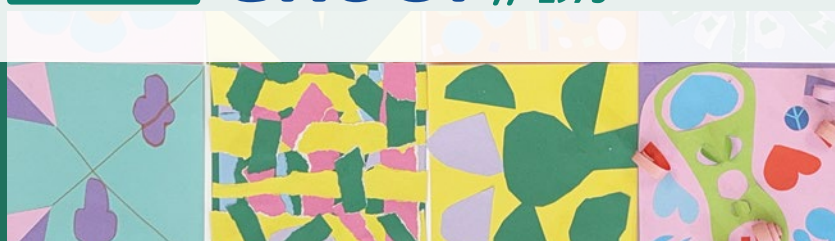




**PORT PHILLIP
COMMUNITY
GROUP** // EST.
1973

**ANNUAL
REPORT**
2024 - 2025



ABOUT PORT PHILLIP COMMUNITY GROUP (PPCG)

PPCG provides wrap-around services to individuals, families and communities facing hardship, social isolation and loneliness. We work with community members to promote wellness by providing early intervention services.

PPCG operates a food warehouse, a neighbourhood house and drop-in service from four locations around the City of Port Phillip. Our services include providing information, referrals and support, such as: emergency relief and material aid, financial hardship services, and community engagement through social, recreational and skill development groups.

PPCG provides services to individuals and families from a range of backgrounds and with a diverse set of needs. Our service incorporates a client-centred, service hub model with collaboration and partnerships with other community organisations.

This year PPCG has developed a new strategic plan. The new strategy is the result of deep reflection and consultation with clients, communities, and partners. The focus is on leveraging partnerships to deliver innovative services that create resilient communities. We aim to promote wellness and build social cohesion.



A copy of this report can be downloaded from Strategic Plan and Annual Reports - Port Phillip Community Group (ppcg.org.au), by calling (03) 8598 6600 or emailing info-support@ppcg.org.au

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.

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).

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

John Wall (Chair)

Board member since 2023

Veena Mishra (Secretary)

Board member since 2023

Elizabeth Jennings (Treasurer)

Board member since 2020

Susanne Birks

Board member since 2018

Aleksandra Janezic

Board member since 2024

Julie Margetts

Board member since 2022

Susanne Wells

Board member since 2024

The cover of our 2024 - 2025 Annual Report is a Collaborative Collage created by participants of the Art Attack Program. This collaborative collage is inspired by the warmth and comfort of a winter's quilt. Each square has been individually created by participants, reflecting personal expressions of nurture and shared experiences. Brought together, these pieces form a collective tapestry of care, connection, and community—each unique contribution stitched into a greater whole, much like a quilt offering warmth through unity.



(l-r) John Wall, Susanne Birks, Julie Margetts, Susanne Wells, Aleksandra Janezic

CEO and CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT



(l-r) Veena Mishra (Chief Executive Officer), John Wall (Chairperson)

This is the final year of our 2021 - 2025 strategy and PPCG continues to evolve and expand its services to support the local community.

As our community struggles with the cost-of-living and housing affordability pressures, we have had to pivot our programs to champion food security and skill development to create more resilient communities. Going forward we aim to provide community members and staff with social and emotional tools to help build that resilience.

Our new Strategic Plan for 2025-2029 focuses on leveraging our networks and connections to create social capital. We will respond to changing community needs by identifying service gaps and responding in a timely manner. We remain committed to bringing about a more resilient and cohesive society in the City of Port Phillip for the next 50 years.

This year we farewelled two board members, Gina Fiske and Clare Edmanson. Gina was the Chair of the Board since 2017. Claire was a Board Member since 2018. It was a huge loss to the Board to farewell two very respected and knowledgeable community members.

We are constantly refreshing the Board with new skills and representatives from the community. This year we welcomed Aleksandra Janezic and Susanne Wells to the Board. Both are residents with experience in the community sector.

PPCG extends its appreciation and gives thanks to our supporters who have ensured that our mission to make significant contributions in people's lives is ongoing.

