



**ANNUAL REPORT  
2020 | 21**



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**From left:**  
Tom Baxter | Chair  
Therese Desmond | CEO

## MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Welcome to the OC Connections Annual Report 2020/2021. The theme of this year's report is *Connection* and, as people of all abilities navigate the second year of the COVID-19 pandemic, there's never been a better time to think about how we connect.

As an organisation that was already dedicated to keeping people connected and engaged, we are proud of what we have achieved. Staying connected with staff, volunteers, participants and their families during the pandemic certainly brought with it new opportunities and new challenges. To keep people safe, we adopted new communication technologies and pandemic appropriate service models. For example, wherever possible, we embraced home based work and support initiatives we wouldn't have thought feasible just two years ago. We also implemented high quality infection control procedures and led the way with our early adoption, and continued use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and COVID-safety protocols.

Against an unpredictable backdrop of state-based lockdowns, we made great progress in extending delivery of our key support services and strategic growth initiatives. As you read through this Annual Report, we encourage you to think about the time, effort and resilience that has gone into not only maintaining but also developing our organisation over the past year.

It has been inspirational to watch our staff, participants and their families rise to the challenges of 2020/2021. We were heartened by the joys and triumphs experienced by many participants this year, and we stood in solidarity with our community as we worked through the disappointments of repeated, cancelled plans brought about by the pandemic.

## SUPPORTING PEOPLE THROUGH THE PANDEMIC

The 2020/2021 financial year brought with it a number of challenges and changes to how we work.

### New ways of working

Between July and November 2020, Melbourne's extended lockdowns meant we had to change most of our centre-based activities and find new ways of working and connecting. Our entire service pivoted as we swiftly introduced new service models.

In keeping with the Victorian Government's lockdown regulations, we were able to offer onsite Day Support Programs to a small number of participants whose regular caregivers were classified as essential workers, and to participants whose support was deemed essential to their health and wellbeing.

We provided Day Support Programs in residents' homes with our 'one worker, one site' policy in place. Our usual well attended employment services turned into a scant workforce, with some employees working from home. We conducted our Towards Employment Pathway online.

Throughout 2020/2021 we also consolidated our working from home arrangements, and we are now a far more mobile and contemporary organisation as a result.

The pandemic taught us we are able to respond quickly and effectively to events. We found we could continue to support our operation and keep people employed by quickly setting up non-supporting participant roles to work from home. For much of the past year working from home has been the norm, and we'll continue to run like this with all safety measures in place for as long as the pandemic poses a risk.

### Wellbeing

From the outset of the pandemic the OC Connections' Board and Executive Management Team were determined to focus on the wellbeing of participants, staff and volunteers. We conducted regular staff seminars on physical and emotional wellbeing and made every effort to reach out and connect with individuals and their families during this time. We are thrilled to report that, to date, no staff have been stood down or have lost their roles due to the pandemic.

### Infection control protocols

Our commitment to going above and beyond the government's recommended infection control protocols paid off this year as we successfully controlled two positive COVID-19 cases within our community.

The first case was in August 2020, with the worker experiencing symptoms. They didn't come to work and sought immediate testing. The second case involved an asymptomatic worker in October. There was no infection transfer to our community, and we applaud everyone who took necessary steps to contain these infections and get tested quickly.

### Vaccinations

OC Connections made every effort to promote COVID-19 vaccinations.

With participant and family safety a priority, the majority of residents living in our homes received at least their first dose of the vaccine. Most residents received this by attending their General Practitioner with support staff. Other participants and families were encouraged to consider vaccination after consulting with their doctor.

We also strongly encouraged staff to get vaccinated and made access to vaccination as easy as possible. We partnered with a local provider to deliver the AstraZeneca vaccine on site.

As most of our staff are under 60, we hope to secure a similar arrangement to deliver the Pfizer vaccine by the end of July 2021.

## THE 2020 AGM

We held our first virtual Annual General Meeting in 2020 and were thrilled with its success. While it's always nice to have everyone together, the virtual meeting worked very well. During the meeting, Alan Bergmann and Kylie Payne were both elected for further terms as Board Directors. Tony McAvaney was also appointed for another year to ensure stability throughout the pandemic.

**“I want to thank our CEO, Therese Desmond, and the Executive Management Team for their steadfast commitment to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of our community during these extraordinary times. Great things have been achieved, and we look forward to the year ahead.”**

Tom Baxter, Chair.

## STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESSION

During February 2021 we held a strategic planning workshop to review our progress within the context of COVID-19. We agreed as an organisation that we were on track to meet our growth objectives by 2022. We adjusted our initial revenue and growth targets by a further 12–24 months to account for the impact of the pandemic.

The Board worked hard to maintain their communication during the past year. They conducted meetings virtually, and we made great progress in advancing our growth strategy. We established the Casey Hub, which provides a new and extended service footprint into Melbourne's South Eastern suburbs. We undertook a great deal of background work around our new Housing Strategy, which kicked off this year. We also made significant advances in developing our Allied Health strategy and continued our merger and acquisition work.

## SECTOR PARTICIPATION

Our commitment to connection saw us reach beyond our own organisation as we continued to take an active role in shaping the future of the disability sector. Over the past year our CEO, Therese Desmond, was an active participant in the NDS Housing and Support National Committee. She was also involved in sector collaborations to write responses to the Disability Royal Commission and participated in several joint submissions around current NDIS changes. All of these initiatives involved advocacy for better outcomes for the people we support.

## IN THE COMMUNITY

Our relationship with the wider community was strengthened during 2020/2021, and we were humbled by the support we received from local organisations. In particular, we would like to acknowledge:

- The Metropolitan Golf Club for their continued support during this pandemic, and
- Dandenong Christmas Tree Farm, who went above and beyond in supporting us when our usual Christmas tree fundraising initiative was cancelled.

We also received two generous bequests, which we greatly appreciate.

We thank everyone involved for their financial support and kindness.

