



# WCC ANNUAL REPORT 2014-15



Whittlesea Community Connections is a not-for-profit incorporated association and an income tax organisation endorsed as a Public Benevolent Institution (PBI) and Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR).

ABN 49 881 724 827  
Reg. No. A0008867P

## CONTACT

Shop 111 Epping Plaza  
Cnr Cooper & High Sts  
Epping, VIC 3076  
03 9401 6666

[admin@whittleseacommunityconnections.org.au](mailto:admin@whittleseacommunityconnections.org.au)  
[facebook.com/whittleseacommunityconnections](https://facebook.com/whittleseacommunityconnections)  
[www.whittleseacommunityconnections.com.au](http://www.whittleseacommunityconnections.com.au)

WCC acknowledges the traditional owners of the land on which we provide our services, the Wurundjeri Willum Clan of the Kulin Nations. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present, and express our hope for reconciliation, justice and the recognition of the ongoing living culture of all Aboriginal people.

1392

family  
violence  
reports

» 11 % increase

330,000 predicted  
pop. by 2036



194,500

population in 2015

3rd FASTEST GROWING MUNICIPALITY IN VIC.

158 NEW RESIDENTS / WEEK

63 NEW BIRTHS / WEEK

35 % of young  
people 0-25 yrs

> 32 %  
greater Melb.

43 % speak a language  
other than English at home

Migrants from more than 140 countries

40 %  
of residents on  
a low income

Traditional custodians  
Wurundjeri Willum Clan

4th highest Aboriginal  
population in Metro Melb

1125 people



\$100M+  
lost to pokie machines

\$687 per adult  
per capita  
» 6 % increase

34 %  
report good health  
Vic av. 47 %



47 %

of over 25s tertiary qualified

» 56 % vic average

10 % Volunteer  
16 % greater Melb.

862 ASYLUM SEEKERS ON  
BRIDGING VISAS

OUR  
COMMUNITY

# CONTENTS

3 .....	Our Community	26 .....	The Power of Partnership
5 .....	The Year in Review	27 .....	Concise Financial Report
6 .....	CEO and President's Report	30 .....	Independent Auditor's Report
8 .....	About Us	31 .....	Our Board
12 .....	Client Services Report	32 .....	Our Staff
15 .....	Settlement Services Report	33 .....	Our Volunteers
19 .....	Legal Services Report	35 .....	Funders and Supporters
22 .....	Media and Advocacy	36 .....	Get Involved
24 .....	Special Projects Report		

# THE YEAR IN REVIEW

ASSISTANCE PROVIDED ON



18,937

OCCASIONS



24 people provided with loan to set up private rental

= \$20,000

in no interest loans

LEGAL FUNDING  
RESTORED

ASYLUM SEEKERS



379

clients assisted with FAMILY VIOLENCE

= 7 clients per week



26,075

VOLUNTARY HOURS =



\$450,837

WORTH OF SERVICES delivered by VOLUNTEERS

14% revenue increase

6,325 attended GROUP ACTIVITIES

support groups training information sessions



PARTNERSHIPS

HUGE VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT

300+

LOCAL PEOPLE



# CEO AND PRESIDENT'S REPORT

*As an organisation with its roots and aspirations firmly embedded in the communities we serve, our task is not only to respond to the growing demand for our services and programs, but also to ensure that we contribute to developing the resilience, health and cohesiveness of our community. From the services and programs we deliver, to the way we deliver them and the partnerships we nurture and cherish, our goal is to enable those who live, work, study and volunteer in Whittlesea to come together to work to achieve a community that is inclusive, a community that supports those who are disadvantaged and a community able to advocate for its own needs and aspirations.*

This year Whittlesea Community Connections faced and rose to numerous challenges. We grew our annual turnover by **14** per cent, and assisted a community member on more than **18,937** occasions including individuals, families, young people, new migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. And through the generous contribution of more than **300** volunteers, we provided community transport for **8,386** people, we supported **1,733** people in financial hardship, assisted with more no-interest loans to prevent homelessness and helped place more than **941** local people into volunteering roles. Our work in responding to the scourge of family violence has been intensified and we supported more than **379** people experiencing family violence. Our legal team assisted **1,961** people with legal information, advice and casework. Our community information and referral program fielded more than **4,588** enquiries from local people, enabling them to find the agency and services they need to meet their needs and achieve their personal goals.



**JEMAL AHMET, CEO**

Going forward, our challenges are many. By the time you read this report we would be busy attempting to minimise cuts to our emergency relief services imposed by the Federal Government, working to determine how we will manage impending Federal Government cuts to our community legal services and proposed cuts to our funding levels imposed by the City of Whittlesea. All of this within the context of increasing service demands and one of the fastest rates of population growth in Australia. Though we greet these cuts with deep disappointment, we are undaunted in our pursuit of our vision and mission and in our unwavering belief that our strength comes from our connection and relevance to our community and not merely from how much money we receive from funding bodies. Whittlesea Community Connections will approach its future as it has its past – taking its lead from the interests, needs and aspirations of our community and guarding our independence in advocating for these with all levels of government and beyond.

Establishing and nurturing meaningful and successful partnerships will continue to be a key feature of our work. Our already important relationships have been cemented more recently with key local and regional agencies. A funding relationship with Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre for the delivery of settlement



**MAUREEN CORRIGAN, PRESIDENT**

services for new migrants and refugees holds great potential for our work with this cohort. Our long-held relationship with Plenty Valley Community Health has been further strengthened and we look forward to formalising a documented partnership which commits both organisations to supporting each other and collaborating to increase our collective impact locally. Similarly, we look forward to greater collaboration and engagement with the Brotherhood of St Laurence as it increases its service and program delivery in Whittlesea. Our Community Legal Service has been developing another exciting partnership with La Trobe University and we look forward to working with the University to expand access to justice for our local community in the coming year.

In the years to come, the not-for-profit sector as a whole will face growing pressure. Government imperatives to streamline its own work and rationalise to save money through greater efficiencies may be achieved at the expense of our sector. Our sector will need to be strong, will need to understand when the interests of the community should be put ahead of the interests of governments and when our independent voices need to be fully exercised.

Community organisations (particularly those that are truly community-based) need to earn that name. To build and maintain the



trust of local communities involves speaking for positive social change and this involves standing up for what is fair and just, even when that attracts criticism and worse still threats of withdrawal of funding.

*If our agendas are to remain the agendas of our communities rather than that of our funding bodies our independence must be boldly asserted and no more so than when it is questioned or challenged.*

In the spirit of these thoughts, we would like to thank our broader community, including our growing list of Association members, for the love and support they have shown us throughout this period. We are in no doubt that this support will be an invaluable inspiration to us in the many good and tough times that lie ahead.

Finally, we wish to thank Whittlesea Community Connections' Board Members for their contributions to the agency in the past 12 months. It has been a year that has involved dealing with hard and complex issues, and we are greatly appreciative of the time, expertise and commitment they have devoted to the agency. We would like to thank the staff and volunteers for the quality, breadth and depth of their contribution to the agency's work.

Our 42nd Annual Report is an overview of the services, programs and achievements of Whittlesea Community Connections in the period 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015. We are proud of the work and contributions of our volunteers, staff and Board throughout this period and invite you to read in more detail the specific accounts from our various teams. We hope you enjoy this report and the stories it tells of our clients, of our purpose, of our volunteers and of our staff.



# WHITTLESEA COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Is a Not for Profit community organisation in the municipality of Whittlesea in Melbourne's outer north. We have been a core Whittlesea agency for 42 years, expanding our programs and services to meet the needs of our community

## OUR PURPOSE

WCC offers services and programs:

To address disadvantage in the community

To promote community participation and involvement

## OUR SERVICES

- ◀ Community Information & Referral
- ▶ Emergency Relief
- ◀ Social Work Case Management
- ▶ Community Transport
- ◀ Tax Help
- ▶ Volunteer Resource Service
- ◀ Whittlesea Community Legal Service
- ▶ Settlement Casework
- ◀ Settlement Youth Services
- ▶ Settlement Social Support Groups
- ◀ Women in Work Childcare Social Enterprise
- ▶ Road Safety Programs
- ◀ Whittlesea Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Family Violence Project
- ◀ Whittlesea Interagency Taskforce on Gambling Project

## OUR VISION

WCC's vision is for a Whittlesea in which people and agencies work together to make a positive difference to their community, ensuring that everyone has equal access to the community's resources and services.

## OUR VALUES

### Self Determination

We support individuals and communities in making choices and decision that best meet their own needs

### Independence

We value and guard our independence, including the right to comment and advocate on government policy

### Not-for-Profit

We provide high quality services that are free at the point of delivery to residents of Whittlesea

### Confidential

We provide services in a manner that protects clients' and community residents' privacy and confidentiality

### Non-Judgmental

We provide services that are impartial and supportive of all forms of diversity

### Diversity

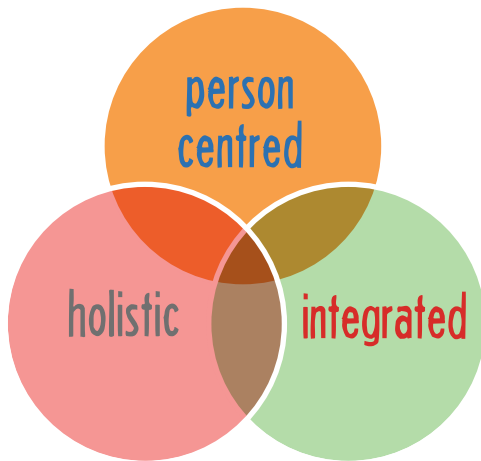
We value the diversity of Whittlesea and commit to strengthening inclusiveness in all aspects of our work



## OUR APPROACH

We believe in:

- ◀ Building stronger, more **resilient** communities
- ▶ Supporting the most **vulnerable** and **disadvantaged**
- ◀ Seeking **effective solutions** to community issues
- ▶ Encouraging and **empowering everyone** to participate to improve their own lives and the lives of others
- ▶ Delivering **high quality, flexible** services that are:



Making a  
**REAL** Difference Everyday

## OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

### 1. Greater Access to Resources and Services

WCC will support a growing and changing community to access appropriate and integrated services and resources.

