

*Open House*

# ANNUAL REPORT

2022/23

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*A Place to Belong since 1971*



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### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Open House acknowledges the Wurundjeri people,  
the traditional Owners of the land on which Open House operates, and  
we pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging.

We thank them for sharing the land on which we live, work, and learn.



## A WORD FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the 2022-23 Annual Report.

As I think about the year that has been, I am thankful for the incredible contribution made by our dedicated staff and volunteers as we assist Open House participants re-engage with life activities. The post-Covid years have been marked with uncertainty, as our local communities emerge and consider planning for the future and wondering what lies ahead.

As I reflect further, I am reminded of the critical role Open House played during the pandemic, and still plays today in so many lives. During Covid, and now in these uncertain times - as families struggle with cost of living increases, rising rents and increased isolation - the role and messages of Open House are more relevant and needed than ever. This expression of God's love, acceptance and belonging continues to be at the centre of all that we do at Open House. Our relationship-based way of reaching out to those who need a place to belong is significantly different to general support services, which are often time-based, or where access is dependent on eligibility requirements or entitlements. As an expression of our faith in a loving God, everyone who comes to Open House is welcome; all are eligible and have a place at the table.

That's why I am so thankful for your support and financial contribution over the past year. I am aware that for many supporters this contribution has continued over several decades.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the many local agencies that collaborate with Open House, as well as acknowledging the support we receive from local churches, Banyule and Nilumbuk Councils, and State and Federal members of Parliament.

Thank you to our CEO, Paul Burgess, for another year of dedicated loyal leadership. I gratefully acknowledge the support he receives from his partner Theresa and their two boys.

As we look to the year ahead and the increasing demand for services, this report provides an important snapshot of the many people who are living life to the fullest because of your kind support. I trust that if possible, you will continue your generous financial contribution and prayers.



**DR. GEORGE GIULIANI**

## OUR MISSION

To live out **Matthew 25:34-40** & **Matthew 28:18-20**

To give long-term friendship and support to children, young people and adults in our community, particularly those who are disadvantaged or socially isolated.

To give opportunities to people to express themselves, and encouragement if they wish to make positive changes to their lives.

# WELCOME TO OUR 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

This time last year, I predicted that the need for our work would increase, and it has. Over the past twelve months, Open House has carried out **5,535 occasions of service**, which is an **increase of 46%** from the previous year. This has obviously kept everyone involved very busy, but that said, our work is incredibly rewarding. As well, nothing inspires our team more than hearing the transformational stories from our participants and their families about the positive impact Open House is having on their lives.

Occasions of service

**5535**

Up 46%

**250**

Bikes restored and redistributed

**160**

Youth Workshops

**80**

Clubwork sessions

**700**

Community meals served at OH

**Whispers Social Enterprise Cafe:**

**25,000** customer sales  
**33** completed training  
**8** gained employment in the hospitality industry

There are two areas in particular that have had to expand in the last year: our work at Malahang Reserve, and our work in the NDIS space. Due to an increase in demand we are now running our program at Malahang on both Wednesday and Thursday nights from 3:30 - 5:30. Each week the community have the opportunity to engage in a range of sports, grab a hot drink from the coffee cart, and enjoy the ever popular free toasties. As well, they can also get a bike free of charge from the bike hut. This year we have been able to up-cycle and redistribute over 250 bikes for the most needy in our community.

The other area that is expanding rapidly is our work in the NDIS space, primarily in the area of specialist one-on-one services to help people gain the skills required to get them job ready. Seeing the positive changes and growth in the participants involved in this area is simply amazing, which will be expanded on in a new section of this year's report: NDIS.

Our social enterprise café, Whispers, has been running in the Ivanhoe Library for a little over a year. Life in the café is very busy and we pride ourselves on serving awesome coffee. In the last year, we completed over 25,000 customer sales and have trained 33 people, eight of whom have gained employment in the hospitality industry. This has been an incredible year for our team, and I am excited for the year ahead.

Finally, I continue to be blown away by the generosity of supporters and partners who make this work possible. So, I want to once again thank you for being a part of the Open House story, and for helping us to give people a place to belong.