John Wall
Chairperson

Veena Mishra
Chief Executive Officer

INCOME and FUNDERS

For 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025 our total income was \$1,470,234; a 10% decrease on last year. We obtained this from grants, donations, interest and fees.

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 Jobs, Skills Industry and Regions, State Government of Victoria
- ➔ Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, State Government of Victoria
- ➔ Department of Justice, Consumer Affairs, VIC (via Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand - GSANZ)
- ➔ Department of Social Services, Commonwealth (via Community Information & Support, VIC - CISVic)
- ➔ Vic Health Foundation



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 additional services to be delivered to our clients and the community, and particularly to meet the increasing demand for our services continues.

TREASURER'S REPORT

This year we are pleased to report that although we are reporting a deficit, it is significantly lower than previous years.

This year our total income was \$1,470,234; a decrease on last year by \$157,461 (or 10%). This was due to a loss of income for Social Meals from the City of Port Phillip and the completion of a one-off Volunteer Coordination Program funded by the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing.

Total expenditure for the year was \$1,471,124, significantly below last year's expenditure of \$1,703,313, a 14% reduction. While our biggest costs remain to support our team, with \$1,064,915 going to staff salaries and wages expenses (72% of expenditure), we were able to keep our organisational and occupancy expenses under control. Program costs did reduce as we did not run the social meals program.

All of this meant we ended the year with a small deficit of \$890 but a significant change from last year's deficit of \$75,618.

At the end of the financial year, we had **\$795,162 in the bank**. The majority is set aside for staff entitlements, outstanding payments, grants in advance and contingent liabilities. The remainder gives us the flexibility to manage the ups and downs in our funding cycles without having to hit pause on our work.

We understand that we need to live within our means to ensure the financial sustainability of the organisation. So, we continue to closely monitor our finances and pro-actively explore ways to increase our revenue for the next and future years to ensure our ongoing operations.

Elizabeth Jennings, Treasurer

OUR VISION, PURPOSE and MISSION

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



STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS 2021-2025

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 communities.

INCLUSIVE

Build 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.

WELL- GOVERNED

Strengthen our
Organisation



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

RESPONSIVENESS

Service Effectiveness and Coordination

10 years of bringing together community...

FIVE MINUTES OF FAME

Five Minutes of Fame is an open mic event that embodies the ethos of St Kilda's creative community and its welcoming vibe. This is PPCG's flagship event which has been running for 10 years and provides a safe environment for budding artists and yesteryear performers who may be facing hardship, to rebuild their confidence within a supportive community.

Residents from aged care, public and community housing are invited to an end of year celebration with food and gifts provided by generous donors.

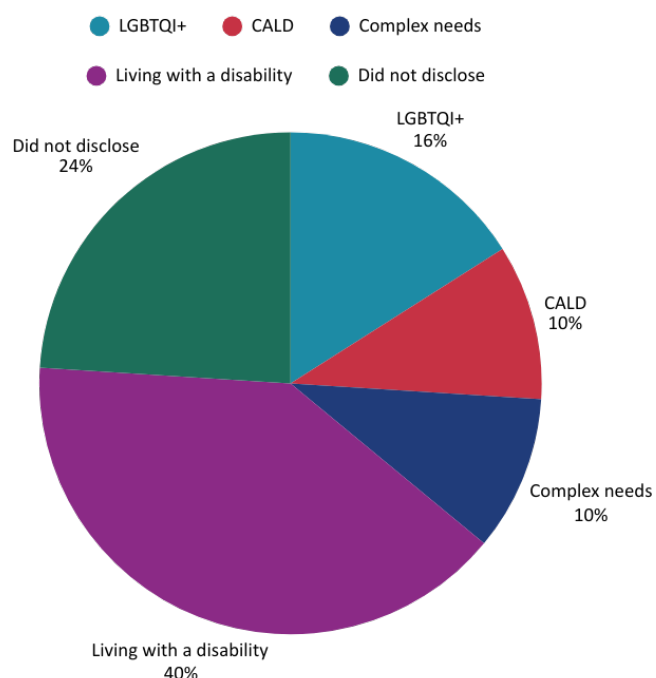
It is a celebration of togetherness and breaking barriers.