### 2. Positive Social and Generational Change

We will improve people's lives and life chances, and contribute to the development of stronger and more resilient communities.

### 3. Greater Capacity and Responsiveness

WCC will substantially increase its organisational capacity, sustainability and responsiveness



*" I love helping people get their licence. They are so appreciative, they never forget me. I still receive, phone calls, messages asking how me and my family are. They also keep me updated with what happens in their lives. I have met many people from different backgrounds and ages and feel very blessed.*



*" The staff at WCC have, without exception, been encouraging and welcoming to me and this is why I will continue to offer my services when I can as a volunteer with WCC.*



*" I love coming to WCC to volunteer every week, without fail. When I cannot get there for a particular reason, I feel bereft!*

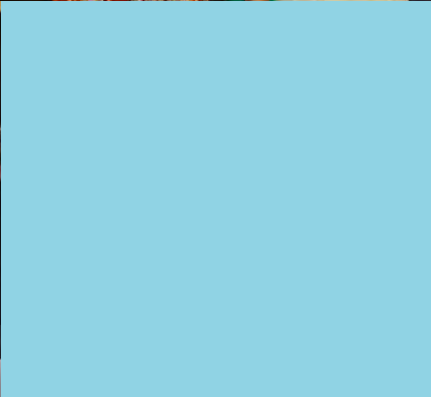






*"From the very first day I never felt like an 'outsider'; everyone in the agency was very welcoming and eager to share their expertise with me. WCC is doing a very impressive job in engaging the community and increasing the local connections of emerging communities."*

*"Love the thought of helping others and passing on the knowledge I have acquired in my lifetime."*



*"Volunteering at WCC has helped me empathize. Without empathy, our communities could not function and injustice would continue to grow. I am proud to be part of an organization that works to restore justice in our world."*





## CLIENT SERVICES

The Client Services team provides a range of programs and services including an information, support and referral service to connect our community to the people, services and organisations they need.

Through emergency relief and case management services, we provide financial and other support to those experiencing hardship. This includes our successful housing brokerage project which helps people access the private rental market through the provision of no interest loans.

Whittlesea Connect Community Transport Service provides transport for disadvantaged Whittlesea residents who have trouble getting to health appointments, social groups and other important commitments.

Whittlesea Volunteer Resource Service connects individuals looking for volunteering opportunities with organisations seeking volunteers.

## COMMUNITY INFORMATION AND REFERRAL

Our community information volunteers have been busy ensuring community members had access to services, community groups and other activities in the local area.

WCC partnered with Community Information and Support Victoria this year to deliver our own 9 week course for our new volunteers. The certified course prepares our volunteers for working with vulnerable clients and ensures they have the confidence to support people seeking assistance. 7 students graduated from the course, most of whom are still volunteering with WCC.

**Highlight:** This year, our International Women's Day celebration was held at the City of Whittlesea offices. A new award structure was adopted to ensure that all nominees were recognized rather than just those who received awards. Congratulations to the 14 women who were acknowledged for the amazing contributions they have made to the local community.

## ACHIEVEMENTS

\$160,834	Distributed in Emergency Relief
7,064	Community transport trips
4,600	Community information contacts made
1,733	Emergency relief assessments made
1,099	Casework appointments provided
940	Community members assisted towards volunteering
906	People registered for Community Transport
448	Tax help appointments provided
352	Community group trips provided
280	Individuals assisted with intensive casework
178	Local volunteers trained
50	Registered organisations

## EMERGENCY RELIEF AND CASEWORK SUPPORT

During 2014-15, our ER volunteers assisted clients with a range of challenges including access to food, medication, education expenses and housing costs to name a few. We accessed a further \$27,000 in discretionary funds to support clients with access to medical equipment, whitegoods, baby items and other essentials.

This year, ER services across the nation took a hit with the national budget for Emergency Relief Services decreasing by around 20%. This will no doubt have an impact on the level of assistance we are able to provide to community members and has caused great concern and anxiety across the sector.



## SOCIAL WORK CASEWORK SERVICE

Our casework service aims to support people who present to us with more complex issues including family violence, homelessness and other housing problems, mental health and asylum seekers needing access to specialised supports.

We continue to facilitate the Whittlesea Emergency Relief (ER) Network, which brings together local ER providers and other interested parties in the City of Whittlesea to share knowledge and resources, and create an avenue for advocating for the needs of our community.

**Highlight:** The Whittlesea ER Network's Christmas drive was a huge success in 2014 with a number of schools, local business and community members donating toys and non perishable items so that local providers were given a boost to help with demand on their services over the Christmas and New Year period.

## HOUSING BROKERAGE AND SUPPORT PROJECT

With Jenny Smith, CEO of the Council to Homeless Persons as our guest speaker, WCC was pleased to launch the Evaluation of the Housing Brokerage and Support Project. Authored by Dr Sharon Parkinson, the evaluation investigated the success of the project to date, and included interviews with clients and other key stakeholders. A number of recommendations were made which WCC is committed to implementing. A copy of the full report can be found on our website.

## TAX HELP

The program run by the ATO and supported by WCC continues to run successfully in ensuring people on low incomes can successfully complete their tax returns. Thank you to our fabulous volunteers, many of whom return to us each tax season, for their contribution.



*“ The support staff are so understanding and you do not feel judged. They treat you with respect and they are polite. They never look down on you – they try to make you smile*

*Housing Brokerage Client*

## WHITTLESEA VOLUNTEER RESOURCE SERVICE

The WVRS faced a number of challenges this financial year, including staffing gaps due to a lack of surety around funding. Thankfully, the WVRS was funded for another 12 months, and Michelle Newton moved from the Settlement Team and stepped in to the role of Volunteer Resource and Training Worker. We assisted community members with access to and information on volunteer opportunities, provided local volunteers with training across a range of topics including food safety and handling, manual handling, first aid and emergency response training.

**Highlights:** With a Community Grant from the City of Whittlesea, the Whittlesea Partnership on Volunteering and Community Engagement developed the *Volunteers of Whittlesea* video, showcasing some of the volunteer opportunities available in the area and promoting volunteerism across the municipality. The video can be viewed at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=asHCJjhUObY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=asHCJjhUObY)



## COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

Demand for Community Transport rose dramatically yet again with a 25% increase in the number of trips being provided this financial year. Trips were provided for individuals to access medical and allied health appointments, social support groups, community activities, early intervention programs and essential shopping. Furthermore, group trips were provided for various community groups participating in support groups and other organised activities. 100% of our services users are residents of the City of Whittlesea.

Two of our drivers completed their Heavy Rigid licence training, increasing our capacity to transport larger groups in our 24 seater vehicle.

## ART CONNECT

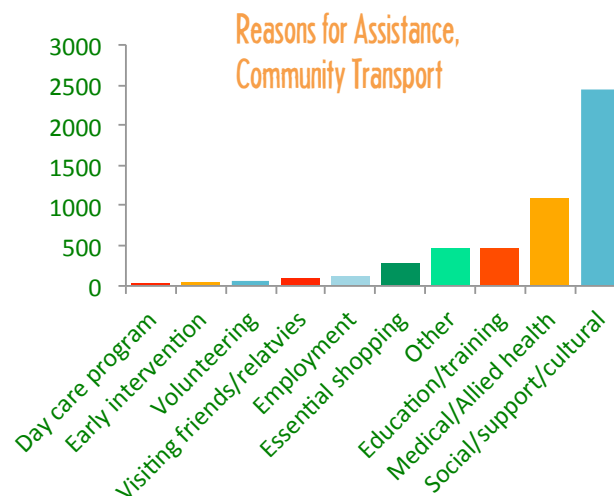
This year, our Art Connect group held 2 exhibitions in partnership with Greenbrook Community House and Thomastown West Primary School to exhibit some outstanding work. Thank you to our incredible volunteers, Siggie, Suzi, Bassem and Maureen for putting the shows together, and to all the participants who showcased their amazing work.

**// No one has helped me in the way that this program has**  
Housing Brokerage Client

**// The fact that we get help in the form of cash here gives me choice and empowers me**  
Emergency Relief Client

## EUCALYPT COMMUNITY MARKET

In April this year, WCC in partnership with Stockland and the Third Place Café established the Eucalypt Community Market. Held monthly, the market provides locals with access to fresh produce, arts and crafts. Community members and local stall holders have shown incredible support for the market, which we hope will continue in to the future.







## SETTLEMENT SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

The Settlement Team at WCC provide a comprehensive range of programs and services supporting Whittlesea's newly arrived migrants and refugees in their first five years of arrival in Australia. A majority of our clients and service users are refugee/protection visa holders and a smaller number are from family visa streams.

### ACHIEVEMENTS

<b>5,174</b>	No of participants in groups and programs
<b>3,981</b>	Hours of volunteer support provided in Settlement Services
<b>1,924</b>	Total referrals to other programs or agencies
<b>1,635</b>	Total client contacts made
<b>397</b>	Newly arrived clients assisted
<b>359</b>	No of settlement group sessions provided
<b>250</b>	Participants at Whittlesea Refugee Week
<b>105</b>	Number of volunteers

### HIGHLIGHTS

Our settlement casework service has assisted newly arrived migrant and refugees with intensive casework support over the past year. Clients were often assisted around the impacts of poor mental health and poor physical health, family separation, unemployment, education pathways, housing vulnerability and legal, migration and citizenship issues. This year WCC entered into a new partnership with Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre to tender successfully for Department of Social Services funding to deliver settlement services in the North and West of Metropolitan Melbourne. The partnership will see a collaborative approach to service delivery from 2015/16 financial year with WCC remaining as the provider for the City of Whittlesea from 2015-18.