## THANK YOU

I am fortunate to be helped in my work by some exceptional people, with special thanks going out to:

### Open House Board of Directors

Dr George Giuliani, Chairman

Phillip Sporton, Deputy Chairman and Chairman of Investment and Safety and Risk Committees

Rev. Melanie Moore, Risk Committee

Caroline Quinn, Chair of Remunerations and Nominations Committee

Rosalind Look, Chair of Fundraising Committee

Alexandra Kajewski, Fundraiser (appointed 24/05/23)

Barry Gunning (resigned 22/02/23)

### Open House Team

Peter Choma, Operations Manager

Steve Marks, Youth Manager

Wendy Farrington, Clubwork Manager

Ann-Marie Fife, Pastoral Care Support Worker

Mia Robinson, Volunteer & Administration Coordinator

Nathan Turner, Program Support Worker

Naomi Kop, Youth Worker

Tim Womersley, Youth Worker

Lyndsay Root, Adult Program Support Worker

### Open House Volunteers

To our fantastic volunteers, too many to mention by name.

Special mention to both Jan Peacock and Glen Bussey who volunteer four days a week.

### Whispers Social Enterprise Team

Caroline Rigby, Café Manager

Gemma Reddington, Barista

Taylah Skene, Barista



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Paul Burgess".

**PAUL BURGESS**  
CEO

OPEN HOUSE

2022/2023



VOLUNTEERS

Even though our team of volunteers are not often in the spotlight, they are the backbone of each and every program and event at Open House: we could not deliver our great community outcomes without their loyalty and hard work. The team at Open House are forever thankful for the time they give.

There is a saying: **"Volunteers do not necessarily have the time to devote to good causes, but they just have the heart."**

Open House is proud to have over 50 volunteers who faithfully give their time and positive energy to serve both the people of Open House and the wider community.

**"I have been volunteering at Open House for just over two and a half years. It's a place where I can come and socialise with a caring group of community-minded people and give something back in return. I bring technical and life skills that I can share and teach to the next generation."**

| Russell P. Bike Shed Volunteer |



The team at Open House are always willing to bring on board volunteers to continue our life changing work. If you want to use your skills and have time to support our local community, please enquire through our website or email Open House at:

**[office@openhousecic.org.au](mailto:office@openhousecic.org.au)**



**MIA**  
**VOLUNTEER**  
**COORDINATOR**





OUR VOLUNTEERS WORKING HARD,  
AND ENJOYING THEMSELVES TOO.



# OPEN HOUSE FINANCIALS

The majority of our operating expenses are staff wages, expenses related to the cost of running programs, and the upkeep of the Open House Macleod site.

It is also important to acknowledge the valuable contribution that our volunteers make. Volunteers are the lifeblood of Open House, and we are proud to have volunteers who selflessly give their time to help us in our cause. Their contribution equated to the equivalent of three full-time staff in 2023.

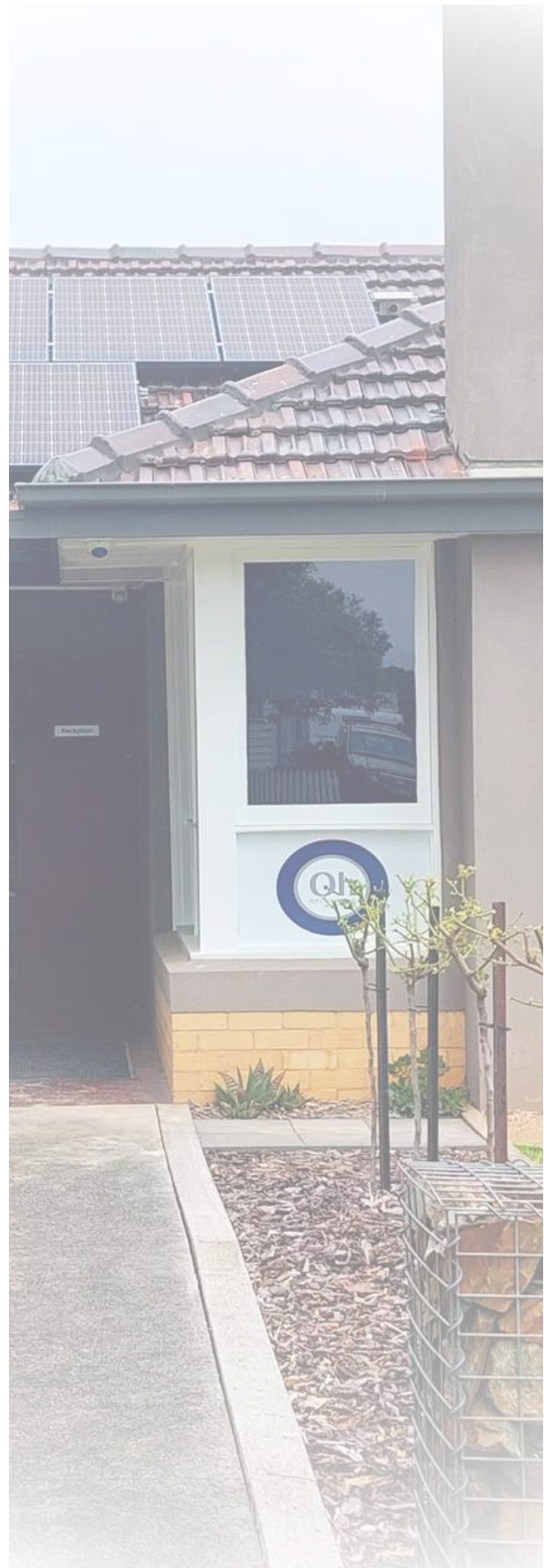
It is because of these volunteers that Open House can provide the vulnerable members of the community with care, support and a place to belong.