## IN THE MEDIA

Our Leaving Allen Street documentary, which won the Audience Choice Award at the 2020 Melbourne Documentary Film Festival, was aired on ABC iview in February 2021. The documentary showcased the transition of residents as they moved out of the outdated congregate care facilities and into new, purpose-built houses in the wider community. Both the documentary and the broader Allen Street changes were a testament to the hard work and dedication of all the staff involved in this large and very successful project.

## ON THE WEB

The OC Connections' website received a refresh this year with an updated colour scheme and new navigation options. This work reflected our commitment to stay connected and up to date with the communication needs of our community.

## IMPORTANT UPDATES

This year also saw us review our arrangements with our auditors. We issued an Expression of Interest for this role in 2021 and we appointed Grant Thornton Australia as our auditing firm for one year.

We thanked our previous auditing firm, KPMG, for its length of tenure and its support over several years.

**“Staying connected during the COVID-19 pandemic has required a huge collective effort, and I thank our Chair, Mr Tom Baxter, as well as the Board and the Executive Management Team for their unwavering commitment to supporting staff, participants and their families.”**

Therese Desmond, CEO.

## LOOKING FORWARD

Because of the pandemic, we will continue to base our immediate priorities around the safety and support of participants and staff. As such, protocols like physical distancing, vaccine rollouts and lockdowns are likely to be with us well into the new financial year. While these facts will undoubtedly affect how we make plans and get together, they also challenge us to think about how we can do things differently.

We are incredibly proud of the many achievements that our diverse community of participants, families, staff and volunteers have celebrated over the past 12 months, and we encourage everyone to stay connected and reach out for assistance during these turbulent times.



**TOM BAXTER**

Chair



**THERESE DESMOND**

CEO

# ABOUT OC CONNECTIONS

**OC Connections is one of Australia's most trusted disability support services. As a not-for-profit organisation, we provide life-changing services and opportunities for more than 360 adults involved in Day Support Programs, Community Living, Employment and Support Coordination.**

Our range of specialised and innovative support services are designed to enable people of all abilities to contribute to society, and to live happy and successful lives on their own terms. We understand that each participant is an individual and, accordingly, we work hard to tailor our support services to meet each person's specific needs and aspirations.

We are especially proud of our commitment to keeping people connected. This guides us in supporting individuals to achieve their greatest level of independence and inclusion in the community. As an organisation, we aim to unlock each person's potential through working with them to maximise their choice and control over their lives.

## OUR VISION

We enable people to live the life they choose within a society that values individuals for who they are, respects their rights and encourages participation in everyday life.

## OUR PROMISE

We advocate for 'my life, my choice' and provide rewarding opportunities that support people to achieve this.

## OUR VALUES

So that we can provide participants with choices they value, we must create meaningful opportunities that bring direction and purpose to their lives and enable individuals to achieve lifelong goals and dreams.

### Choice

The ability to choose how to live is central to everyday life. People feel valued when given the chance to make choices and decisions about what matters most in their lives.

### Opportunity

Our inclusive services focus on the person and their individual needs. We create and provide opportunities for people to develop and grow, pursue goals and live as independently as possible.

### Respect

We respect every person's right to make choices and to be heard. We empower people to live full lives and develop a sense of belonging, which encourages them to be active participants within their community.

### Equality

We advocate for the disadvantaged, acknowledge a person's right to live life with dignity and equality, and celebrate the joy of diversity.

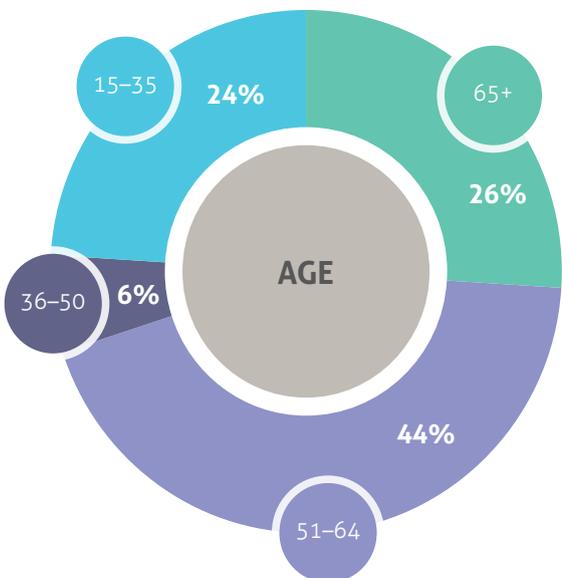
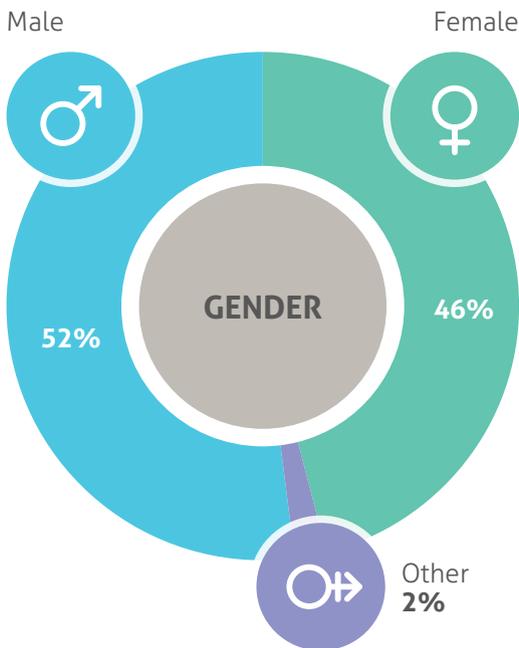


Craig tends to the garden

# WHO WE SUPPORT AND HOW WE SUPPORT THEM

Throughout 2020/2021, OC Connections supported over 367 adults living with disability. Helping individuals to achieve their personal goals, dreams and aspirations is an important part of this support.