This year we partnered with traders from the South Melbourne Market who provided generously to our cause.

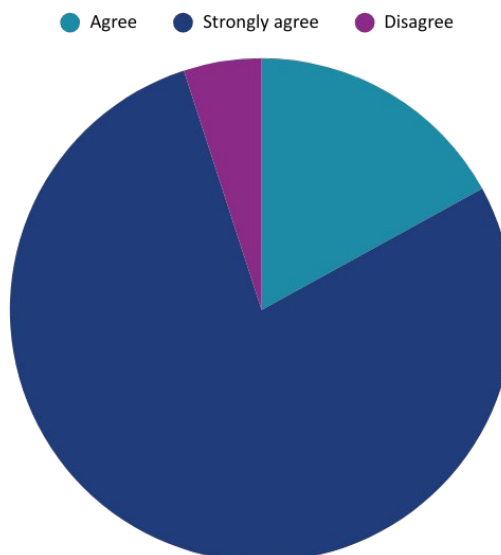
Our long-term partners for this program are the Albert Park Rotarians who provided three-course meals and volunteers to help on the night.

The attendees this year came from a range of backgrounds and the vast majority responded that they found the event to be of benefit.

Attendee Profile



When asked if the event was beneficial...



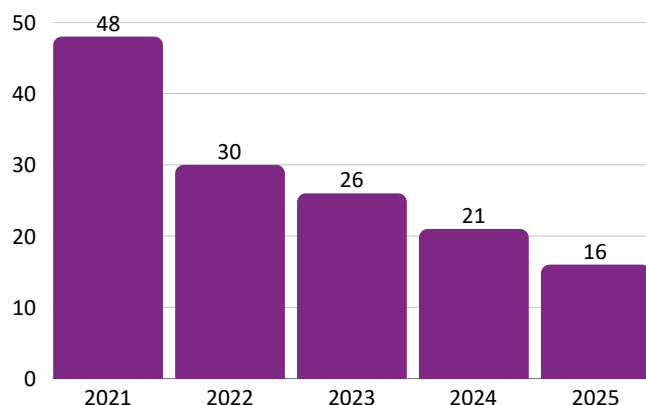
5 years of coordinating food relief...

SHARE THE FOOD COLLECTIVE

One of our cornerstone initiatives, Share the Food, redistributes rescued food from markets and supermarkets—food that would otherwise go to waste—to smaller community organisations, helping them to meet growing demand with culturally appropriate and nutritious food.

Share the Food also reflects a broader ambition: strengthening Port Phillip's food security systems through collaboration, resource-sharing, and trust.

Agencies Supported



"I am truly grateful for the generosity, help and kindness that your organisation offers us in the supply of all manner of goods. There are individuals within your organisation who go above and beyond our expectations. I am truly humbled and grateful. We look forward to working with you and continuing to help the needy long into the future."

- recipient organisation

COMMUNITY FOOD SECURITY CONSULTATION

In early June, PPCG, together with Christ Church Mission and with support from Southside Community Foundation, convened the inaugural Community Food Security Consultation. This gathering brought together community-based organisations and local government representatives, to identify shared challenges and opportunities in the local food security landscape. One of the most clearly expressed concerns was the fragmented nature of the sector, a proliferation of committed but disconnected efforts, resulting in duplicated services, inefficiencies, and missed opportunities for more strategic impact.

At the same time, participants recognised significant strengths across the food security network in Port Phillip, including deep community relationships, diverse service offerings, and strong local knowledge. Together, we successfully advocated for commercial FOGO bins from the City of Port Phillip.

We send 24% of fresh food to land fill per year. From July approximately \$67,000 of waste produce will go to green waste instead.



5 years of partnerships...

BROKERAGE & DONATIONS

Through our comprehensive brokerage and donation program, PPCG has partnered with several organisations to enable community members to access tailored emergency relief and hardship assistance that is based on their unique needs.