For a full set of our audited financials please visit the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission website at [www.acnc.gov.au](http://www.acnc.gov.au)

Should you wish to discuss any of our financials, please feel free to contact Peter Choma at: [pchoma@openhousecic.org.au](mailto:pchoma@openhousecic.org.au), or call the office directly on (03) 9459 7083.

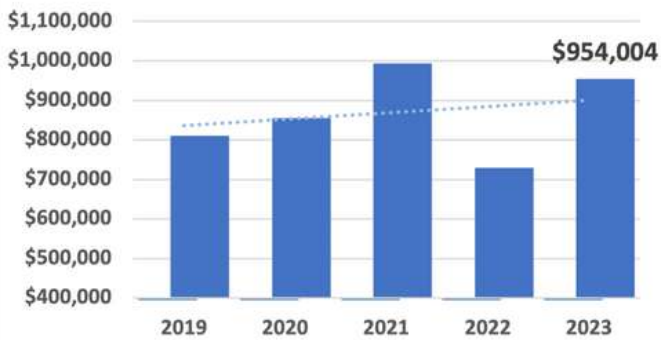


**PETER**  
**OPERATIONS MANAGER**

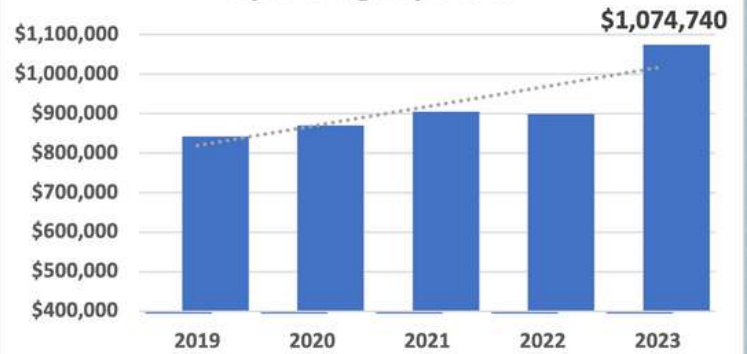


# OPEN HOUSE FINANCIALS

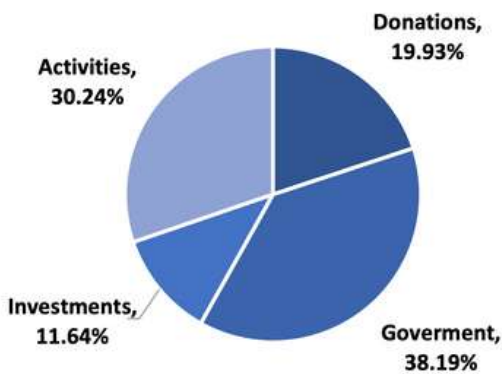
### Operating Revenue



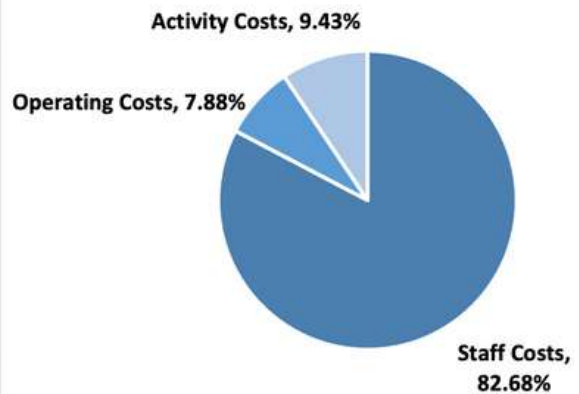
### Operating Expenses



### Operating Income



### Operating Expenses



OPEN HOUSE

2022/2023



YOUTH SERVICES





## Overview of the Year

In the past 12 months, we as a team have had the incredible privilege of witnessing firsthand the astounding accomplishments and heart-warming experiences that our programs have brought to our community. Open House has always been dedicated to friendship, connections and creating a space for everyone to belong, and this year was no exception. The Youth Workshop Mentoring Program, Backyard Sports, and School Holiday Program were the driving forces behind some truly remarkable transformations in the lives of the participants, leaving a lasting impact that touched us deeply.

## Youth Workshop Mentoring Program (YWMP) Highlights

The YWMP proved to be a resounding success, providing a nurturing environment for personal and group projects. The newly refurbished workshop (thanks to Jagajaga Strengthening Communities Program) saw the completion of diverse projects, including toolboxes, welding projects, pickleball bats, chopping boards, a sign for the coffee cart shed, and beehives. Engaging in these hands-on activities empowered the youth and developed their skills and creativity.

Apart from workshop skills, the YWMP also emphasised overall health, leading to improved physical well-being among the participants. The program fostered job-readiness skills through eye-opening experiences such as commercial bakery tours at Bakers Crust and visits to Melbourne Polytechnic and the Victorian Tunnelling Centre, opening exciting prospects in the building and construction industry.

