

NEIGHBOURHOOD COLLECTIVE AUSTRALIA  
AND THE OLD CHURCH ON THE HILL

# ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022



# ABOUT US

Welcome to our first ever annual report!

Neighbourhood Collective Australia is a registered charity building stronger, resident-led communities where everyone belongs. We manage the Old Church on the Hill, a community hub in Bendigo that's been operating for 13 years. As well as our direct community work at the Old Church, we partner with multicultural communities, not-for-profits and government to provide community development, training, applied research and consultancy to better engage, connect and support communities.

The Old Church is a vibrant community centre used by over 30 groups, organisations and associations. We host a range of activities, including a community garden, live music, foster carers support groups, disability support groups, English classes for refugee women, playgroups, a weekly free community lunch, a food relief program, a social enterprise café and much more. The Old Church is not incorporated or a legal entity, and many hands have contributed to making it what it is today.

Neighbourhood Collective Australia registered as a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee and an ACNC-registered charity in January 2021. We have a small, part-time staff team and over 30 regular volunteers. We are managed by a Board of Directors. Our Board of Directors and senior staff include founding members of the Old Church and local residents who are involved at the Old Church. We are a Child Safe organisation and committed to the safety and wellbeing of all young people.

**OUR MOTTO IS  
"THERE'S A PLACE AT THE TABLE FOR YOU"**

# INTERVIEW WITH OUR CEO, ROSITA VINCENT

The 2021-2022 year has been a big one for Neighbourhood Collective Australia and the Old Church on the Hill. Below, our CEO, Rosita Vincent, reflects on the year.



Q1. LOOKING BACK ON THE 2021-2022 YEAR, WHAT ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF?

This year continued to see lockdowns and the effects of the pandemic on residents, especially those with other health conditions and those living alone. Seeing our community and volunteers continue to provide support and finding innovative ways to do that has been very special. Having our new deck finished in time to be able to supply fresh coffee and cooked meals through our cafe window was amazing, providing social connection and support to new community members. Programs like our food relief program have been a highlight, working out how to get culturally relevant food such as okra, sukuma, and snake beans from Melbourne suppliers during lockdowns, so that local refugee communities can continue to nourish themselves with these staples.

Q2. WHAT KEEPS YOU UP AT NIGHT?

While I think we've seen the end of lockdowns, every day I hear new stories of mental health problems in our community. Isolation and loneliness are real. One senior at our community lunch last month told me, "I'm so glad to be here. This is the first time this week I've spoken to anyone except my cat." We need to get better at connecting and building community.

Q3. WHAT'S ON THE HORIZON FOR NEXT YEAR?

In August we'll be starting a new program called "Kids on the Hill." This has come out of the requests from some of the families from refugee backgrounds wanting to connect their children in better. We'll be growing and planting in the community garden, cooking, eating and more! We also have some great opportunities in the next six months to contribute to the work of other community centres across the state.

# OUR PROGRAMS

The first half of this year was characterised by ongoing lockdowns, significantly impacting our ability to consistently engage community. Lockdowns also meant we saw an increase in social isolation, mental health problems and family violence, while inflation and the high cost of food more generally putting pressure on our community meals and food relief programs.

Key programs and initiatives in 2021-2022 have included:

- Village lunch: a free, nutritious, warm weekly meal. Partnering with Bendigo Retirement Village Lively and City of Greater Bendigo
- The Living Room: a weekly community connection program that sees 40-60 local residents connect each week. This year the youngest attendee was 10 days old and the oldest was 91! Partnering with CatholicCare
- Open Futures: a leadership program working with 14 early career multicultural community leaders. In partnership with Welcoming Australia and the Victorian Multicultural Commission
- The Old Church Driving School: to support women from refugee backgrounds who don't have family or friends who can teach them to drive, matching them to community volunteers. Delivered in partnership with Regional Victorians of Colour and City of Greater Bendigo
- Adapt at the Old Church: working with local residents to understand and adapt to climate change. In partnership with Adapt Loddon Mallee and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, Victorian State Government
- The Sharing Table: a food relief program providing fresh produce and pantry staples each week Delivered in partnership with Bendigo Food Share
- Three playgroups: one for parent/s carers with a disability, one general playgroup and one for multicultural families. Partnering with Lively, Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services, Bendigo Hazara Community Inc and Quarry Hill Primary School.
- Live music: Despite lockdowns, 30 gigs and live concerts were performed, featuring local, Melbourne and inter-state artists.. In partnership with Bendigo Blues and Roots Festival and the Bendigo Jazz Club.
- Community garden program: connecting volunteers and local residents to learn how to grow their own food.