## COMMUNITY LIVING



**94** 

**TOTAL PARTICIPANTS**

**706,144**  **HOURS**  
OF SUPPORT PROVIDED



**594,609 hrs**

SUPPORTED INDEPENDENT LIVING (SIL)



**87,638 hrs**

SIL DISABILITY SUPPORT FOR OLDER AUSTRALIANS (DSOA)



**12,995 hrs**

COMMUNITY LIVING INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT



**3,335 hrs**

COMMUNITY LIVING INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT DSOA



**7,567 hrs**

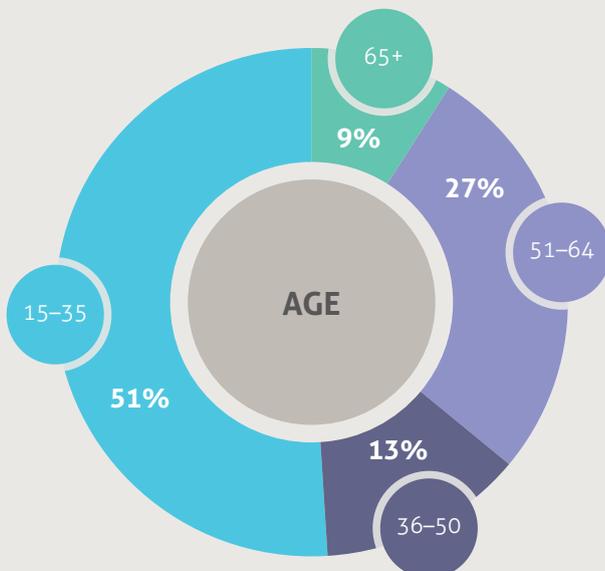
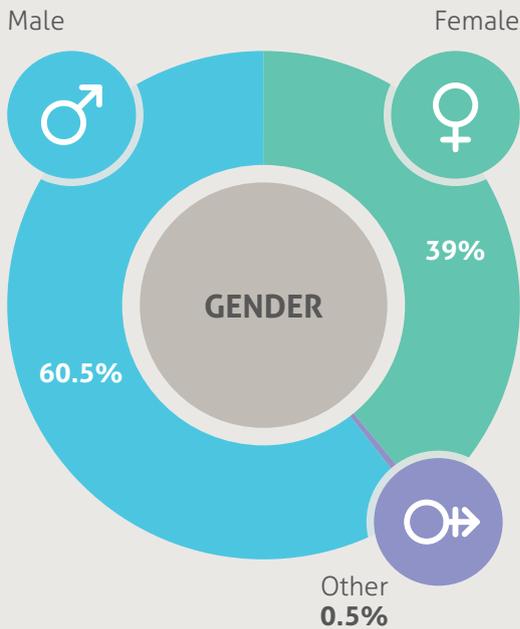
SHORT-TERM ACCOMMODATION

## DAY SUPPORT

**190** 

**TOTAL PARTICIPANTS**

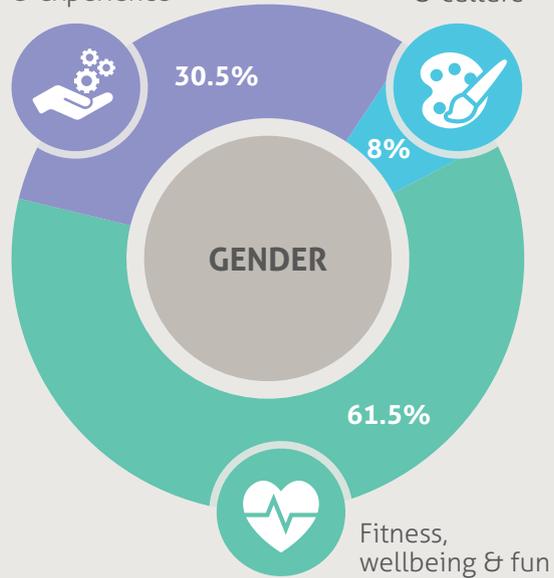
**108,008**  **HOURS**  
OF SUPPORT PROVIDED



Our Day Support Programs aim to build the skills, independence and confidence of participants. To achieve this, participants select programs within their areas of interest.

Learning, skills & experience

Art, music & culture



**8**



**NEW PARTICIPANTS**

**3**



**5**

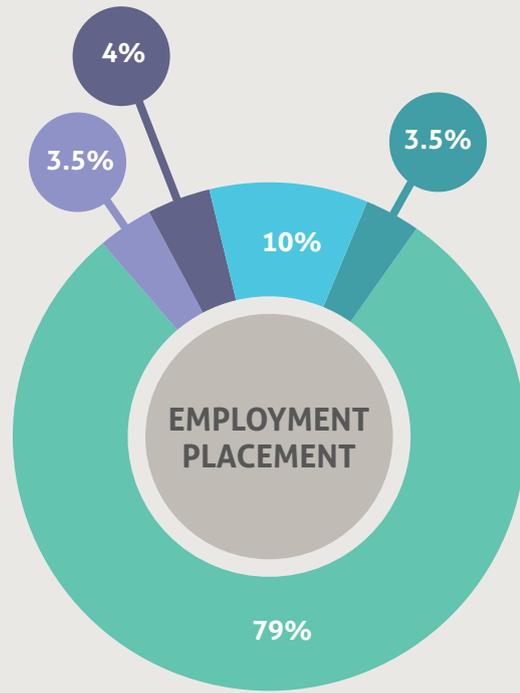
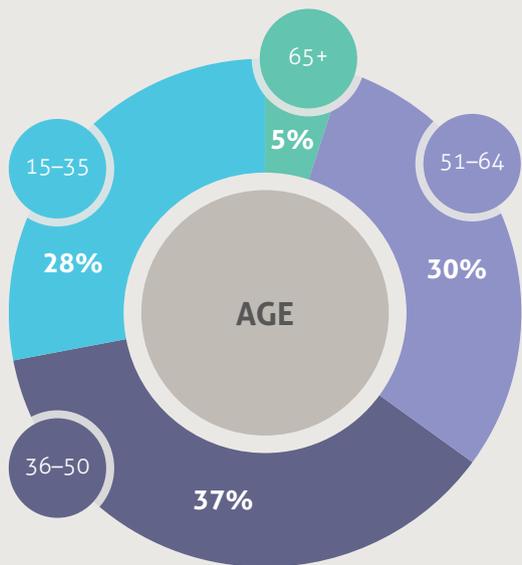
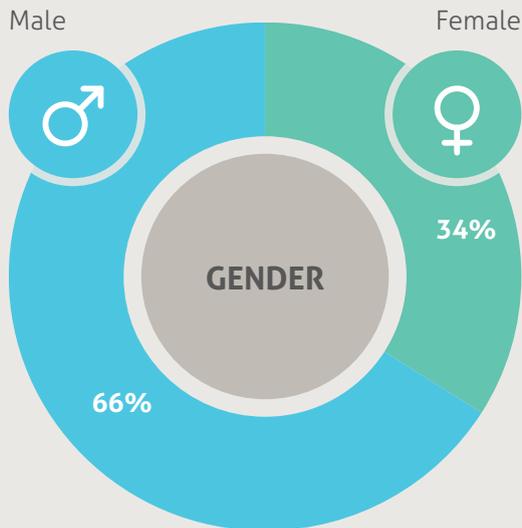


## SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT: OC CONNECTIONS ENTERPRISES

**119** 

**TOTAL PARTICIPANTS**

**111,625**  **HOURS**  
OF SUPPORT PROVIDED



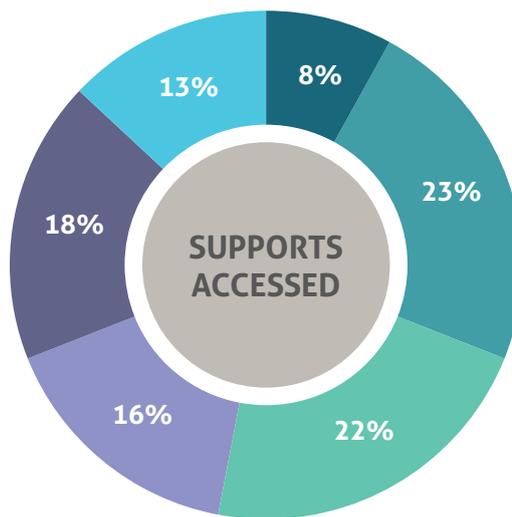
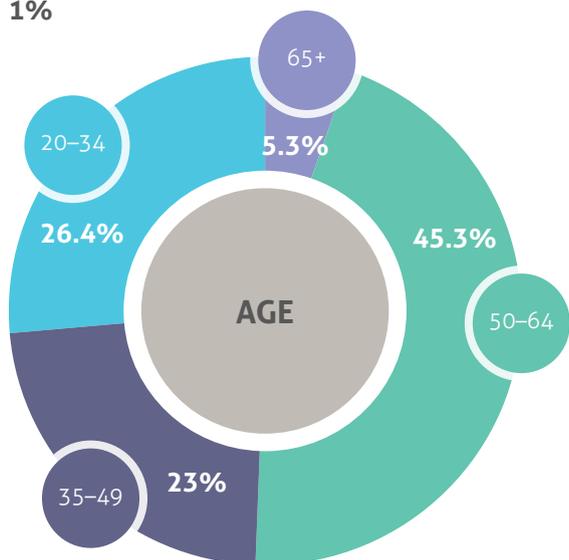
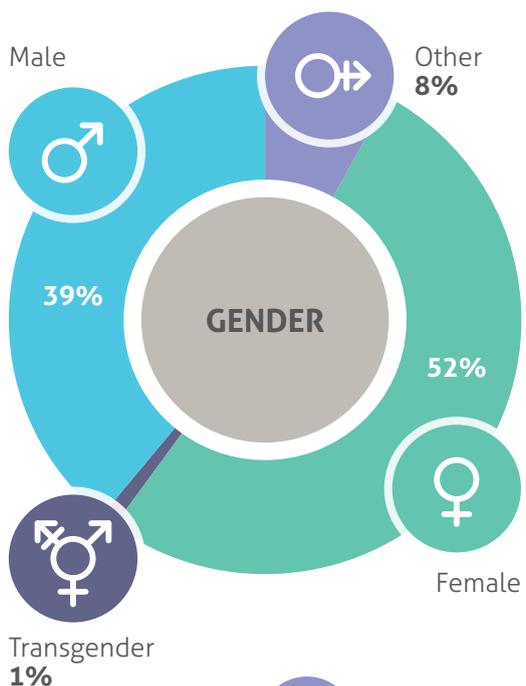
-  Car wash
-  Dept. of Defence Administrative Assistance Program (DAAP)
-  Administration
-  Packing
-  Towards Employment

## SUPPORT COORDINATION

**95** 

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**TOTAL PARTICIPANTS**



-  Employment
-  Day Support Programs
-  Accommodation
-  Personal care
-  Allied Health
-  Behavioural support

# YEAR IN REVIEW

Over the past year we have used our values-based approach to make sure that all individuals we support had the best possible access to the services and resources that matter to them.

During this time, we have worked tirelessly to:

- respond to the needs of participants and their families
- respond to market changes, including NDIS/NDIA changes
- position ourselves as the market leader in the sector
- actively improve our commercial effectiveness and long-term sustainability
- be responsive to and proactively manage the impact of COVID-19
- continuously inform and update staff, participants and their families about the implications of COVID-19 and its effect on service delivery, wellbeing and the vaccination rollout
- continue to innovate.

## THE STATISTICS

We are proud of our many achievements during the year, which we have summarised in the following statistics.



**40–523\***

WEEKLY DAY SUPPORT ACTIVITIES



**190**

PARTICIPANTS



**8**

NEW PARTICIPANTS



**100,270 hrs**

DAY SUPPORT PROGRAMS



**7,738 hrs**

DISABILITY SUPPORT FOR OLDER AUSTRALIANS

\*This range reflects the reduced services provided during the peak of COVID-19 lockdowns, when we offered services only to families of emergency services and those in urgent need.