### CHALLENGES

- ▶ Many community members significantly affected by violence in their home country with grave fears for immediate family and community members, especially in Iraq and Syria
- ◀ The increasing push for online services excluding many newly arrived community members with low computer literacy, English levels and computer access
- ▶ Use of professional interpreter services by community agencies is still poor at times, which impacts on the confidence of newly arrived communities in accessing services
- ◀ Clients often facing significant barriers to employment with little assistance from funded agencies, which exacerbates housing vulnerability and financial stress
- ▶ Some impact on the perceptions of social cohesion and inclusion that has previously predominated in our region in the current international and Australian political environment

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ADVOCACY

Groupwork, community development and advocacy are backbones of our approach to delivering services to ensure that newly arrived community members are given real opportunities to have a say, make meaningful connections and participate fully in our community.

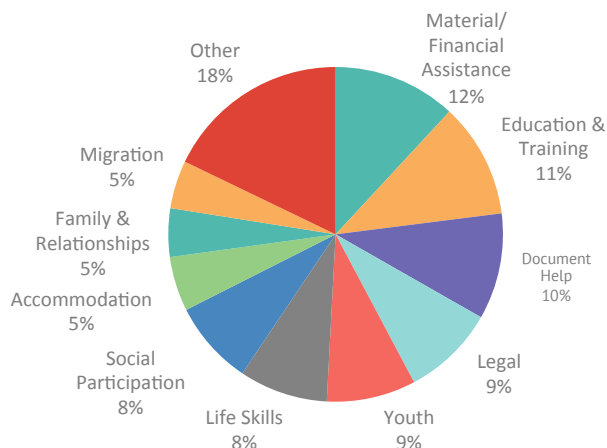
Our four multi-faith, multicultural support groups all grew in membership, strength and diversity with 75-90 participants now attending weekly meetings with the support of dedicated volunteers. Information sessions have included oral health, nutrition, counselling, family violence, parenting, legal issues, road safety, fines and debts and seeking financial support.



## Highlights

- ▶ Continued local orientation bus tours, which have been highly effective in introducing newcomers to a range of relevant services, building trust and familiarity
- ▶ Produced the *Alsediqua* DVD with the Whittlesea Arabic Women's Group and the volunteer expertise of Alex Haynes, highlighting the power of social support at reducing isolation and depression
- ▶ Facilitated strong community involvement in the WCC CALD Family Violence and Iranian Hamdel Projects. Young men engaged strongly in discussions regarding consent, violence and power, gender, respect, and helping friends and family
- ▶ Fed into WCCs Family Violence Royal Commission submission and the particular experiences, needs and barriers faced by CALD communities
- ▶ Met with the Shadow Immigration Minister to discuss the future of Australia's Humanitarian Resettlement Program
- ▶ Began significant engagement with the Melbourne Market in its relocation to Epping and with other local employers, in the bid to support pathways into work
- ▶ Developed a new partnership with Plenty Valley Community Health to deliver services for our Refugee Support Group
- ▶ With the Whittlesea Career Pathways Employment Working Group, ran another highly successful What Employers Want Breakfast with over 100 job seekers, local service providers and employers
- ▶ Distributed The Harmony, our Arabic Newsletter to over 300 community members monthly
- ▶ Strengthened the co-ordinating role of the Whittlesea Multicultural Issues Network, to ensure local service providers collaborate to address the needs of newly arrived communities in our area
- ▶ Facilitated the role of Arabic and Persian speaking women in the Faith in Unity Project. The women went on to organize a highly popular community based event for Refugee Week

## Reasons for Assistance



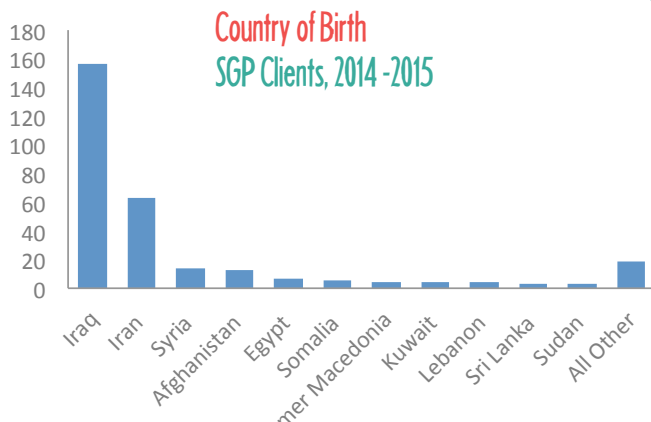


## SETTLEMENT YOUTH PROGRAMS

In 2014-15 we assisted newly arrived young people with a wide range of casework and groupwork, events and programs.

### Achievements

- 250+** Attendants at school holiday and other youth group programs in 2014-15
- 70** Average number of homework club students assisted per week
- 58** Young people supported with individual casework on a range of issues
- 52** Number of volunteer homework tutors from Latrobe Uni, Australian Catholic University the WCC Volunteer Service delivering hundreds of hours of tutoring
- 28** Young people assisted with personal employment support
- 13** Newly arrived young people involved in our Job Confident Youth Employment program including direct contact with employers and online job applications
- 4** Number of homework support programs



### Highlights

- ▶ School holiday programs continued to be a good way to engage isolated newly arrived young people. This year programs included a Zoo trip, Surf Lifesaving day and You Yangs day tour with high attendance rates and good feedback from young people
- ▶ Continued the partnership with the Brotherhood of St Laurence and Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre to deliver the Refugee Action Program (RAP) soccer program and soccer camp to newly arrived young men
- ▶ A new Art Studio holiday program was developed with Thomastown West Primary School for socially isolated students
- ▶ Piloted a popular Healthy Relationships and Wellbeing program with YAMEC students at Melbourne Polytechnic providing information around nutrition, mental health, stress management and fitness
- ▶ Ran additional and well received Little Bugs bike education programs with newly arrived students and their parents in response to school requests

### Youth Connections

Sadly this year saw the end of the Youth Connections Program which had allowed us to support migrant and refugee young people who were at risk of early school leaving into education and employment. We had delivered Youth Connections for a number of years in a consortia arrangement with NMIT however the national program was defunded by the Federal Government and as yet has not been replaced.

Through our DSS and VicRoads funding we were still able to support young people with a range of complex issues however.

*"I always return home more determined to do whatever I can to assist these brave, resilient, positive, hardworking people who have suffered so much just so their families can be safe. They spur me on. They are role models for all of us."*

Volunteer



## WOMEN IN WORK

With the invaluable support of philanthropist Pam Usher and the Sunshine Crocodile Foundation, Women in Work, our Mobile Childcare Service engaged 13 qualified women from migrant and refugee backgrounds to provide 783 hours of care to children whose parents were attending community groups, services and programs this year. Pam will continue her support in the coming year with our efforts to address family violence.

Alongside our regular Friday playgroup with Thomastown West Primary School, WIW also established a second successful multicultural playgroup at Thomastown West Community Hub.



**// Since the days when Australia first became involved in the Iraqi War I have felt an overwhelming need to do something to help refugees. I acknowledge that my own life has been so very privileged, having never known fear, or real poverty or war.**

*Volunteer*

## ROAD SAFETY PROGRAMS

Our road safety programs have gone from strength to strength this year, with the valuable contribution of scores of highly dedicated driver mentors. This year we have welcomed a number of Arabic and Persian speaking mentors who have the capacity to provide first language on road support which is critical to those most recently arrived.

### Achievements

- 1,598** Hours of volunteer mentoring provided to young people with no other access to driving support
- 255** Hours of on-road mentoring support and professional lessons provided to 10 newly arrived adult learners
- 88** Percentage of course participants that obtained their Learner's Permit
- 62** Young people were supported to gain driving practice in the L2P program
- 25** NMIT students from newly arrived background participated in two week long Road Safety Programs
- 17** Learners got their Ps and graduated from the program!
- 5** Road safety info sessions delivered to Farsi, Arabic, Chinese, Macedonian and Vietnamese speakers

## ASYLUM SEEKERS

In 2014-15 WCC supported a growing number of asylum seekers living in our community who are ineligible for settlement support services funded by the Federal Government. More than 800 asylum seekers in our community are living on bridging visas with temporary visa status, restricted access to services and reduced income support eligibility. This makes them one of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in our community.

We have seen a marked increase in the number of asylum seekers seeking our support around financial crisis, requests for basic household goods and material aid, employment support, legal issues, depression and poor mental health, many of whom hold fears for their future and that of their family here or overseas.

A change in the system of support for asylum seekers which has lead to a reduction in available casework in funded services in the past year has impacted negatively on local asylum seekers who are often very vulnerable. Many are sleeping on the floor with no beds or unable to afford food and other basics on a reduced income.

WCC as a generalist provider has the capacity to provide some casework support to asylum seekers, and we will assist anyone in our community in need, regardless of circumstances, however this work remains unfunded.

**// If we had work rights on this visa, I would not be needing this assistance.**

*Asylum Seeker*

# WHITTLESEA COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE

*We have had another successful year in responding to our community's legal needs, representing the interests of those facing many obstacles to accessing the legal system. We have come a long way since our establishment 10 years ago. We have agitated and advocated for increased resources as best we could finding some success along the way. 10 years on, we have expanded our services to more effectively meet population growth and rising community demand. We now employ 7 salaried lawyers who are assisted by more than 40 active para-legal volunteers.*

Prioritising our services to people most in need, the number of people we assisted in 2014-15 grew from the previous year; we opened and finalised more cases and the number of clients we saw through our outreach program increased by a staggering 89%. In total we helped almost 2,000 people in Whittlesea.