Through these partnerships PPCG has been able to assist people with furnishing their homes after moving from homelessness, choosing an entire wardrobe of new clothing, providing essential uniforms for children, supporting mothers and carers with items for new babies and growing children, supporting people in crisis with urgent rental payments and much, much more.

This year, our brokerage program helped our local community access \$46,622 worth of support. We thank all the organisations working alongside us.

BROKERAGE PARTNERS:

Our Village – essential items for babies and children from prams and cots to clothing packs and toiletries.

Queen's Fund – targeted funding for women and their children including crisis payments, education resources, bill relief and more.

GIVIT – vouchers for furniture, clothing and other essential household items giving people choice over what they buy.

Thread Together – entire new wardrobe that is chosen by client via a free online shop.

State School Relief - essential uniform and transport for school children.

Rotary Inner Melbourne Emergency Relief Network – furnishing entire households with large furniture, crockery, appliances and more.

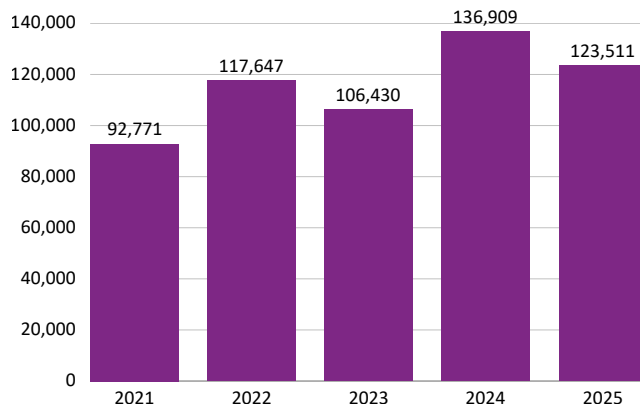


AJ with children's clothing packs from Our Village



Elaine with representative from Five Loaves

Emergency Relief Value (AU\$)



5+ years of financial hardship services...

FINANCIAL COUNSELLING

John* was the victim of a serious assault that restricted his ability to work due to significant physical injuries and ongoing psychological trauma. He also experienced poor mental health, substance abuse and gambling in the wake of the assault.

John was eventually able to return to full-time employment. Unable to receive any Centrelink payments, he relied on his savings. Once these were depleted, he accessed many small loans, 'buy now, pay later' and wage advance facilities which led him into an unmanageable debt spiral. John reached out to the National Debt Helpline for help once he realised he had completely lost control of his finances. Juggling his debts was no longer sustainable and he could not see a way out of his dire financial situation.

Given his large numbers of debts and vulnerabilities, John was provided with intensive Financial Counselling Support. John was assisted in negotiating with creditors to secure slight reductions in debts and long term—and most importantly—affordable and sustainable payment arrangements.

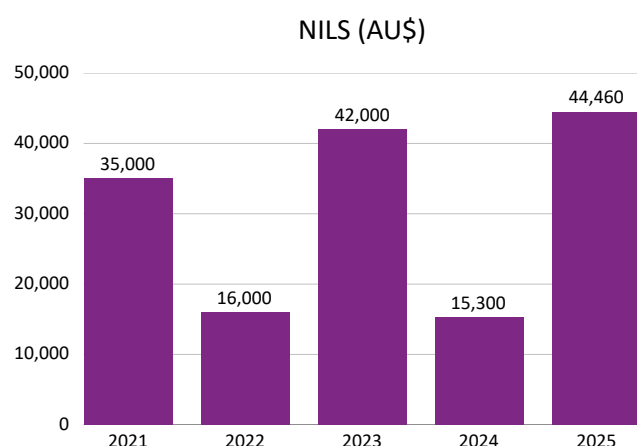
NO INTEREST LOANS SCHEME (NILS)

23 year old Mary* contacted PPCG seeking a NILS loan to help fund a psychologist assessment for autism. She receives a fortnightly Centrelink Job Seeker payment of \$811 of which \$255 goes towards rent. After paying her other expenses there was insufficient funds to cover the \$1900 assessment.