# OUR PARTNERSHIPS

Community partnerships are at the heart of what we do. This year, coming out of lockdowns we've been able to re-establish work with long-term partners as well as engage a range of new partners.

**Funding partners:** we are grateful to both the individuals who donated towards our work and our philanthropic and government funders:

- City of Greater Bendigo
- Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, Victorian State Government
- Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, Victorian State Government
- Gospel Resource
- Sustainability Victoria, Victorian State Government
- Welcoming Australia

**Community partners:** we partner with a range of not-for-profits, associations and community groups in three ways: as partners in our direct work at the Old Church, as partners in our training and capacity building work across Victoria and as users of the Old Church community space, where we promote and support their own activities. On occasion, all three types of partnerships overlap!

- Anglicare
- Bendigo Blues and Roots Music Festival
- Bendigo Carpet Bowls Group
- Bendigo Chess Club
- Bendigo Cloggers Group
- Bendigo Filipino Association
- Bendigo Food Share
- Bendigo Jazz Club
- Bendigo Malayalee Association
- Bendigo Philosophy Club
- Bendigo Regional Food Alliance
- Bendigo Retirement Village
- Bendigo Senior Secondary College
- Bendigo South East College
- Bendigo Sustainability Group
- CatholicCare
- Cornerstone Community
- CWA
- Didi Bahini Samaj Victoria
- Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria
- Ethnic Council of Shepparton and District
- Hazara Community of Bendigo Inc.
- Hokushin Shinoh Ryu Iaido Bendigo
- Interchange
- Karen Organisation of Bendigo
- Kerang Neighbourhood House
- Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services
- Long Gully Neighbourhood Centre
- Lord Somers Camp
- MacCapella
- Multicultural Arts Victoria
- On the Hill Theatre Company
- Quarry Hill Primary School
- Regional Victorians of Colour
- Social Foundry
- Sisterworks
- St Matthew's Church Long Gully
- Symposium of Australian Gastronomy
- Uncertain Curtain
- Whetayoukyouk
- Welcoming Australia

# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

This is our first full financial year as Neighbourhood Collective Australia. Our total revenue was \$530,684, with the largest part of this being donations from charitable funds and government grants. A special thank-you to Gospel Resource for their ongoing financial support. Our main expense was staff wages, which went towards our small part-time staff base.

Due to our small revenue, we were not required to complete a financial audit, however we decided to do this in order to review the organisation's financial and risk management processes. Below is an extract from the audited financial statement. For a full copy, please email [hello@collective.org.au](mailto:hello@collective.org.au).

## Neighbourhood Collective Australia Ltd

ABN 28 647 210 973

### Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income For the Year Ended 30 June 2022

	Note	2022 \$	2021 \$
<b>Revenue</b>	3	530,684	75,201
Employee benefits expense		(276,480)	(28,763)
Depreciation		(1,400)	(460)
Accounting fees		(2,351)	(94)
Catering expenses		(13,828)	-
Consulting		-	(6,504)
Rates		(11,097)	(1,442)
Project costs		(34,196)	(302)
Cost of goods		(40,804)	(1,642)
Insurance		(13,147)	(3,096)
Materials and equipment		(10,299)	(247)
Gospel resources		(31,107)	-
Other expenses		(21,491)	(2,465)
<b>Surplus for the year</b>		<b>74,484</b>	<b>30,186</b>
Other Comprehensive Income		-	-
<b>Total comprehensive income for the year</b>		<b>74,484</b>	<b>30,186</b>

# CONTACT INFORMATION

[hello@collective.org.au](mailto:hello@collective.org.au)

[www.collective.org.au](http://www.collective.org.au)

[www.theoldchurch.org.au](http://www.theoldchurch.org.au)