Cooking experiences added a fun dimension to the program, with activities like commercial sausage making and baking hot cross buns (with Training Now), mastering potjie on the fire, taking up the MasterChef challenge, and crafting delicious burritos and pizzas using produce from the community garden. Additionally, the participants took pride in giving back to their community through community work and gardening initiatives.

Some fun activities outside the workshop included attending the Melbourne Formula 1 Grand Prix, visiting the Shrine of Remembrance, and being immersed in a city experience.

## **Backyard Sports (BYS) Highlights**

The BYS program managed to secure additional funding, enabling it to offer a second day per week at Malahang Reserve. This extension was welcomed by the local community and nearby primary schools, who were drawn in by free toasties and the coffee cart, as well as the opportunity to engage in community sports and socialise.

A standout quality of the BYS program was its unwavering commitment to the participants' well-being. The program persisted through all weather conditions, ensuring that the young people always had a supportive and inclusive space to enjoy sports activities and/or receive a free refurbished bike.

## **School Holiday Program Highlights**

The School Holiday Program provided memorable experiences for the youth. Bike rides to the You Yangs and explorations in the Dandenong Ranges allowed the participants to connect with nature and enjoy physical activities. Funfields provided a day of amusement and excitement, and thrift shop experiences encouraged creativity and sustainable practices.

## **Youth Mentoring Programs and Educational Partnerships**

Open House effectively collaborated with several schools throughout the year to deliver Youth Mentoring Programs. These initiatives fostered growth in young people and provided valuable opportunities to engage with education. Among the partner schools were Plenty River College, Macleod College, and various schools in Banyule and Nillumbik Council areas, and students learned about sustainability and healthy eating at Edendale Farm.