## WHAT WE DO

Our legal team provides free legal information, advice and casework to the Whittlesea community. Working to address the barriers that prevent people from accessing the justice system, the team also conducts community legal education and advocates for law reform.

Our approach combines an enhanced legal team working within a successful whole of agency integrated approach to holistically support those needing legal assistance but who are unable to use or pay for private solicitors. For Whittlesea residents, being able to access support for a range of legal matters from a single location can drastically reduce the time, cost and anxiety spent travelling within and beyond the LGA.

Throughout 2014 - 15 legal advice and casework in our day-time, evening and outreach appointments increased on the previous year and we ensured that our lawyers were accessible to as many in our community as resources allowed.



## OUTREACH

Our outreach legal services are an important way in which our legal team extends the availability of services to City of Whittlesea residents throughout the municipality. In addition to our Epping offices we have ensured the continuation of legal provision at Mill Park Community House, Anglicare Victoria in Lalor, Laurimar Community Activity Centre in Doreen, Uniting Care Kildonan in Epping and Plenty Valley Community Health in Whittlesea.



## ACHIEVEMENTS

**1,961** Clients Assisted

**1,498** Legal Advice Provided

**545** Cases finalised

**518** Cases opened

**518** Outreach appointments

## The WCLS and Greensborough Family Relationship Centre Partnership (GFRC)

Our partnership with the GFRC provides a critical avenue for assisting separating parents with who are residents of Whittlesea. This work ensures that local people have access to quality legal advice as they navigate through processes required to arrange for the custody and care of children after separation or divorce. We provide information sessions, advice, casework, and assistance during family mediation and have seen the demand for the services provided by this partnership continue to increase.





## VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers significantly strengthen our ability to respond to the legal needs of our community. With more than 40 active volunteers at any one time our responsiveness is greatly boosted. Para-legal volunteers, many of whom are law students with keen aspirations to learn as much as they can while studying, assist with reception and in-take roles enabling our solicitors to maximise their time addressing the legal issues they are presented with.

We also benefit from the volunteer and pro-bono contribution of qualified lawyers who provide legal advice, information and consultation to residents on our behalf. Our capacity to undertake Casework, increases the numbers which comes off the back of our committed group of volunteers and they form an important role in the expansion of opportunities to access the justice system for many Whittlesea residents.

**We are justly proud of our volunteer team and thank them for their contributions.**

## THE YEAR AHEAD

In 2014-15 we joined with other community legal service organisations nationally to overturn federal government threats to legal service funding. These were direct threats not only to specialist legal service providers but also to many local legal services such as our own. It was with a great deal of relief that the unity of the sector, along with the support of the broader Australian community, forced the Government to a change of heart and the withdrawal of the threat of cuts. However, we approach the 2015-16 financial year without certainty in relation to funding for 2 of our solicitor positions. The funding term for these 2 lawyers ends at the end of June 2016 and current Government policy remains that these contracts will not be renewed. We will continue our advocacy efforts to ensure that we can successfully defend our services and we remain committed to our conviction to grow our team and increase the quantity, quality and breadth of legal work we undertake on behalf of our community.

## COMMUNITY LEGAL EDUCATION

Throughout 2014-15 our legal team provided many community legal education sessions on various legal topics. We completed many Family Violence information sessions, particularly with local culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities, as part of the Whittlesea CALD Communities Family Violence Project; we provided session to a range of community groups covering various topics including family law, wills information sessions and sessions on the services of WCLS to NMIT students.

## LAW REFORM

Our law reform work has continued with our on-going involvement with the Infringements Working Group of The Federation of Community Legal Centres. We have also led the way in promoting the legal needs of those experiencing family violence and our legal team were at the forefront of special projects to tackle the impact of this spiralling and acute issue for our community. Our legal team have been instrumental in informing our responses and submission to the Victorian Family Violence Royal Commission.





## PARTNERSHIP WITH LATROBE UNIVERSITY

The Whittlesea Community Legal Service has had a long relationship with La Trobe University, with many of our para-legal volunteers being current or former students of the University's Law School. The University is keen to establish a professional practice course for its students in partnership with Whittlesea Community Connections and we have committed to work together towards the establishment of a pilot for such a course commencing at the start of the University

year in 2016. We expect to sign a partnership protocol for arrangements to accommodate La Trobe University students seeing clients under the auspices of our legal team and supervised by a La Trobe academic in conjunction with our WCLS Principal Solicitor. The prospect of bringing the University into a real world clinical setting is exciting for the students, the University and WCC alike. We are very happy to be a part of bringing such a project to fruition.

## TARGETING GROWTH

By reason of obvious need in the Mernda/Doreen area, where there is little provision of any form of social and community support services, we are presently exploring the development of a new outreach. Discussions are currently underway with the Brotherhood of St. Laurence, who we hope may be able to provide in kind support for the establishment of such an outreach in the New Year.



# ADVOCACY AND MEDIA 2014 » 2015

Epping Agency Receives \$150,000  
to Cut Family Violence  
[Northern Star Weekly](#) - 2/12/2014

Whittlesea Council Decides not  
to Fight Bridge Inn Hotel Pokies  
[Whittlesea Leader](#) - 3/12/2014

Nominate Women for Top Gong  
International Woman's Day  
[Whittlesea Leader](#) - 17/2/2015



DEC

FEB

JUNE  
2014

NOV

Victoria Police and  
Multicultural Youth Day Out  
[Eyewatch: Darebin Police  
Facebook Page](#) - 21/01/2015

JAN

Whittlesea Council Gambling  
Reform Push Includes Forum  
[Whittlesea Leader](#) - 14/11/2014

Anger as Pub Gets more Pokies  
[Northern Star Weekly](#) - 18/11/14

Whittlesea Santa needs a hand  
[Northern Star Weekly](#) - 19/11/2014

High Household Debt and Cost  
of Living Pressures Causing  
Depression, Suicide Attempts...  
[ABC Television](#) - 24/11/2014

Federal Funding Back-flip  
Saves Legal Service Jobs  
[Northern Star Weekly](#) - 7/4/2015

Whittlesea Households Hit by  
Utility Bills Pain  
[Northern Star Weekly](#) - 9/4/2015

**JUNE**

Surprise and Disappointment at the City of Whittlesea's Refusal to Fund Family Violence Work  
**Whittlesea Leader** - 30/06/15

**MAY**

Whittlesea: Renters Pushed to Outer Fringe  
**Northern Star Weekly**  
- 19/5/2015



Dr Charles Livingstone, Monash School of Public Health and Jemal Ahmet CEO WCC, Talk Problem Gambling  
**'The World from Below'**  
**Channel 31** - 26/5/2015

WCC Lodges Submission to the Royal Commission into Family Violence - May 2015

**APRIL**


Tackle Problem Gambling with Prevention to Rival Quit's Anti-smoking Campaign says Community Support Chief  
**Whittlesea Leader** - 28/4/2015

**MARCH**

WCC writes open letter to Scott Morrison, Minister for Social Services Re Estimated \$271m Cut from the Community Services Sector - 2/3/15

Women Recognised for Community Contribution International Woman's Day  
**Whittlesea Leader** - 31/3/2015

Whittlesea Community Legal Service Fears Job Losses as Federal Cuts Loom  
**Northern Star Weekly** - 17/3/2015

 WCC CEO, Jemal Ahmet, Speaks about Family Stress in our Growth Suburbs  
**ABC Radio National** - 2/3/2015

Funding to Legal Centres Cut Without Consultation  
**Whittlesea Leader** - 16/3/2015

Rob Mitchell MP, Federal Member for McEwen, Speaks in Support of WCC's Community Legal Service  
**Australian Parliament** - 26/2/15

Speech by Andrew Giles MP, Federal Member for Scullin, in Support of WCC's Community Legal Service  
**Australian Parliament** - 10/2/15

WCC's Housing Brokerage Evaluation Report Launch - 23/4/15

To Reduce Family Violence, we have to Look Further Than the Inner City  
**The Guardian** - 27/4/2015



## SPECIAL PROJECTS

Over the past five years the number of family violence incidents reported to police in Whittlesea has nearly doubled. In 2014-15 WCC saw 379 clients experiencing FV. WCC has responded to this increase in request for support by making a submission to the Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence and initiating two family violence prevention projects.

### WCFVP

The Whittlesea CALD Communities Family Violence Project continues to support real change in reducing and preventing family violence in Whittlesea. Led by a project worker funded through WCC, project partners include The Salvation Army Crossroads, InTouch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence, City of Whittlesea, Kildonan UnitingCare, Berry Street, Whittlesea Community Futures, Plenty Valley Community Health, and Victoria Police.

### Achievements:

**\$20,000** of grants delivered to **7** women's support groups, including Whittlesea's first Malaysian and Sri Lankan women's groups

**13** group facilitators and 20 faith leaders trained in identifying and responding to family violence

**50** women participated in family violence awareness education sessions

**1 in 3** participants later sought support for themselves or a friend or family member

**+** Australia's first Arabic language men's family violence group piloted

## HAMDEL

### Preventing Violence Against Women in Partnership with Whittlesea's Iranian Community

This year saw the successful delivery of the Hamdel Project, a 12-month prevention of violence against women pilot project funded by national organisation Our Watch and the State Government. WCC partnered with The Salvation Army Crossroads and Women's Health In the North to work alongside Whittlesea's newly arrived Iranian community to design and deliver activities aimed at promoting respectful, gender equitable relationships and preventing violence before it occurs. Evaluation from the project has contributed to the development of a national toolkit for working with communities to prevent violence against women.