## COMMUNITY LIVING



94

TOTAL PARTICIPANTS



706,144

TOTAL HOURS OF SUPPORT



16,330 hrs

INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT



7,567 hrs

SHORT-TERM ACCOMMODATION



## SUPPORT COORDINATION



95

TOTAL PARTICIPANTS



3,425 hrs

TOTAL SUPPORT COORDINATION HOURS



## SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION



119

TOTAL SUPPORTED EMPLOYEES



111,625 hrs

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT



4

TOWARDS EMPLOYMENT



186 hrs

HOURS OF SUPPORTS IN OPEN EMPLOYMENT



## VOLUNTEERS



500 hrs

OC CONNECTIONS ENTERPRISES



126 hrs

DAY SUPPORT / COMMUNITY LIVING



360 hrs

CORPORATE



130 hrs

FUNDRAISING

## AWARDS

### SERVICE AWARD RECIPIENTS

Every year at our Annual General Meeting, OC Connections recognises our wonderful staff through service awards. The staff listed below have given over five years of service to OC Connections and we presented them with their Service Awards in October 2020.

We thank them for their dedication, service, and commitment to the people we support and to OC Connections.



Beryl (Chebet) Vincent, one of our great Day Support staff members, wearing PPE

AWARD RECIPIENTS	TITLE	NUMBER OF YEARS WITH US
Laurelle Edwards	General Manager, Independence and Living	5
Sheela George	Disability Educator	5
Deborah Groves	Executive Assistant	5
Carmen Kauye	Disability Educator	5
Anna Kealy	Disability Educator	5
Robert Tallar-Villegas	Revenue and Project Accountant	5
Terani Thomas	Disability Support Worker	5
Debra Walters	Disability Support Worker	5
Gregg Osborne	Disability Support Worker	6
Michelle Jacobs	Disability Support Worker	11
Naureen Virani	Disability Support Worker	11
Tupauina Bau	Disability Support Worker	15
Alfred Duijkers	Disability Support Worker	15
Lily Rodricks	Training Officer	15

## THE ALLEN JAMES AWARD RECIPIENT: HANNAH ISLES

Every year the Rotary Club of Oakleigh, Clayton and Huntingdale assists OC Connections in developing its staff through the Allen James Award.

This year's Allen James Award went to Towards Employment Facilitator, Hannah Isles. In her current role at OC Connections Enterprises (OCCE), Hannah supports and mentors school leavers with disability in their path to employment.

Hannah was nominated for the award by OCCE's Athena Kontonis, Learning and Assessment Manager, and Steve Betinsky, General Manager, Employment and Enterprises.

In recognition of her work, Hannah received a vocational scholarship to pursue her education and training in the disability field. The scholarship will help fund her current study in the Graduate Certificate of Disability and Inclusion at Deakin University.

Steve said "Hannah has done a sensational job developing the Towards Employment curriculum, including building the online delivery model that we used to great effect during COVID-19 lockdowns. She has received several glowing endorsements from various participants' parents who have observed positive changes since their family members commenced the employment pathway."

**Hannah said, "It felt great to be recognised by my peers. I started the Graduate Certificate of Disability and Inclusion at Deakin University in March and hope to graduate in November this year. The award's financial contribution will be a significant boost to my study!"**

Hannah is passionate about using her skills and knowledge to make a difference in the disability sector. Inclusion in employment and everyday living is a driving force – she has lived experience with disability with her younger brother – and this is front of mind when she decides what to do with her time.



Peter Webb from the Rotary Club of Oakleigh, Clayton and Huntingdale presented Hannah's award

Before becoming the Towards Employment Facilitator, Hannah was a Disability Educator with the OC Connections Day Support Program. During this time, she was a key Support Worker for a number of participants and focused on developing their skills, knowledge and interests in leading a healthy lifestyle.

She developed a kitchen and garden program where participants learnt how to build and nurture a thriving garden and cook meals from scratch. Hannah was also instrumental in encouraging and supporting participants to apply for and secure funding from the OC Achieve Fund for a new table tennis table and basketball ring, to help them remain active.

In 2020 she had plans to spend time at Camp America's summer camp, supporting young people with disability. Like countless others, her travel was cancelled because of COVID-19, but the upside for us was she could continue with the Towards Employment Pathway, developing the program and supporting the participants with whom she had developed strong rapport. This led to Hannah developing the online component of the pathway, which allowed participants to continue their learning and training at home during lockdown. The change in 2020 plans also meant she could start further study.

Her hopes for the future are to continue her work in disability, particularly in the area of inclusion. She aims to apply knowledge gained from her degree to her work life. In particular, a major goal is to educate employers on inclusion for people with disability in the employment sector.

## HOUSING PROJECT

### UPGRADES

In 2020/2021 OC Connections embarked on an exciting housing project that aims to review and improve the quality of our homes and make them more comfortable for our residents. This involved inspecting all supported independent living houses and developing a plan to make upgrades as required. Even some of our newest homes are included in this initiative.

While there was a short delay because of COVID-19 lockdowns, the project is now underway. This work will ensure that all of OC Connections' residential homes are compliant with the National Disability Insurance Scheme's Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) guidelines.

The upgrades are exciting for the residents who have been involved in conversations with OC Connections about changes they may need to their homes.

### NEW HOMES

Importantly, the larger part of the project involves developing four new homes. Two will be in the inner East cities of Monash and Glen Eira and two in the outer East in the City of Casey.

Upgrading homes and creating new homes allows OC Connections to take another step towards providing quality accommodation in the community for people with disability.

We expect the project will take a number of years to complete and we will share more information as the project progresses.

## LEAVING ALLEN STREET DOCUMENTARY

In 2020, OC Connections featured in the award-winning documentary Leaving Allen Street. The documentary received the Audience Choice Award at the Melbourne Documentary Film Festival and aired on ABC iview.

The documentary shows the positive outcomes that can be achieved when people with intellectual disability have access to safe and affordable homes within a community setting. It showcases important themes like freedom, choice, opportunity, dignity, respect and love.

The Leaving Allen Street documentary demonstrates how providing housing for people with disability helps them to build their confidence and develop a closer connection to the community in which they live.

