagement and social inclusion ethos, bringing together community members in a volunteer capacity, fostering a sense of belonging and connection.

PPCG is fortunate to have a dedicated volunteer base, many of whom have been committed long-term. We wholeheartedly recognise the incredible contribution made by those who choose to contribute their time in support of PPCG and our collective community, making it possible to deliver programs and services that we would not otherwise be able to provide.

During FY 2022-2023 we were ably supported by 36 active volunteers who generously shared a collective 4000 hours of their time. Volunteers have reported great satisfaction with their work and the connections they have made.

We were pleased to hold a morning tea during National Volunteer Week in May, to recognise and say thank you to our volunteers for the wonderful support provided throughout the year.

A ceremony was held, with Port Phillip Councillor Robbie Nyaguy doing the honours of handing out Certificates of Appreciation to those present. The PPCG team also presented a small plant as a gift to each volunteer to symbolise the growth and nurturing that they enabled within their roles with PPCG and the community. The event was attended by Cr Louise Crawford and Cr Peter Martin as well as members of the PPCG Board in recognition of the important role that these volunteers have in the community.



Photo: PPCG Volunteer Week event

36 volunteers
generously contributed
4000+ hours of their time



Photo: PPCG Volunteer Week event



Photo: PPCG Staff

Board Development

PPCG has a diverse, mission aligned and skilled Board of Directors. This year, the Board has been actively engaged in:

- > A Sustainability Vision and Planning Workshop to update the PPCG Sustainability Action Plan
- > A Board Performance Review and development of a Board Development Action Plan
- > A Board Cultural Review
- > Our Annual Board Strategic Workshop to monitor performance against our strategic plan.



Volunteer Engagement and Development


There are many wonderful people who volunteer their time to support our programs including Social Meals, Share the Food, administration and support services, and education initiatives.

PPCG provides a diverse range of opportunities for our volunteers. We value the skills, experiences, talents, ideas and energy that volunteers bring in support of our mission and purpose.

With a \$55 000 grant received from DFFH, we have initiated a project in partnership with our Volunteers to strengthen their engagement and experience of working with us right across the engagement life-cycle.

Our impact

1st July 2022 to 30th June 2023




Information, referral and support
26,571 client contacts



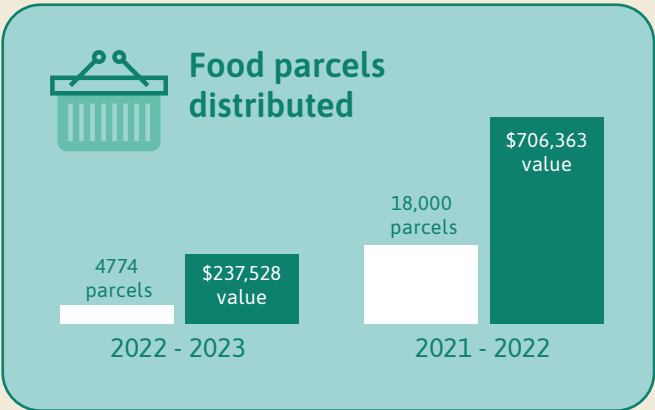
Financial counselling
2100 hours 225 clients*
Male 43% Female 56% Non Binary 1%



Social meals
1300 client contacts

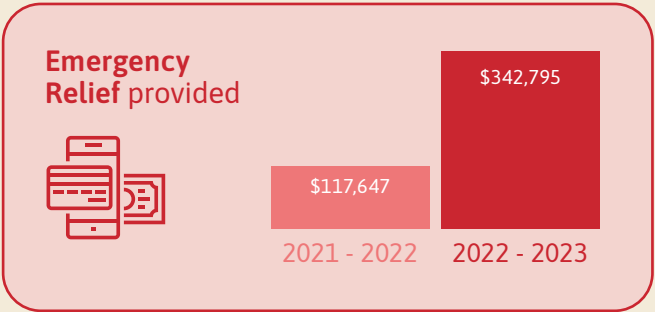


Education and skills development
12,575 student contact hours





Social inclusion activities
59 participants






26 Agencies Supported
to provide relief




4068 Volunteer hours provided
up 268 from 3800 in 2021-22



\$3000 Back to School
funds provided



1903 cooked meals provided




172 education students engaged
up 13 from 159 in 2021-22

Demographics across our programs				
	Education and Skills	Recreation Activity Group	Information and Referral Support	Social Meals
Under 65 years of age	62%	85%	86%	81%
Over 65 years of age	37%	15%	11%	19%
Identify as Male	36%	44%	47%	69%
Identify as Female	56%	54%	51%	31%
Identify as Non Binary	8%	2%	2%	0%



38.6% Culturally And Linguistically Diverse clients



5% Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients

Looking Forward

Over the last 50 years, PPCG has worked in partnership with our community to develop and deliver responsive services that support people to achieve their goals and lead meaningful and purposeful lives.