Brother: *I realized... Maybe there was some opportunity I have **taken from my sister...** Now I think **she has rights**, she can think, she can do what she wants...*

Sister: *Before he was really angry and we couldn't talk to him... Now he is much friendlier and he tells us that he loves us.*

**||** *Before I thought FV was private and now I know it isn't. **It is my responsibility to care***  
Project participant

**||** *This information is so important for everybody to know. Afterwards, we discuss it with our family and friends so that **everyone hears it***  
Project participant





## HEALTHY TOGETHER WHITTLESEA

Whittlesea Community Connections worked with the Healthy Together Whittlesea team to support activity that increases local people's health and wellbeing. Health Together Whittlesea, is a partnership between Plenty Valley Health and the City of Whittlesea. The work included progression of Council's Smoking Strategy, support for how Council can support sporting clubs to be more inclusive, and other activity aimed at better coordinating local resources to support a healthier community.

## THOMASTOWN WEST COMMUNITY HUB

The Thomastown West Community Hub was given a boost this year with the Ward Ambler Foundation funding the growth of our Learning Support Programs and Playgroups. In the last financial year, a second multicultural playgroup was established and we introduced an English as an additional language class for students of Thomastown West Primary School who require additional support and a school holiday art program. The presence of a hub co-ordinator also facilitated some early intervention supports for families from Thomastown West Primary School. The Cool Leaning Club, delivered in partnership with The Smith Family supported students of TWPS with programs related to the schools curriculum on a weekly basis and PRACE provided English conversation classes to support parents of the school. The partnership with TWPS, PRACE and The Smith Family have resulted in the delivery of meaningful programs that support families of Thomastown West Primary School in achieving the best possible educational outcomes.

## WHITTLESEA INTERAGENCY TASKFORCE ON GAMBLING

Gambling is a significant problem in the City of Whittlesea, with \$101 million lost in 2014-15. This equates to over \$700 per adult in the Whittlesea LGA - well in excess of the state wide average. Approximately \$40 million of that is estimated to come from problem gamblers. While gambling is an individual choice, there are enormous costs to individuals, families and the community. The Productivity Commission has identified that for every gambler that develops an addiction, 7-10 other people are impacted by their gambling. Problem gambling has been shown to have links with mental illness, drug and alcohol abuse and family violence. Community agencies in the area are experiencing the strain that these losses place on the community through additional demand for services such as emergency relief and family support.

The Whittlesea Interagency Taskforce on Gambling (WITOG) was established in 2012 and WCC is proud of being one of the founding agencies of this group. Membership includes WCC, Plenty Valley Community Health, Kildonan UnitingCare, The Salvation Army Crossroads, Hume Whittlesea Primary Care Partnership, Whittlesea YMCA, Neami National and Women's Health In the North.

WITOG is committed to reducing the impact of gambling harm in Whittlesea and though its position is not an 'anti-gambling' one, member agencies believe poker machines are dangerous products that are programmed to win and designed to addict and that as such, stronger regulation as with tobacco and alcohol is required in order to protect the vulnerable and their families from the enormous harm that 'pokies' create.

WITOG's place based, community development approach has been an important reason for its success in engaging with individuals, groups and organisations.

For the upcoming year WITOG will push to improve public policy to protect our community from the harms of gambling. This is by no means an easy task and it will take the collective will and commitment of not only of WITOG but also of the community as a whole.

### In 2014-15 our work to reduce the harm from poker machines included:

- ▶ Presenting to **25** community groups to a total of **516** people
- ◀ Recruiting **12** local volunteers to assist in the dissemination of information at meetings and on social media
- ▶ Fostering partnerships with key local organisations
- ◀ Running a joint project with Plenty Valley Community Health Men's Behaviour Change program.
- ▶ Working with the City of Whittlesea, including presenting to Council staff

**// We have the right to vote. We should have the right to have a say in having gambling venues in our area. I have seen lots of issues and family being affected due to gambling. There should be more services around. The Emergency Relief that is needed is mainly due to the effects of problem gambling. I am still affected by gambling.**

*Emergency Relief Client*

## SPECIAL PROJECTS

### The Power of Partnership: Meet Mojdeh Abedi.

*Partnerships are an important part of how WCC ensures our community benefits from the expertise of specialist services supported by the local experience of community organisations. This year The Salvation Army's Mojdeh Abedi has worked closely with WCC as part of efforts to prevent and reduce family violence.*

In 2013 in response to the growing number of WCC clients experiencing family violence, WCC and The Salvation Army Crossroads established a partnership to address family violence. I started coming to WCC once a week to provide specialized family violence support and capacity built staff. As part of this partnership, we also ran family violence information sessions for staff, volunteers, and community groups. In 2015 I was seconded to WCC as co-project worker for the Hamdel project working alongside Claire Varley to support Whittlesea's Persian-speaking community to design and deliver activities to prevent violence against women and children.

From the very first day I never felt like an 'outsider'; everyone in the agency was very welcoming and eager to share their expertise with me. I felt really at home. WCC is doing a very impressive job in engaging the community and increasing the local connections of emerging communities. The staff's compassion for social justice is inspirational and they do an outstanding job.

**The Hamdel Project was an incredibly successful partnership.** The project was conducted as a partnership between WCC, The Salvation Army and Women's Health In The North. We worked with the newly arrived Persian-speaking community of Whittlesea, a majority of them being from Iran. Hamdel's focus was on prevention of violence against women and children, and our activities included training for women, legal

education for couples, family activity days and a respectful relationship soccer program for young men.

The partnership allowed us to bring together workers with different skills and areas of expertise, which meant a well-rounded integrated project. **I feel proud to have been part of such a dynamic team.** I am also very proud of the project participants who embraced all the opportunities offered by the project, no matter how small, to be an active part of this vibrant city and contribute to its beauty and strengths. Their passion and commitment made the project a success and it was the community that really made this project happen. I am in awe of their courage and resilience in going beyond the barriers they face in their everyday lives.

**// I am also very proud of the fact projects and partnerships like this exist, bringing together agencies to work together towards our common goals.**

The community groups run by WCC, such as the Persian-speaking Women's Group, have impressed me so much. **It is from groups like these that real change and support is born and nourished;** these groups are so vital to the community because they connect people with services, supports and, most importantly, their community.



# CONCISE FINANCE REPORT

## Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2015 Operating Statement for the Year Ended 30 June 2015

	30 June 2015	30 June 2014
<b>REVENUES</b>		
Grants	\$2,238,849	\$1,983,120
Interest	\$28,152	\$25,511
Fundraising	\$13,095	\$20,410
Other	\$286,495	\$215,561
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>\$2,566,591</b>	<b>\$2,244,602</b>

	30 June 2015	30 June 2014
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Employee and Labour related Costs	\$1,796,054	\$1,652,417
Telephone	\$27,526	\$28,365
Postage	\$4,709	\$3,282
Stationery	\$4,898	\$7,992
Rental -City of Whittlesea	\$12,162	\$12,702
Advertising	-	\$867
Accounting & Audit	\$46,945	\$39,037
Project Costs	\$113,472	\$50,579
Staff Training	\$5,167	\$6,258
Volunteer Training	\$2,821	\$1,688
Subscriptions & Memberships	\$5,355	\$4,177
Staff amenities	\$2,844	\$2,509
Bank Charges	\$73	\$44
Depreciation	\$33,372	\$39,897
Emergency Relief Community Support	\$160,835	\$139,375
ER Admin. Expenses	-	\$5,000
Printing and Photocopying	\$7,956	\$9,352
Legal Practising Certificate	\$3,010	\$3,577
Legal Library	\$990	\$1,601
Information Technology	\$16,047	\$13,886
Project Management Costs	\$31,795	\$15,000
Community Transport (leases, fuel and maintenance, insurance excess)	\$81,890	\$88,303
Other	\$103,424	\$86,255
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$2,461,344</b>	<b>\$2,212,163</b>
<b>CHANGE IN NET ASSETS RESULTING FROM OPERATIONS</b>	<b>\$105,247</b>	<b>\$32,439</b>

The Concise Financial Report is an extract from the full financial report for the year ended 30 June 2015. The financial statements and other information included in the Concise Financial Report are derived from, and are consistent with, the full financial report of Whittlesea Community Connections. A copy of the full financial report is available from our website, [www.whittleseacommunityconnections.org.au](http://www.whittleseacommunityconnections.org.au)

	30 June 2015	30 June 2014
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Cash	\$933,281	\$586,909
Receivables	\$58,862	\$68,709
Investment-Shares in PCCU	\$60	\$60
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>\$992,203</b>	<b>\$655,678</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Equipment	\$105,754	\$106,456
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$1,097,957</b>	<b>\$762,134</b>

	30 June 2015	30 June 2014
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Creditors		
GST Liabilities & PAYG Liabilities	\$14,581	\$15,790
Payroll Liabilities (inc. Super)	\$4,696	\$4,695
Deposits for Future Services	\$4,000	\$3,500
Grants Received in Advance	\$23,000	\$56,000
Grants Carried Forward	\$377,602	\$184,984
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<b>\$423,879</b>	<b>\$264,969</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Employee Entitlements	\$312,138	\$240,476
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>\$736,017</b>	<b>\$505,445</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$361,939</b>	<b>\$256,689</b>
<b>EQUITY-ACCUMULATED SURPLUS</b>		
Balance at start of Financial Year	\$202,906	\$170,467
Adjustment for entry error to 2013-14 end of year closing balance	\$2	-
Add Change in Net Assets resulting from operations	\$105,247	\$32,439
	\$308,155	\$202,906
Transfer to Growth Area Fund Reserves	\$(96,216)	-
	\$211,939	\$202,906
Balance at the end of Financial Year	\$211,939	\$202,906
Growth Area Fund Reserves	\$150,000	\$53,784
<b>TOTAL EQUITY-ACCUMULATED SURPLUS</b>	<b>\$361,939</b>	<b>\$256,689</b>



## NOTES

Notes to and Forming Part of the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 30 June 2015  
Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

### a) Basis of Accounting

The financial statements are a general purpose financial report which has been prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards. The Financial Statements have been prepared on the basis of historical costs.