# STRATEGIC PLAN

The OC Connections Strategic Plan 2019–22 sets the Board agenda for how we as an organisation will invest in ongoing connection, innovation and outcomes for participants, their families and the community. We are proud of what the Strategic Plan 2019–22 represents and it continues to guide our organisational efficacy.

## STRATEGIC PLAN WORKSHOP

In February 2021, we held a Board and Executive Management Team Workshop to review the suitability of the Strategic Plan within the context of COVID-19. The Board agreed that while some initiatives had been slightly delayed, the overall plan was still relevant and on track. During the workshop we also heard from an external expert about how to maintain a healthy workplace culture.

## PRIORITISING WELLBEING

With the COVID-19 pandemic stretching into its second year, much of the past year's focus was on prioritising the wellbeing of participants, their families and staff. We conducted several wellbeing and resilience sessions over the past year and we worked hard to ensure that staff continued to be employed.

Communication during this unprecedented time was critical to running our organisation effectively. It involved keeping everyone up to date with changes to plans and schedules as they morphed to keep up with the pandemic. In response to COVID-19, all staff continued to make safety a priority.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

As an organisation, we are proud of the following achievements.

### Housing Project

Planning for our much-anticipated Housing Project is now well underway, and we are currently assembling a team that will arrange refurbishment of our residential houses and the build of our four new homes.

### Casey Hub

We launched our Casey Hub in March and this year's focus was to find a suitable base. The hub is an important part of our growth strategy and we have chosen Cranbourne West, in the City of Casey, as the location. This allows us to extend our services into Melbourne's South Eastern suburbs.

This project supports people with disability in living in the community by providing services that will grow participants' independence, skills and confidence.

### Merger and acquisition work

In continuing to roll out our Growth Strategy, the Board has been busy preparing for potential merger and acquisition opportunities.

# OUR STRATEGIC PLAN ON A PAGE 2020/21

## CONNECTION | INNOVATION | IMPACT

Investment in ongoing connection, innovation and outcomes for participants, their families and the community.

### OUR VISION

To enable people to live the life they choose within a society that values individuals for who they are, respects their rights and encourages participation in everyday life.



### OUR GOALS

1. Grow the number of hours of support service provided to younger participants (15-30 year olds) by at least 120% (c. 29,000 hours) by 2022.
2. Deliver at least 50% sustainable revenue growth for the organisation by 2022.
3. Identify and initiate at least three new service collaborations to drive quality, service scope and growth by 2022.

### OUR PRIORITIES

1. **Engage and attract younger participants**  
Extend reach, engage and grow the number of younger participants (15-30 year old's) accessing support.
2. **Service innovation and growth**  
Scaling our employment enterprises, growing supported independent living (SIL) and community inclusion supports to new and existing participants. Trialling value-add services such as allied health.
3. **Explore models for scale**  
Explore, test and progress models that can deliver significant scale with a focus on mergers and acquisitions and cross sector collaborations.

### OUR ACTIONS

**Embed Co-Achieve and data**  
Leverage internal and external data and insights to inform, respond to, and deliver on participant outcomes.

**Workforce capacity and capability**  
Develop an agile and adaptable workforce to respond to emerging participant and compliance demands, changing practice and new technology.

**Technology and practice**  
Explore, test, trial and invest in innovative technology and best practice service delivery models that enable ongoing connection with participants, and enhance our profile and reach.



Ben – Day Support participant



Michael – Supported Employee, OCCE

# CONNECTION AT WORK

## Our Supported Employment division, OC Connections Enterprises (OCCE) overcame several challenges last year as a result of the pandemic.

To comply with Department of Health' COVID-safety requirements, we had to limit the number of people working onsite each day. We also needed to keep some at-risk employees safe by getting them to stay home.

Fortunately, thanks to innovative workforce models like working from home, we were able to quickly change the primary work location of many of our employees to home, and ensure that everyone felt connected and supported throughout that process.

### EMBRACING TECHNOLOGY

We are proud of everything we managed to achieve last year and feel how we adapted is a testament to our resilience and capability as an organisation.

Keeping our employees connected and engaged during the lockdowns was an important part of 2020/2021. Wherever possible, we communicated online using tools like Zoom and Teams to keep people together and to make general 'wellness' calls. We also used these platforms to deliver online learning and training.

By embracing technology and thinking innovatively we:

- kept employees connected and engaged, through fortnightly virtual coffee catch ups
- provided ongoing work from home opportunities for 16 Supported Employees during lockdown
- conducted skill building and online training
- organised weekly speakers to share information with our Towards Employment cohort about their places of work and employment goals
- maintained our learning pathway programs

- successfully implemented COVID-safe work practices including:
  - practicing hand sanitising
  - practicing social distancing
  - wearing PPE
  - using check in and out procedures.