## **VCAL Placement**

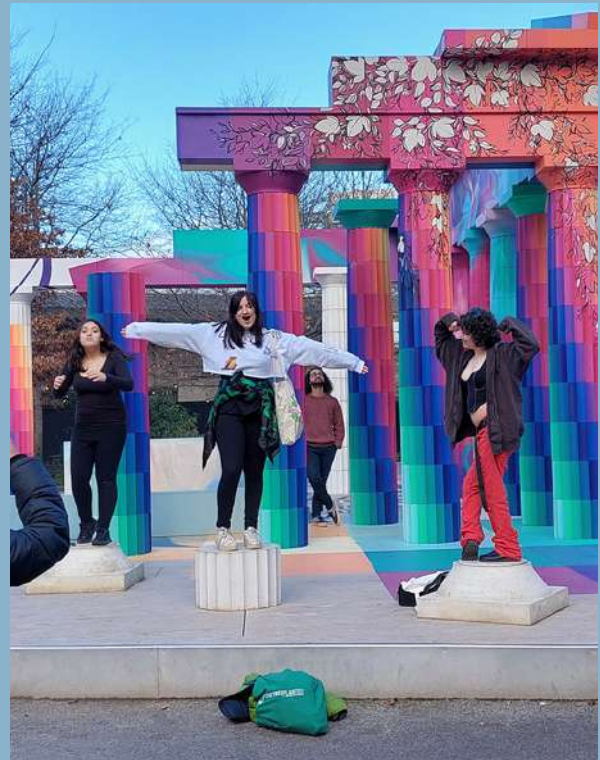
We also offer one-on-one VCAL placements for young people that we have an existing relationship with. Our current student has been involved for over seven years. It has been great to watch him develop his trade skills, and he now has the ability to become a very good trade apprentice.

## **Social Value Outcomes and Impacts**

The impact of our Youth Programs was significant, with various positive outcomes observed. Participants gained essential job-readiness skills, such as hospitality and creative abilities, fostering hope for the future. Additionally, the programs contributed to improved overall health, better diet choices, increased self-esteem and confidence, and enhanced friendships and relationships among the youth in the community.

**STEVE**  
**YOUTH MANAGER**











Clubwork would like to thank the amazing supporters who gave so generously to Open House this financial year. Your support has enabled us to continue this vital ministry that started back in 1971.

This year, Clubwork had a great year. You are never too old to learn new skills; during the year, an 85-year-old participant learnt how to use an electric sewing machine for the first time.

Throughout the year, we welcomed new participants and volunteers; our volunteers inform us that they learn so much from the participants. We continue to get referrals from My Aged Care looking for a Social Support Group for their clients. We were excited to welcome Lyndsay to Open House, who joined us in August as the Adult Support Worker, and brings many gifts and talents to the Clubwork program.

In September, we enjoyed a presentation from Fire Rescue Victoria, informing us how to keep safe at home and check that our electrical appliances are safe to use. We also had our annual "Footy Day" BBQ and quiz, followed by traditional footy food, which is always a favourite!

Throughout the year, the participants eagerly worked on their craft to enter the annual Whittlesea Show. As well, Clubwork received a donation to cover the costs of having "Animals on the Move" visit us. This experience was incredibly rewarding, allowing participants and volunteers to get up close with the farm animals. Many participants had never experienced such love from animals.

The Christmas breakup is always a treat, in which we indulged in all the Christmas delicacies, and heard the story of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.

On our return to Clubwork this year we kicked off with the annual Emergency Training for all staff, volunteers, and participants, which keeps us up to date with CPR and other lifesaving practices, and reminds us that the most important thing to do is call 000.

Shrove Tuesday (Pancake Day) is always fun to celebrate, and we enjoy playing games, cooking, and eating pancakes, followed by Easter celebrations 40 days later. We were also thrilled to have Training Now come and show us how to cook hot cross buns, as well as sausages and chocolates.

The Crime Prevention Officer for Banyule, and Lynn Rawson from Neighbourhood Watch, came to visit and gave us ideas on how to keep ourselves safe in our homes; it was remarkably interesting.

We continue to stay connected with those who cannot attend Open House anymore, as this connection is vital for their wellbeing.

Our annual outing to the Diamond Valley Singers was well received, and we want to thank them for their ongoing support.

**WENDY & LYNSAY  
ADULT PROGRAMS**





OPEN HOUSE

2022/2023



PASTORAL CARE

Oh  
OPEN HOUSE

## Visitation

Open House is definitely making a difference to so many people in our community. In our Visitation Program we can get alongside participants and provide individualised support. This is due to a team of dedicated volunteers who are committed to meeting up with a participant, either weekly or fortnightly. The participants love the visits and the outings. The Visitation Program continues to expand with increasing demand on our services.



## Community Meal

Our community meal, previously held on Tuesday nights, has moved to Thursday lunchtime. This was an easy decision as most of the participants are at a stage in their lives where they are uncomfortable going out at night. The participants are loving the new time slot as it is immediately followed by Bible Fellowship.