Mary explained that many children, particularly girls, miss out on receiving an autism assessment and diagnosis. Receiving an assessment was very important to Mary. She believed it could be life-changing and that a diagnosis could provide a pathway to accessing support and would also be a validation of the feelings she has had since childhood.

Working through her budget and bank statements, PPCG NILS volunteer Patrick saw that each fortnight Mary's expenditure exceeded her income and that she was funding the shortfall through Afterpay loans. After identifying that she was spending more on eating out than cooking at home, he advised her to make a small adjustment to this trend could potentially free up enough money to allow her to apply for a loan. They agreed that she should try adjusting her spending for a month to see if she could manage. This she did and as a result they determined that she could now balance her budget even with the loan repayments. The NILS application was submitted and approved and Mary was able to receive an autism assessment.

*names and identifying details have been changed



"I can be housed but still be homeless"
- person with lived experienced

INCLUSIVE

Build Individual and Community Capacity

FROM CLIENT TO ENGAGED COMMUNITY MEMBER

Vicci is a passionate and dedicated volunteer at Port Phillip Community Group (PPCG), whose journey reflects the power of community connection and personal empowerment. A resident of public housing, Vicci first engaged with PPCG when she was new to the area and seeking support.

Through PPCG, Vicci received vital information, referrals, and support that helped her settle into the community. She speaks highly of the team, describing them as empathetic, knowledgeable, and efficient. During this time, she also accessed Uniting’s Disability Employment Services, conveniently co-located within the same building.

Inspired by the care and assistance she received, Vicci chose to give back to the organisation by becoming a volunteer. With PPCG’s training and encouragement, she launched a community-led initiative in her high-rise building, fostering local engagement and support.

Vicci completed a Community Support Worker course run by CisVic which helped her to expand the Chatty Cafe initiative and run her own community-based programs.

Her commitment has created meaningful opportunities for connection and inclusion among her neighbours.

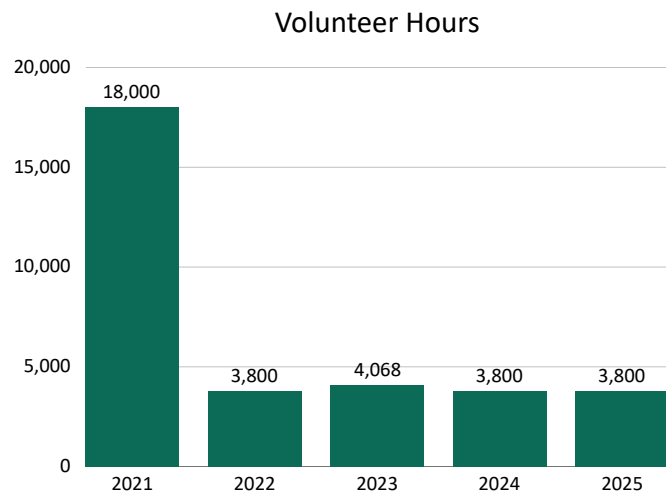
Reflecting on her journey, Vicci describes her experience with PPCG in three words:

*“valued,
respected,
and happy”*

Her story is a powerful reminder of the impact that inclusive community organisations can have on individual lives.



Vicci at the volunteer day event



NEIGHBOURHOOD CONNECT TALKS

This year, Alma Road Community House (ARCH) began hosting monthly group information sessions on topics of interest chosen by community members. In collaboration with our partners, community members have received information on:

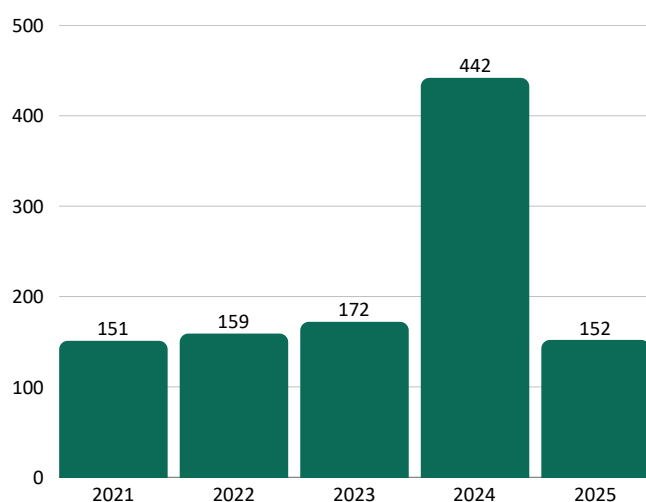
- Fall Prevention (delivered by Walking Tall)
- Accessing Financial Information (delivered by Services Victoria)
- Building Muscle Longevity (delivered by Walking Tall)
- Aged Pension Information (delivered by Services Australia)
- Healthy Feet (delivered by Bolton Clarke)
- Understanding Aged Care (delivered by Services Australia)

PIER FISHING AT ARCH WITH ELWOOD ANGLERS

The Elwood Anglers are new partners who stepped in when the program was in hiatus due to staff shortages. They provide reels, bait, and instruction to anyone who needs it. The sessions accommodate up to 20 participants.

With outdoor activities affected by winter weather, The Elwood Anglers trialled an indoor fishing session at ARCH. This well-received workshop on knot tying was followed by a session on fishing techniques for Port Phillip Bay.

Education: Number of Participants



PLANT HARVEST EAT

Plant Harvest Eat is a new 10-week course at ARCH designed to provide basic gardening and food production skills in a supported and fun environment.

The course is targeted towards women and carers living in high density housing who may not have space for growing edible plants at home. It includes a mixture of theory, practical exercises and field trips. It is a fantastic program for those looking for opportunities to build confidence, make new friends and maybe take a step towards further study or gaining employment.

Some of the course highlights include:

- ➔ A visit from David Southwick, State Member in the Victorian Parliament, for the re-vegetation activity
- ➔ An indigenous planting session with plants from the Bili Indigenous Plants Nursery, Port Melbourne
- ➔ An Insect Hotel Workshop and Plum Tree Pruning Session
- ➔ A tour of Veg Out St Kilda, Community Garden
- ➔ Building connections with other community gardens including the neighbouring Te Arai Street and Christ Church Community Centre in St Kilda
- ➔ Plus, lots of hands on activities, quizzes and the sharing of garden stories while here at ARCH

This program is sponsored by VicHealth and supported by the City of Port Phillip.



FROM VOLUNTEER TO STAFF MEMBER

When Kerrie first walked through the doors of Port Phillip Community Group, she was simply a newcomer to Melbourne looking to make local connections, what she found was something more profound: a pathway to growth and meaningful community impact.

Kerrie's initial foray into volunteering at PPCG began with the Share the Food program. It was when she discovered the Nutritional Education and Skills Training program that her true passion ignited. Here, she could combine her love of food and nutrition with her educational background, helping adult learners develop practical cooking skills.

The transition wasn't always smooth. "My experience is dealing with teenagers, and I learned to step back with adult learners," Kerrie reflects. This adaptation required her to develop entirely new skills and to learn to work with different age groups.

The pivotal moment came when an opportunity arose to back fill for the trainer. "I felt appreciated, like I was doing something... helping other people and receiving good feedback," she recalls. This experience of stepping up and taking responsibility revealed her natural leadership abilities and deep understanding of the program needs.

In her professional role at PPCG, Kerrie designed a program supporting families and carers of primary school children, helping them build skills and knowledge that could lead to further education and employment. Her volunteer insights proved crucial in understanding "the type of participants we

were going to be targeting and the challenges" they would face.

Today, Kerrie's journey stands as a testament to the transformative power of volunteering. Her confidence, rebuilt after completing her teaching career, now serves as inspiration for others hesitant to take that first step.

Her message to prospective volunteers is refreshingly simple: "Give it a go; you don't know 'til you try" and "Try it once and see how you go." For those uncertain about their qualifications, she offers practical wisdom:

"Volunteer in something you enjoy doing in everyday life or want to learn about."