The future remains challenging and while there are generally high levels of advantage and favourable health outcomes in Port Phillip, extreme disadvantage and poorer health outcomes exist in some of our neighbourhoods. For some people, necessities such as housing and food security are out of reach without support. Homelessness continues to be a major concern and older women are the fastest growing group at risk of homelessness.

In 2023, the overall increase in living costs, including private rental accommodation and job losses, has led to greater financial stress for many people. An increase of job seekers and youth allowance recipients has meant that people who have managed in the past, are now seeking support services.

Many residents including women, older people, people with a disability, families with dependent children, those living alone and with mental health issues are finding it difficult to make ends meet.

Looking forward, we will focus on:

- > **Building resilience and providing direct support** so that people can have choices, and take up opportunities in their lives.
- > **Growing partnerships with other organisations** to increase opportunities for people to participate and thereby reduce barriers to access local services.
- > **Ensuring our impact is measured and reported**, so we know what difference our services have for people and their families.
- > **Strengthening the foundations of PPCG** including financial sustainability, environmental action and fostering the capabilities of our engaged, skilled and mission aligned Board, staff and volunteers.

Our capacity to connect with our well-established network of partnerships and community agencies in an increasingly complex environment will be more important as we work together to provide support and services that enable people to live with dignity and self-determination.

PPCG's proud history and reputation as a responsive, inclusive and well governed organisation will stand us in great stead as we tackle the most significant social and economic challenges of recent times.



Photo: PPCG Leadership team (L-R) Catrina Sofo, Kim Greenstone, Veena Mishra and Ruth Krawat



Photo: Rumi club 2012

"Special thanks for all of the support over the past 50 years, looking forward to 50 more."

Make a lasting Impact:

We understand that making a Will is a personal and important decision. It's a chance to ensure that your wishes are carried out after you're gone and that the people and causes you care about benefit from your support.

We have made leaving a bequest to PPCG easy through Willed, an online platform to create your Will. Visit the donation page of our website ppcg.org.au

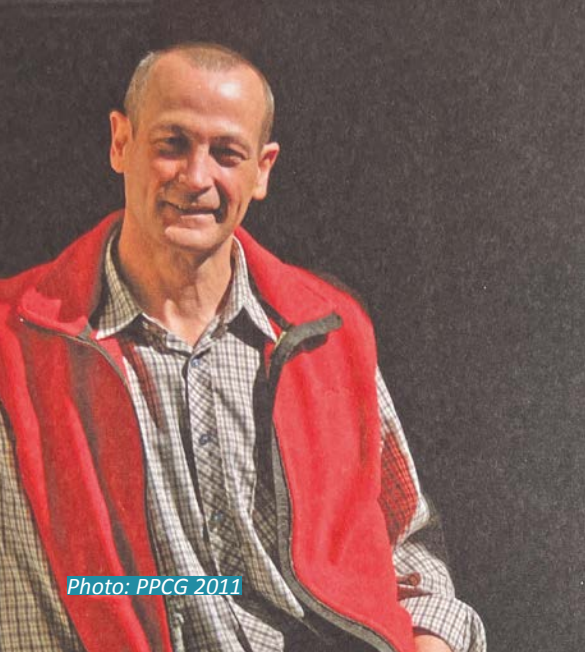
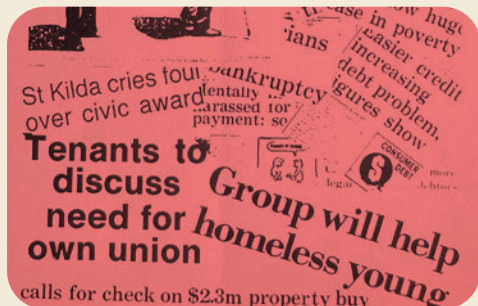


Photo: PPCG 2011



Photo: Recreation Access Groups 2012





St Kilda (main office)
161 Chapel St, St Kilda VIC 3182
E. info-support@ppcg.org.au
T. 8598 6600

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

Alma Road Community House
200 Alma Rd, St Kilda East VIC 3183
E. arch@ppcg.org.au
T. 9525 8746