## Bible Fellowship

Bible Fellowship is going strong, we have had several new people join this year and have been studying all the books in the New Testament. The meal and Bible Fellowship is a place of friendship and support for our volunteers and participants, in which we all enjoy lunch, singing, Bible studies and occasional outings. We have visited several churches, including St Katherine's, St Georges, Rosanna Christian Church and Uni Hill Church. We also love having the ministers from different churches come and speak at Bible Fellowship.

## Let's Get There Program

Every morning we take the Open House buses to homes in the local area, to take 20 primary-aged students to school. Education through school attendance is so important, and there can be tragic consequences for children who don't get an education. As a result of our bus pick-ups, the students' attendance at school has increased and they are receiving a valuable education. We have enjoyed getting to know the children and their families, are building positive relationships with them, and have been able to provide pastoral support to them when needed. Lastly, we are so thankful to all the volunteers that are assisting with this program and making a valuable difference in the lives of these children.

## Community

There is always so much opportunity to support the community. We have been able to bless families and individuals in need with meals, and provide weekly support to NDIS clients. Every Friday I am at our Whispers café, making myself available to participants and the community for pastoral care.

The highlight of the week is on Thursday afternoons, where we enjoy cooking toasties for the community at Malahang Reserve. It's been a great way to connect with the community and to get to know the children that come every week.

## Student Placements

Over the past year, we have had several high school and university students do their community service or student placement at Open House, from colleges and universities that include Stotts College, Swinburne University, Loyola College, Ivanhoe Grammar, Northside Christian College and Australian Catholic University.

**ANN-MARIE  
PASTORAL CARE**



## *Muriel Rosemary Farrington*

13/08/1927 - 05/06/2023



## We said goodbye to Muriel Farrington

Muriel was such an outstanding woman. Her time at Open House inspired and influenced thousands of people over many years of service. Muriel was gentle, caring, creative, faithful and a blessing to the Open House family, bringing joy and peace. Muriel established our Clubwork program and closely assisted George in the Bible Fellowship program. She was also musical and loved to play her instruments and encourage others to learn, passing on her creative and artistic skills to many people. Muriel saw the best in everyone, and everyone loved her and looked up to her.

We are so thankful for her life, faithfulness and care to many vulnerable people at Open House. We have been so honored to have known Muriel. She will be remembered with gratitude. We know that she is in heaven with her beloved husband George and our saviour Jesus.







A newer venture at Open House has been exploring how we can work more collaboratively with our NDIS participants. We have taken huge strides this year to develop how we help our participants to reach their goals and help them become more independent. For some, this has been through joining our Youth Workshop and Clubwork programs, thereby receiving mentorship and learning new crafts and skills.

These programs give participants a connection to the community and are intrinsic to the Open House mission of giving people a place to belong. Developing our participants is always the number one priority, and in partnership with our Whispers social enterprise café, we have developed a hospitality training program that gives personalised training tailored to individual needs.

**NATHAN**  
**PROGRAM SUPPORT WORKER**



OPEN HOUSE

2022/2023



SOCIAL ENTERPRISE -  
WHISPERS

This is the first full year we have been running Whispers, our social enterprise cafe. It has been a steep learning curve, but under Caroline's leadership the cafe is proving to be a very successful venture.

The purpose of Whispers is not just to serve great coffee, but to also be a safe training space for those who struggle to gain employment. It is also a place where friendships are formed and where the community can receive support.

### A few numbers:

- 25,000 customer sales
- 33 people have gone through our training program
- 8 have gained employment in the hospitality industry

### Training Process:

We develop a unique training plan developed to suit the individual needs of the trainee, with no fixed time for the trainees to complete it. Each person starts at our Macleod site where they learn the basics of hospitality including all aspects of making coffee, the point of sale system, and food safety; during this time there are plenty of opportunities to make coffee for people on site. After they are confident in making coffee at Open House, they then have the opportunity to hone their skills in the coffee cart. The final step is to gain experience at Whispers, after which we help them in their employment pathways if they so choose.



# WHAT OUR CUSTOMERS HAVE SAID

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"WHEN WE ARRIVED, ALL THE TABLES WERE FULL. THE STAFF WERE INCREDIBLY ACCOMMODATING AND PULLED OUT MORE TABLES AND CHAIRS TO SET US UP WITH A SPACE TO SIT OUTSIDE. THEY WERE VERY FRIENDLY AND MADE US ALL FEEL INCREDIBLY WELCOME, GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND TO SET US UP WITH A GREAT SPOT TO SIT AND ENJOY OURSELVES. OVERALL, JUST FANTASTIC AND MADE THE WHOLE EXPERIENCE GREAT."