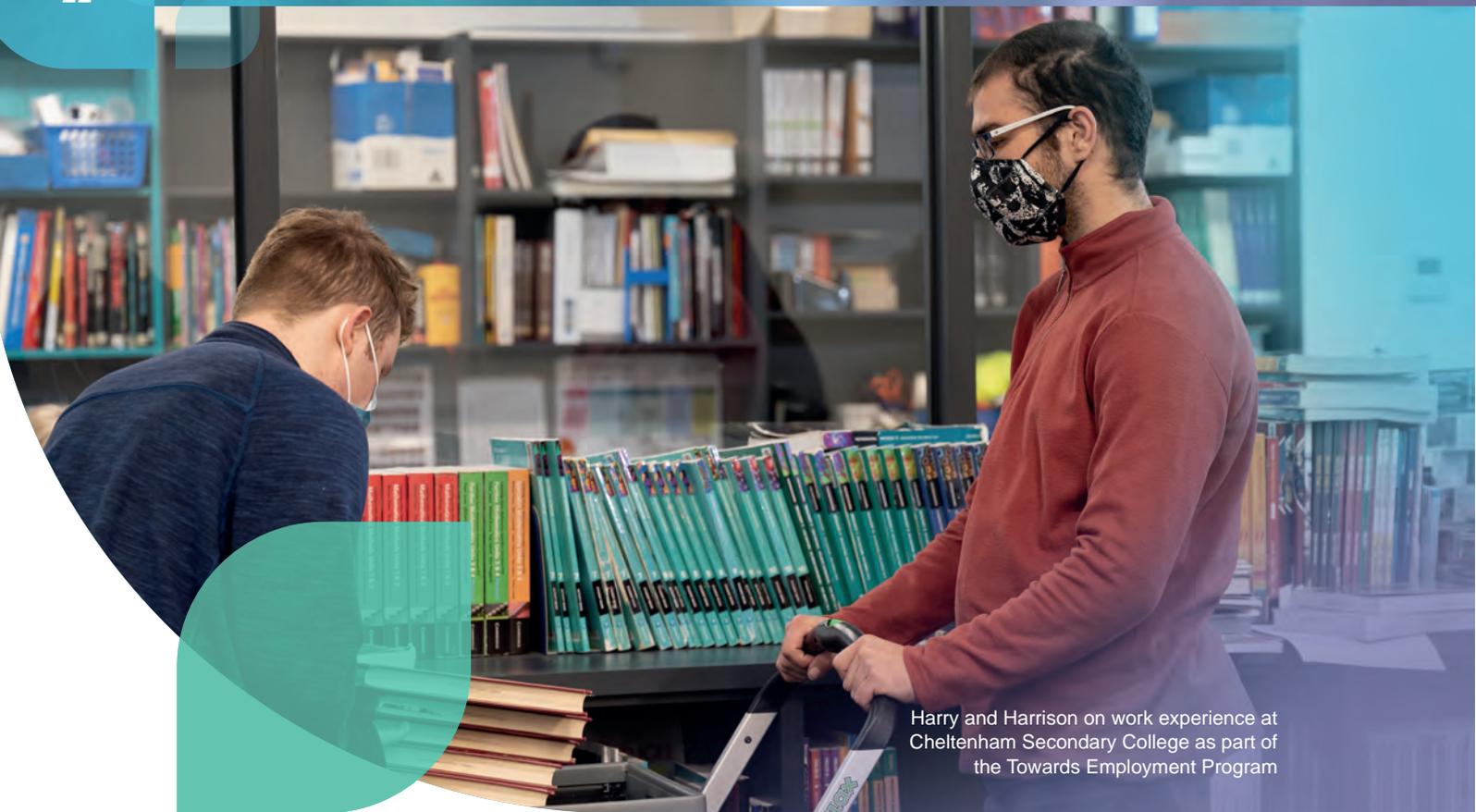
### DEFENCE ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (DAAP)

DAAP has stayed operational throughout the pandemic. All participants remained compliant with required COVID-19 safety protocols and dutifully delivered continuity of service through every lockdown. This meant essential mail services continued for Defence personnel based at St Kilda Rd Barracks. The DAAP contract has been extended for another 12 months, which is a wonderful achievement and continues a positive partnership.

### PACKAGING

OCCE packaging was able to operate for most of last year thanks to our new work-from-home initiative. This allowed us to maintain production and achieve 94% of our business targets. It also enabled us to keep our people connected and engaged throughout the lockdowns.

We were fortunate to have 16 of our Supported Employees working from home, which in turn maintained their work skills and helped us fill our orders.



Harry and Harrison on work experience at Cheltenham Secondary College as part of the Towards Employment Program

## CAR WASH

The OCCE car wash service closed for six months last year to keep our Supported Employees safe.

Despite this interruption, we onboarded three major new clients – VicPol, BaptCare and the Mordialloc Freeway Project (delivered by the McConnell Dowell Decmil Joint Venture) – and these new clients created new work opportunities for our Supported Employees across 11 customer-based sites throughout Melbourne's South Eastern, Bayside and Western suburbs. This has doubled the work opportunities available to Supported Employees who are interested in working in the car wash team.

**During the months that the car wash was operational, the team received some fantastic feedback, including this from VicRoads: “Your team today did an amazing job. We really appreciate their effort and timeliness. They were fantastic. Very courteous and even the dirtiest vehicle was not a problem for them.”**

## TOWARDS EMPLOYMENT

Our Towards Employment Pathway remained fully operational throughout 2020/21. To achieve this, we modified our learning modules and used a mix of Google Classroom and Zoom for course delivery. In embracing these technologies, we were able to keep participants supported and connected with minimal disruption to their learning goals.

OC Connections' participants also took part in weekly Zoom activities with guest speakers. This gave them the opportunity to learn about the presenters' places of work and employment goals. It also helped participants build confidence in speaking to people they had just met, and to gain a level of comfort using virtual technology.

## LOOKING FORWARD

As we look forward to a new financial year, we anticipate continued levels of uncertainty because of COVID-19.

As a result, we are committed to staying at the forefront of safety and compliance. We also anticipate a growing demand for our services, which means we will be able to welcome more Supported Employees.

## SPOTLIGHT ON NANE

Nane has worked at OC Connections Enterprises (OCCE) for three years in the blister packing section of our commercial operations. She has a clear goal of becoming a supervisor and looks forward to being able to share her experience and knowledge with others.

When OCCE was closed to Supported Employees during the first lockdown in 2020, Nane was at home. Determined not to let the lockdown beat her, she used the time to plan her employment path. She decided she wanted to get her forklift licence to add to her skills in the packing section.

"I wasn't working, so I decided to do something about it and make use of my days" she said. True to her word, Nane enrolled in the WorkSafe forklift training course. After two days of theory and one day of hands-on learning, she now confidently operates a forklift under supervision in the OCCE

warehouse. Nane views this experience as a lesson in believing in herself. "The training gave me the freedom to honour my goals and believe in myself. I know I can conquer anything" she says.

As well as working on her own goals during lockdown, Nane was conscious of supporting others who were less fortunate. During the 2021 lockdowns, Nane cooked meals to share with her friends and her church community. She loved being hospitable and enjoyed helping people who were experiencing financial hardship during the lockdowns.