### b) Reporting Entity

The results in this financial report includes all funds over which Whittlesea Community Connections Inc. controls resources to carry out its functions. Whittlesea Community Connections Inc. is a not-for-profit incorporated association and public benevolent institution providing information services, settlement services, Community Legal Services, a Volunteer Resource Service, an emergency relief program and other support services. The agency is staffed by a combination of paid staff and volunteers. Paid staff during the year have included a CEO, Settlement Support and Community Development and Education workers, Solicitors and Office Coordinator. The primary source of funding is government grants. The entity is incorporated under the Incorporation Act 1981, with a Management Committee responsible for governance.

### c) Taxation

The Agency is an Income Tax Exempt organisation endorsed as a Deductible Gift Recipient and Public Benevolent Institution.

### d) Equipment

Acquisition of assets are initially recorded at cost. The entity adopts a threshold of \$1,000 when recognising equipment

### e) Investments

All Investments are recorded at cost. Interest revenue is recognised as it is received.

### f) Employee entitlements

Liabilities for employee entitlement to wages and salaries, annual leave, long service

	30 June 2015	30 June 2014
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Receipts from Grants Donations and sundry charges	\$2,493,805	\$1,963,788
Interest Received	\$28,152	\$25,511
Other	\$286,495	\$215,561
Fundraising Income	\$13,095	\$20,410
TOTAL	\$2,821,547	\$2,225,270
Payments for employees and administrative expenses	\$(2,475,175)	\$(2,171,591)
<b>NET CASH PROVIDED BY OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>\$346,372</b>	<b>\$53,679</b>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Purchase of fixed assets	\$-	\$-
Net Cash from financing activities	\$-	\$-
Net Cash provided by investing activities	\$-	\$-
Net Increase (Decrease) in cash held	\$346,372	\$53,679
Cash at beginning of financial year	\$586,909	\$542,874
<b>CASH AT END OF FINANCIAL YEAR</b>	<b>\$933,281</b>	<b>\$596,553</b>
<b>NOTES TO STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS</b>		
(a) Reconciliation of cash		
<b>CASH IN BANK AND IN HAND</b>	<b>\$933,281</b>	<b>\$586,909</b>
(b) Reconciliation of net cash provided by operating activities to operating surplus		
Operating surplus		
Non-cash flows in operating activities	\$105,247	\$32,439
Depreciation		
Provision for Annual Leave Loading/Sick Leave/Long Service Leave	\$5,922	\$39,897
Changes in assets and liabilities	\$71,662	\$59,206
Decrease/(Increase) in receivables		
Increase/(Decrease) in creditors and provisions	\$9,847	\$(1,599)
Net Cash outflow from purchase of plant and equipment	\$158,911	\$4,099
Net cash flow from financing activities	\$(5,217)	\$(80,365)
		\$-
<b>NET CASH PROVIDED BY OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>\$346,372</b>	<b>\$53,679</b>
<b>CASH AT BEGINNING OF FINANCIAL YEAR</b>	<b>\$586,909</b>	<b>\$533,230</b>
<b>CASH AT END OF FINANCIAL YEAR</b>	<b>\$933,281</b>	<b>\$586,909</b>
<b>INCREASE IN CASH DURING YEAR</b>	<b>\$346,372</b>	<b>\$53,679</b>

leave and other entitlements which are accrued at balance date and are expected to be paid or settled within 12 months of balance date are accrued at nominal amounts calculated on the basis of current wage and salary rates, inclusive of associated on-costs. Liabilities for other employee entitlements which are not expected to be paid or settled within 12 months of balance date, are calculated as per Australian Accounting Standard AAS30; Accounting of Employee Entitlements: The liabilities are calculated at the present value of the expected future payments to be made in respect of services provided by employees up to balance date. In assessing future payments, regard is given to experience

#### g) Superannuation

The entity makes to the superannuation plan which provided benefits to employees.

#### h) Cash for the purpose of the Statement of Cash Flows

Cash includes cash deposits which are readily convertible to cash on hand and are subject to an insignificant risk of change in value which are used in the cash management function on a day to day basis.

#### i) Grants

Grants are recognised as revenues when the entity obtains control over assets. Outstanding grants over which the entity has control are recognised as receivables and recorded at nominal amounts.

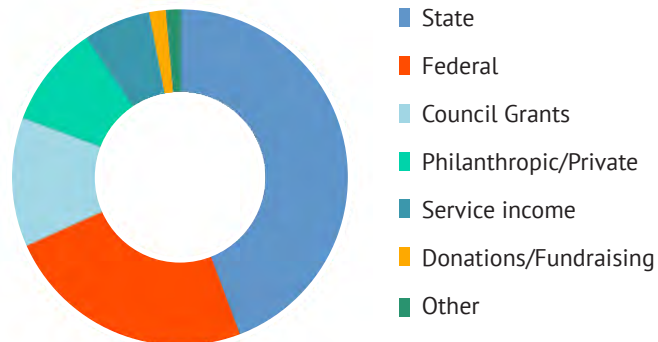
#### j) Creditors

These amounts represent unpaid liabilities for goods received and services provided to the entity prior to the end of the reporting period. These amounts are unsecured and are normally settled within 7 days).

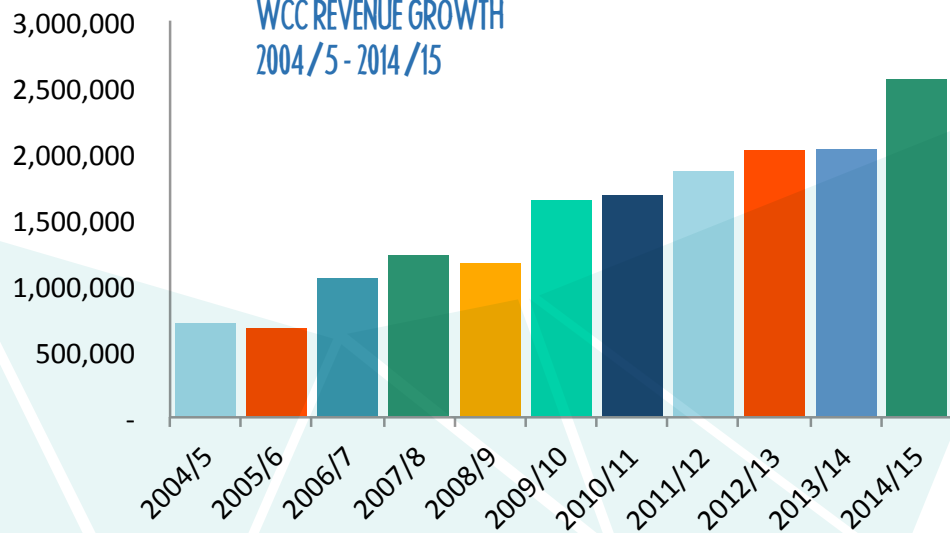
#### k) Comparative Information

Comparative information, where necessary, has been reclassified to comply with the 30 June 2014 financial statement presentation.

### WCC FUNDING SOURCES



### WCC REVENUE GROWTH 2004/5 - 2014/15



# INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT

PAG Accounting

TO THE COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT  
WHITTLESEA COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS INC.

## Report on the financial report

We have audited the financial statements of Whittlesea Community Connections Inc. which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2015, and the statement of comprehensive income for the year then ended, statement of changes in equity / statement of recognized income and expenses and cash flow statement for the year then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information and the committee's assertion statement.

## The Committee of Management's responsibility for the financial report

The Committee of Management of Whittlesea Community Connections Inc. is responsible for the preparation of the financial report, and have determined that the basis of preparation described in notes to the financial report is appropriate to meet the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (Vic.) and the needs of the members. The responsibility also includes such internal control as the Committee of Management determine is necessary to enable the preparation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

## Auditors responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. We have conducted our audit in accordance with Australian auditing standards. These auditing standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance that the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report that presents fairly in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of the accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by those charged with governance, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

## Independence

In conducting our audit, we have complied with the independence requirements of the Australian professional accounting bodies.

## Electronic publication of the audited financial report

It is our understanding that Whittlesea Community Connections Inc. intends to electronically present the audited financial report and the auditor's report on its internet website. Responsibility for the electronic presentation of the financial report on Whittlesea Community Connections Inc. website is that of those charged with governance of Whittlesea Community Connections Inc. The security and controls over information on the website should be addressed by Whittlesea Community Connections Inc. to maintain the integrity of the data presented. The examination of the controls over the electronic presentation of audited financial reports on Whittlesea Community Connections Inc. website is beyond the scope of the audit of the financial report.

## Opinion

In our opinion the financial report of Whittlesea Community Connections Inc. presents fairly in all material respects, the financial position of Whittlesea Community Connections Inc as at 30 June 2015 and of its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended on that date and complies with Australian accounting standards.



Brian J. Egan CPA  
PAG Accounting, a division of Plan Act Grow Pty Ltd

Dated this 18th day of November, 2015

Suite 4,116 Pascoe Vale Road  
Moonee Ponds, VIC 3039  
PO Box 420, Moonee Ponds 3039  
T + 61 3 9370 1989  
F + 61 3 9370 0357  
www.pag-group.com.au  
ABN 84 107 596 994



# THANK YOU

WCC would like to sincerely thank all our board, staff, volunteers, donors, funders and partners.