INFORMATION SUPPORT and REFERRALS

Amrita* is an asylum seeker and victim-survivor of family violence, living with the ongoing impacts of complex trauma. With no income, no eligibility for Centrelink, and no family support in Australia, she faced immense challenges alone. Following a mental health crisis that resulted in the temporary removal of her young child from her care, Amrita was referred to Port Phillip Community Group (PPCG) after being discharged from hospital.

Her immediate goal was to stabilise her situation and gain employment, so she could be reunited with her child. Over a series of support sessions, PPCG worked alongside Amrita to address multiple barriers and connect her with essential services.

Through PPCG's support, Amrita was able to:

- Advocate to her housing provider and apply for a rental hardship agreement to maintain safe and stable housing
- Receive a referral to community legal services to help resolve urgent visa and immigration issues
- Access transport support through a successful Queen's Fund application, enabling her to attend scheduled visits with her daughter
- Receive regular food parcels to ensure she could feed herself and bring meals during visitations
- Connect with local food relief agencies and asylum seeker services for broader support and long-term assistance

Amrita is optimistic about regaining an income and continuing her path toward reunification with her daughter.

Amrita's journey is a testament to the importance of holistic, compassionate support—meeting people where they are and walking alongside them as they rebuild.

*name and identifying details have been changed



WELL-GOVERNED

Strengthen Our Organisation

DIGITISATION AND STAFF TRAINING



We have invested in the digitisation of our phone systems and room hire services in the past year to increase efficiency and to better capture data in order to improve our services. Space2Co platform has greatly improved our marketing reach for room hire with increased utilisation over the last six months.



We implemented the first phase of 3CX web-based phone system which has enabled us to monitor call volumes. The second phase is planned for completion in the next financial year.



We have invested in our people by providing leadership development to team leaders and targeted training to staff on psychological safety.

Following on from our inaugural staff survey last year, all staff completed a benchmarked psychological safety survey.



Picture of staff, board and volunteers celebrating volunteer week in May 2025

PPCG

Highlights By Number

OUR SERVICES DELIVERED CONTRACTED HOURS OF SERVICE:

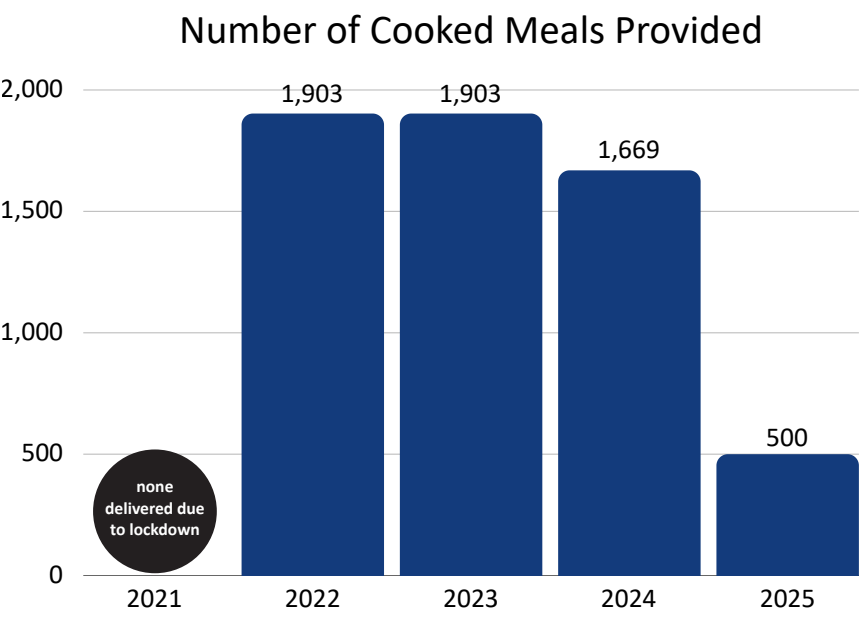
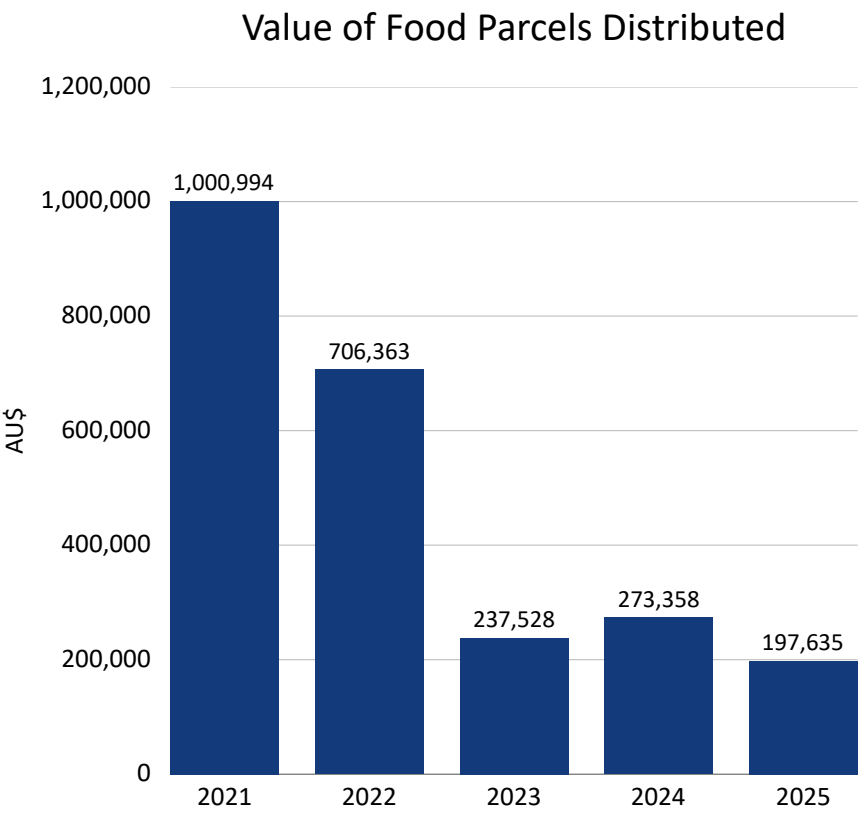
INSTANCES OF SERVICE	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
INFORMATION REFERRAL AND SUPPORT	35,586	33,710	26,571	30,422	34,143
FINANCIAL COUNSELLING	6,317 hours	5,540 hours	2,100 hours	1,748 hours	1,695 hours
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INCLUSION	4,832 hours	5,674 hours	1,300 hours	7,706 hours	43,890 hours
EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT	9,319 hours	1,152 hours	12,575 hours	10,080 hours	9,160 hours

DEMOGRAPHICS: ALL DIRECT ACCESS PROGRAMS 2025

%	EDUCATION	RECREATION ACTIVITY GROUP	INFORMATION AND REFERRAL SUPPORT	FINANCIAL COUNSELLING
UNDER 65	93	85	84	DNC*
OVER 65	7	15	16	DNC*
MALES	40	44	39	35
FEMALE	52	54	60	65
OTHER/NOT STATED	12	2	0.5	DNC*

*Data not collected

OUR IMPACT:





YOU CAN HELP MAKE A DIFFERENCE



MAKE A DONATION

online: ppcg.org.au/support-us/donation

in-person: drop into any of our offices



CONTACT INFO

info@ppcg.org.au

St Kilda
161 Chapel St,
St Kilda
VIC 3182
T. 8598 6600

Port Melbourne
333 Bay St,
Port Melbourne
VIC 3207
T. 9209 6350

**Alma Road Community
House (ARCH)**
200 Alma Rd,
St Kilda East VIC 3183
T. 9525 8746

Share the Food Warehouse
18 Salmon Street,
Fishermen's Bend,
Port Melbourne
VIC 3207