"The staff are wonderful, and the coffee is perfect. Going to the library and getting a coffee from Whispers makes my day. There's always a warm atmosphere, it is a lovely part of the community."

"I can't help but feel that the coffee always tastes better when you know that it is directly supporting and impacting the community. I love coming to this little café and make it a priority to pop past once a week and combine a coffee or toastie with some work. For me, the best part is the atmosphere. I love working in spaces which are community driven and the library here is great for that. Fast Wi-fi, heating and just a nice communal vibe. Kid friendly and tables outdoors as well as indoors, perfect for sunny days. The toasties are yummy and always taste fresh, coffee is good too."

"I'm partial to a wagon wheel cookie. Sure, they take a little longer than usual to come out but I believe that is a fair price to pay in order to help provide people in the community with a chance at work experience. Service is always with a smile!"

"There are plenty of fast paced, high volume cafes in the area... Personally, I'd rather a feel good coffee than a fast one. Also, prices are standard if not more reasonable than usual."

OPEN HOUSE

2022/2023

WHISPER



**We have a diverse range of partners who have committed their resources to support our mission. They share our vision and are determined to make the world a better place.**

**We sincerely thank all our partners for their generosity and ongoing support.**

Anglican Men's Society  
Anthony Carbines MP (Ivanhoe)  
Banyule City Council  
Banyule Network of Uniting Churches  
Bendigo Bank Community Foundation  
Bill Brady Organisation  
Banyule & Nullimbik Youth Service Network  
Burra Squares  
Charles Latrobe Secondary College  
Concord School  
Diamond Valley College  
EACH (WILD)  
Edendale Farm  
Eltham High School  
Empower Church  
Fairfield Trust - The Properties Corporation of the Churches of Christ  
Gospel Resource  
Greensborough College  
Gresswell Uniting Church  
Heidelberg Court Fund  
Inger Rice Foundation  
Iris & Ken Baldwin Foundation  
Ivanhoe Grammar School  
Kate Thwaites MP (Jagajaga)  
Macleod College  
Melbourne Polytechnic  
Miles Real Estate - Ivanhoe and Rosanna  
Montmorency College  
Mr Macleod Cafe  
Mr Martins Cafe  
Nillumbik Shire Council  
Olympic Villiage Primary School  
Planetshakers  
Plenty River College  
Rosanna Baptist Church  
Rosanna Uniting Church  
Sandi Foundation  
School Focus Youth Service  
Sideshow Burgers  
Soroptimist International of Deakin University  
St George's East Ivanhoe  
St James Ivanhoe  
St John's Diamond Creek  
St John The Beloved Liberal Catholic Church  
St Katherine's St Helena  
St Pius X Primary School  
The Order of St John of Jerusalem  
The SALT Foundation  
The Salvation Army  
Training Now Pty Ltd  
T-Bike  
Uni Hill Church  
Uniting Church Ivanhoe & Heidelberg  
Victoria Police  
William Angliss (Vic) Charitable Fund

# WAYS TO PARTNER WITH OPEN HOUSE

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## DIRECT DEPOSIT

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**Account Name:** Open House Christian  
Involvement Centres  
**BSB:** 633 000  
**Account Number:** 155054588

## CREDIT CARD

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Please visit:  
[www.openhousecic.org.au/donate](http://www.openhousecic.org.au/donate) or  
scan the QR code.



## CHEQUE

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Please make all cheques out to:  
**Open House Christian Involvement Centres**  
67-71 Strathallan Road, Macleod VIC 3085

## JOIN OUR MAILING LIST

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## HIRE OUR COFFEE CART

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We love our coffee here at Open House, and we have an incredible coffee cart that can be hired, along with a barista. The coffee cart is a great addition to any event, and the funds raised through the hiring go back into supporting the life-changing work of Open House.

Please email or call the office for enquiries regarding hiring our coffee cart.

## HIRE OUR HALL

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We also hire out our hall space.  
Please contact us for more information.





*A Place to Belong since 1971*

**TACKLING SOCIAL ISOLATION AND GIVING  
PEOPLE A PLACE TO BELONG SINCE 1971.**

**67-71 Strathallan Road, Macleod VIC 3085  
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