## Our Board

	<b>Maureen Corrigan OAM</b> President	Associate Diploma SACS; Certificate IV – TAE; Certificate IV - Community Service Management; Electorate Officer, Richard Wynne MP; Driving Instructor; WCC International Women's Day Convenor.
	<b>Greg Godfrey</b> Treasurer	Dip. Financial Planning; Financial Information Services Officer – DHS Centrelink
	<b>Martin Booth</b> V. President/Public Officer	BBS (Psychology, La Trobe University); Certificate IV in Training and Assessment; WCC Volunteer Community Information Worker since 2007.
	<b>Sam Alessi</b> Official City of Whittlesea Representative	BA, BEd, Dip. Teach; Grad. Dip. Computing; City of Whittlesea Councillor from 1997; Mayor of City of Whittlesea 1997/8, 2000/01 & 2004/05; Teacher; Chair, Yarra Plenty Regional Library Board; Chair, Metropolitan Waste Forum.
	<b>Rolf Peake</b> Secretary	WCC Volunteer Information Worker; Treasurer, Lalor Living & Learning Centre CoM; CoW Cultural Bridges working group.
	<b>Sebastian (Dinny) Jaconis</b> Ordinary Member	Bachelor of Commerce, University of Melbourne. WCC Community Information Worker.
	<b>Raziye Baftiyar</b> Ordinary Member	Bachelor of Social Work; Volunteer and Social Worker
	<b>Owen Waldie</b> Ordinary Member	Volunteer at WCC as Bus Driver for the Arabic Speaking Women's Group and the Community Transport Service.
	<b>Nessie Sayar</b> Ordinary Member	Community Services Work Cert IV; WCC ER assessor and Community Transport Service Driver; Vice President-Whittlesea Turkish Cypriot Women's Group; CoM, Women Matter 2 Network; Treasurer, Whittlesea Multicultural Communities Council; CFA Peer Educator, Home Fire Safety. Vice President-Cultural Bridges Community Action Group
	<b>Stephen Lewis</b> Ordinary Member	Sheet Metal Worker first class, Dip Vocational Education and Training, Certificate IV Training & Assessment, Bus Safety Accreditation; General Manager, Training Development & Risk, AGA; CoM Inner Northern Local Learning and Employment Network.
	<b>Christine Lewis</b> Volunteer Representative	Volunteer in the Visitor Information Centre, Seymour. WCC Emergency Relief Assessor
	<b>Ashleigh Trimmer</b> Volunteer Representative	Bachelor of Arts; Juris Doctor; Trainee Lawyer; Night Service Coordinator and Volunteer Paralegal, WCLS.

## Our Staff

Ann Lightowler	Community Lawyer
Ben Rodgers	Project Worker
Brad Sanders	Community Transport Coordinator (to Aug 2014)
Carmela Raudino	Settlement Services-Emerging Communities Caseworker
Caterina Angelis	Emergency Relief Coordinator & Case Manager (Mat Leave from Feb 2015)
Charlotte Inglis	CALD Communities Family Violence Project Support Worker (from Mar 2015)
Chris Howse	Principal Solicitor
Chris Ryan	Community Lawyer
Claire Varley	CALD Communities Family Violence Project Worker
Dalal Sleiman	Settlement Support Worker, Arabic Speaking Communities
Deepty Cusima	Community Information & Resource Worker
Despina Kourou	Graduate Community Lawyer
Edmond Babatunde	Driving Program Coordinator
Georgianna Brooks	Community Transport Worker
Grozda Nedeljkovic	Settlement Support Worker & Migration Advisor
Haseeb Mian	Graduate Community Lawyer
Jane Yang	Volunteer Resource & Training Worker (to Oct 2014)
Jemal Ahmet	CEO
Jonathan Lee	Community Lawyer
Kate O'Sullivan	Team Leader Settlement Programs
Katrice Bolden	Acting Emergency Relief Coordinator & Case Manager (from Feb 2015)
Kim Lai	Office Coordinator
Lily Lim	Community Hub and Youth Activities Worker (to Dec 2014)
Luaipou (Luai) Leuga	Acting Community Information & Resource Worker (Jul-Oct 2014)
	Acting WIW Community Enterprise Worker(Nov 2014-June 2015)
Michelle Newton	Settlement Services Caseworker (to March 2015)
	Volunteer Resource & Training Worker (from Apr 2015)
Nina Lim	Community Hub Coordinator (from Feb 2015)
Parry Williams	Community Transport Coordinator (from Oct 2014)
Peta Fualau	Team Leader Client Services
Rani Flory	Community Lawyer/Project Worker (Maternity Leave from Sept 2014)
Sam Charlesworth	Women in Work Community Enterprise Worker (Mat Leave from Nov 2015)
Sarah Haintz	Youth Worker, New Arrivals
Sudha Kuganesan	Youth Connections Worker (to Feb 2015)
Tanya Francis	Community Outreach Lawyer (Maternity Leave from Oct 2014)
Vanessa Galea	Coordinator of Volunteers & Administration of Legal Service
Vieli Choka	Settlement Services Caseworker (from Apr 2015)

**// I love my job.**  
**Everybody works**  
**as a team and all**  
**members show**  
**respect, compassion**  
**and patience in all**  
**situations which**  
**enables me to excel**  
**with confidence in**  
**my role.**  
*Staff member*



## Casual Staff

Amity Adley  
Duaa Al Aryahi  
Fawzia Abukalam  
Gary Walpole

Gemila Nur  
Hanaa Bottroos  
Howid Madir  
Jagjeet Bindra  
Krishantimala Joseph  
Lina Ida  
Manel Rouma  
Meenakshi Kataria  
Nafiso Said  
Nasrin Siyawsh  
Nadarajah  
Sribalachandran  
Nazar Kunda  
Nertila Stergu  
Nick Parisi

Rachel Kori  
Sherien Tadros

Learning Support Program Tutor  
Women in Work Child Care Worker  
Women in Work Child Care Worker  
Connect Plus Driver,  
Community Transport Service  
Women in Work Child Care Worker  
Women in Work Child Care Worker  
Women in Work Child Care Worker  
Women in Work Child Care Worker  
Women in Work Child Care Worker  
Women in Work Child Care Worker  
Women in Work Child Care Worker  
Women in Work Child Care Worker  
Women in Work Child Care Worker  
Women in Work Child Care Worker  
Account Clerk

Arabic Men's Group Facilitator  
Women in Work Child Care Worker  
Connect Plus Driver,  
Community Transport Service  
Women in Work Child Care Worker  
Arabic Women's Group

## Our Volunteers

Aaron Mennillo  
Abarna Ahilaeswaran  
Abhimanyu Rangi  
Adam Conti  
Adam Soliman  
Alan Roberts  
Aleksandra Mitreska  
Alex Hadjitelemachou  
Alex Roussel  
Alex Scokley  
Ali Reza Zobdeh  
Alyson Bryant  
Amanda Curatore  
Amity Adley  
Ana Nikolovska  
Andrew Goldbergs  
Andrew Leamon  
Andrew Tredwell  
Angela Daniel  
Angela Laskaris  
Anna Sinclair  
Anne Maher  
Anoma Kumarasena  
Aram Dehghanfa  
Ashley Green  
Ashley Trimmer  
Ashligh Gambera  
Asna Bastian  
Aubrey Gardner  
Austin Virathone  
Ayda Zeyazadeh  
Barry Main  
Bassem Sako  
Bekir Cetinkaya  
Belinda Daricilli  
Belinda Mitrevski  
Bessie Lim  
Bianca Buzoianu  
Biljana Sterjovski  
Bindu Chelikkattil  
Bob Hutchinson  
Briana Martin  
Brittany Macali  
Broderic Indranada  
Bryan Klassen  
Caitlen Rexley  
Camila Salazar  
Cara Thompson

Carl Helgesen  
Carl Reid  
Carol Roberts  
Cathy Bithel  
Cecile Huynh  
Ceri Webb  
Chamila Dasanayaka  
Chantal El Khoury  
Charlotte Monaghan  
Charlotte Vo  
Chiry Chen  
Chris Cairns  
Christian Side  
Christina Hill  
Christine Lewis  
Christine Tran  
Christopher Ragozzino  
Colin Davidson  
Connie Lambropoulous  
Craig Pfanner  
Damian Apolloni  
Daniel Izev  
Daniya Abduljabbar  
Danushka Perera  
Daryl Craze  
David Bevilacqua  
David O'Meara  
David Whelan  
Deanna Cam  
Despina Kouros  
Diana Sui  
Diana Vukic  
Dina Fernando  
Dinny Jaconis  
Dino Ciuffetelli  
Dorothy Challenger  
Duncan Phillips  
Elaine Alderson  
Elena Durovska  
Elham Hosseini  
Elissa Andreaacchio  
Elly Hackney  
Emily Taha  
Emma Leech  
Emma Turton  
Evan Paul Gellert  
Fariha Zaima  
Farrah Abdul

Frank Torcasio  
Fred Venturini  
Gary Walpole  
Gaye Chatfield  
Gemma Hannah  
Ghada Marcus  
Gianna Iacobucci  
Gill Harsharan  
Glen Hepper  
Glenys Peart  
Gloria Kitteringham  
Gloria Flores Diaz  
Gloria Ozougwu  
Glyniss Warren  
Gordana Damjanovska  
Graeme Adams  
Guneet Kaur Bindara  
Halim Amirhamzah  
Haseeb Mian  
Hatim Mansour  
Haylee Cooper-Maclean  
Helen Murnane  
Henry Kupper  
Igor Pavlovski  
Inaam Jirjigs  
Iris Wang  
Isharaka Gunasinghe  
Issa Ayash  
Italo Malavisi  
Jacklyn Assaf  
Jacqui Nettleton  
James Adley  
James Allen  
Jan Macdonald  
Jan Marshall  
Jann Darvill  
Jasmine Zarei  
Jelena Sarenac  
Jemma Gan  
Jenni Alagiozitis  
Jennifer Galbraith  
Jennifer Zekirovska  
Jeremy Grassie  
Jessica Khoury  
Jiselle Hanna  
Jiwanjot Kaur  
John Arnold  
John Ferwerda

**|| On a daily basis I genuinely  
wake up eager to get to work**  
Staff member

**|| I am in awe of the staff  
who work at WCC. I admire  
them for their drive and  
commitment to redress  
injustice in the community.**  
Volunteer





## Our Volunteers cont.

Joseph Rossello  
Josh Janevski  
Joylyn Karunakaran  
Judy Franklin  
Judy Sorrell  
Julie Parry  
Karam Kaur  
Karim Zaki  
Karisma Takah  
Karma Zarour  
Katy Ying Kang  
KaYing (Karen) Lam  
Keerthana Jeyakandan  
Ken Polly  
Kieran Balmaceda  
Kim Luong  
Kimberley K Meyers  
Kristian Cirianni  
Lena Gagano-Reddy  
Leonard Dalli  
Lisa Clark  
Lisa Toshack  
Luisa Consiglio  
Luke Dimario  
Lynne Dobby  
Madhurika Rane  
Maiken Hansen  
Mandy Giannarelli  
Manel Rouma  
Manohari Muthiah  
Margaret Main  
Marion Jordan  
Martin Booth  
Maryam Fatahi  
Maryam Enweya  
Maureen Goulding  
Megan McKenry  
Melissa Koutoukidis  
Melissa Lee  
Meng Hiong Beh  
Mia Swift  
Michael Boulis  
Michael Donec  
Michael Faulkes  
Michael Pollock  
Michael Saleh  
Michelle Patching  
Michelle Roberts  
Mike Tran

Mithila Yogendran  
Mojdeh Molammghobadi  
Mona Beshara  
Monica Quijano  
Montana Vasey  
Murray O'Callaghan  
Nadarajah Sribalachandran  
Nadia Gheybi  
Nahid Azriah  
Nancy Sui  
Nasim Saeedi  
Nasrin Khodadadi  
Nasrin Yousef  
Natalie Micedski  
Natalie Potenza  
Natasha Folk  
Nathalie Huynh  
Nathalie Njako  
Nathan Pedersen  
Negin Khoi Mirzahassanlou  
Nermin Saban  
Nesrin Haydar  
Nessie Sayar  
Nick Parisi  
Nicole Hudson  
Nigel Pennington  
Norman Dykes  
Normy Webb  
Nouzi Besavend  
Nuwani Ranasinghe  
Owen Waldie  
Paul Byrnes  
Paul Dellios  
Paul Walford  
Paul Were  
Paul Wilson  
Perri Arabatzis  
Peter Hudson  
Peter Leek  
Peter Murgano  
Peter Murray  
Phi Hoang  
Pinar Tat  
Ponifasio (Poni) Lua Vaka  
Rachael Monteleone  
Rachel Lai  
Rai Harmohinder  
Rakan Shamma  
Rakesh Kumar

Raminder Johal  
Randa Rafiq  
Ravneet Kaur  
Ray Wilton  
Ray Wyatt  
Rey Villegas  
Rhonda Rose  
Rifqa Diedericks  
Ritaa Maroki  
Robyn Crawford  
Rolf Peake  
Rosa Harrison  
Rose George  
Rosie Kaur  
Rubaba Haider  
Rufaro Mahachi  
Ruth Seidler  
Saeed Ghasinzadeh  
Sai Keerthi Ramayanam  
Salad Ali  
Sama Ghanim  
Samantha Jolevska  
Samantha Trigilia  
Sandy Newman  
Sarah Gard  
Sarah Martiniello  
Sarah Notarianni  
Sawsan Saleh  
Seema Siddiqui  
Seyhan Balkis  
Shahnaz Poshtkouh  
Shaun Moran  
Shazia Nishar  
Sherien Tadros  
Shoukry Sidrak  
Siggi Pfefferle  
Simone Allen  
Somayieh Jafari  
Sonal Sehgal  
Souliman Abdo  
Sowmiya Sooriakumaran  
Sreelakshmy Sijith (Sree)  
Stephanie D'Rozario  
Stephen Bell  
Steven Howell  
Steven Lewis  
Subhashini Ratnayake  
Sukhpreet Kaur  
Sulaika Dhanapala

Suzan Arslan  
Suzana Grivicic  
Suzi Duncan  
Sydney Godsall  
Sylvia Georgiadis  
Tamara Abduljabbar  
Tanya D'Souza  
Tanya Jonnalagadda  
Tatiana Echeverri Restrepo  
Tayla Harrison  
Teagan Manger  
Teagan Morton  
Thao Dang  
Thea Johnstone  
Tina Battaglia  
Tina Kazich  
Tom Ondicho  
Tony Townsend  
Tosn Ozmanian  
Tracie Stewart  
Treby Carolyn  
Trevor Prendergrast  
Trizia Martin  
Umang Mann  
Urooj Khan  
Valantina Shamoon  
Valerie Lai  
Vicki Selvaggio  
Victoria Mira  
Vinita Sharma  
Vivian Hoang  
Vladimir Popov  
Wilhelmina Kholer  
William Rivera Ramirez  
Yanwei Chen  
Yasmin Moussa  
Yen Phi Tran  
Yianni Mardikis



# Donors and Funders

## GOVERNMENT

Dept. of Social Services  
(Australian Government)  
Office of Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship  
(Victorian Government)  
VicRoads (Victorian Government)  
Victoria Legal Aid (Victorian Government)  
City of Whittlesea

## PHILANTHROPIC

Crocodile and Sunshine Foundation  
The Scanlon Foundation  
The Ian & Nelleke Clark Encouragement Fund  
The Jack Brockoff Foundation  
The Mercy Foundation  
The Queens Fund  
The R.E. Ross Trust  
The Rotary Club of Bundoora Inc.  
The Walter and Eliza Hall Trust  
The Ward-Ambler Trust  
Victorian Women's Trust

## OTHER

Islamic Council of Victoria  
Salvation Army - Coburg  
Bronwyn Halfpenny MP  
La Trobe University Students  
Lilly D'Ambrosio MP  
Epping Combined Pensioners Association  
Mill Park Secondary College  
Andrew Giles MP  
Danielle Green MP  
Our Watch Limited  
PRACE  
Jenny Mikakos MP  
Rob Mitchell MP

## COMMUNITY

Jemal Ahmet  
Emma Antonetti  
Juliet Allen  
Nicky Brown  
Tarn Barford  
Kelly Bolton  
Rabiye Balkis  
Joseph Antonetti  
Josephine Brown  
Renee Bonnici  
Samia Badawi  
Michael Buckley  
Rebecca Burns  
Verna Chilcott  
Phoebe Churches  
Ann Cleland  
Felicity Connolly  
Sarah Cooke  
Damien Cordery  
Maureen Corrigan  
Judith Cotterill  
Jen Couch  
Fi Dal  
Rachel De Oliveira  
Lara Deretic  
Ruz Dimitrieska  
Taylah Duck  
Gwenda Dufty  
Kristie Dunn  
Sue Evans  
Alex Findlay  
Tess Flynn  
Marika Forras  
Rachel Garner  
Olivia Giannarelli  
David Gibson  
Anne Glover  
Simon Gray  
Danielle Green  
Ben Hall  
Avril Hannah-Jones  
Rebecca Harris  
Jayne Hatherall  
Alex Haynes  
Anthony Heslop  
Robyn Higgins

Peter Hudson  
Charlotte Inglis  
Sebastian (Dinny) Jaconis  
Elaine Jenyns  
Michelle Jones  
A Jordan  
Mary Ellen Jordan  
Samantha Kathe  
Monique Keel  
Angela Kelly  
Katalin Kish  
Despina Kourous  
Sudha Kuganesan  
Joanne Kyrkilis  
Anna Lervese  
Glenda Lindsay  
Andrew May  
kira Mazurek  
Anita Mccaffrey  
Annette McKail  
Anthony McKee  
Philippa McLean  
Liz Meade  
Eve Merton  
Adele Mifsud  
Belinda Milevski  
Leslie Mohr  
Louise Morrison  
Pallavi Murthy  
Elham Naghizade  
Renee Nelson  
Paul Nichols  
Aun ONG  
Ros O'Sullivan  
Craig Parker  
Uri Pech  
Sarah Pennell  
Paul Plowman  
Christian Polifka  
Jane Price  
Lida Rashidi  
Carmela Raudino  
Amanda Ravenhill  
Chris Roche  
Ben Rodgers  
Kate Roulston

Chris Ryan  
Helen Said  
Tamsin Sawford  
Paula Sharp  
Amber Smith  
Duane Smith  
Philippa Smith  
Alison Standish  
Megan Stericker  
Heather Stewart  
Rachel Street  
Angie Temouskos  
Jeff Thompson  
Laura Thompson  
Tim Thornton  
John Tolis  
Tamara Torzillo  
Penny Toumplis  
Ashleigh Trimmer  
Stephen Trimmer  
Elias Tsigaras  
Lesina Veniale  
Susie Vincent  
Carolynne W  
Karo Walter  
Steve Ward  
Janet Wayne  
John Weate  
Mike Webb  
Kate Wheller



# GET INVOLVED



There are many ways that you can help us support WCC's work

## ◀ VOLUNTEER

We have many opportunities for local people of all backgrounds and experiences to get involved. We are always looking for drivers, driver mentors, community information volunteers, homework tutors, English teachers, Christmas gift wrappers and people who have specialist skills or simply a will to give back to the community in some way.

## ◀ DONATE

We are currently seeking partners who would like to invest in the work that WCC does in the community. Please contact us to discuss further. Or come along to one of our annual fundraising events!

## ◀ BECOME A MEMBER

Members of WCC contribute to the community ownership of this unique local and independent organisation. Our strength lies not in the amount of funding we receive but in the support given by local people. Joining is easy. Download a membership form on the WCC website.

## ◀ STAY INFORMED

WCC publishes a monthly e-newsletter that features up to date information about events, key issues, and an update of our work. Add your name to our mailing list- see email below.

Follow us on facebook. Stay up to date and find out more about local issues and events.

To find out more about how to get involved, visit [www.whittleseacommunityconnections.org.au](http://www.whittleseacommunityconnections.org.au)

## Making a REAL Difference Everyday