Nane's self-drive and determination have seen her become a valuable member of her work and personal communities.

Well done, Nane – we are so proud of your kindness and determination!



Nane doing what she loves: working a forklift and cooking for others (above right)

## CONNECTION, COMMITMENT AND CREATIVITY – DAY SUPPORT PROGRAM

Our popular Day Support Program underwent a number of changes in 2020/2021 due to COVID-19 lockdowns. During this time, the Day Support team showed outstanding commitment and resilience, shouldering the changes as they continued to provide modified services.

Without their hard work, many families in our community would have gone without the supports that they heavily rely on.

### SUPPORTING ESSENTIAL WORKERS

While our Day Support Program was unable to operate as usual for much of the year, we were able to run the program for participants whose family members were classed as essential workers and for participants whose health and wellbeing would have been negatively affected without these supports.

In total, we were able to help approximately 40 families with one-to-one support. Our COVID-safe practices and commitment to strong infection control protocols were key to running a safe and successful program during this uncertain time.

### DAY SUPPORT AT HOME

For participants in our residential homes, we provided modified Day Support services at home. This required great flexibility and understanding from staff, residents and their families. We extend our warmest thanks to everyone involved. With one-to-one support, many participants were able to develop new skills and work towards their individual goals during this time.



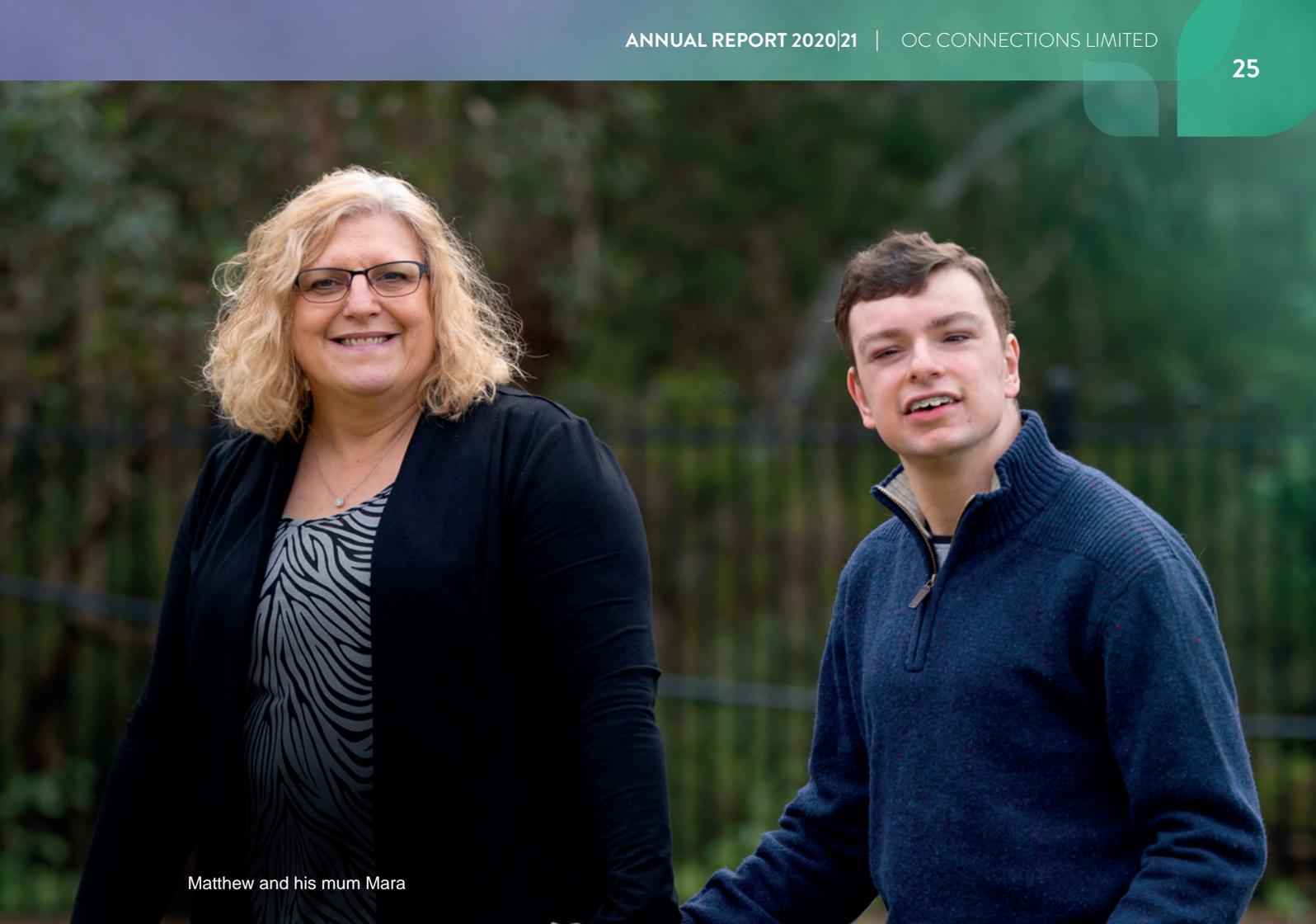
Rev Colleen Arnold-Moore

### STAYING CONNECTED

For participants who had to stay home, we were able to provide individualised services that matched their individual preferences. We invited participants and their families to take part in a questionnaire asking about their interests and preferences for 2021 and worked hard to implement these requests. By focusing on issues like choice and control, we were able to support participants in new and exciting ways. We received excellent feedback from family members who are amazed at what we have helped participants to achieve.

### THANK YOU TO THE ANGLICAN CHURCH

Our sincere thanks goes to the Anglican Church, in particular to Reverend Colleen Arnold-Moore and Minister Michelle Budhathoki, who offered the use of their halls in Dandenong Road and Abbeygate Street at a significantly reduced cost. This helped us to facilitate ongoing support during the times we were limited by social distancing requirements.



Matthew and his mum Mara

## SPOTLIGHT ON MATTHEW

Matthew has been an enthusiastic participant in our Day Support Program for the past two-and-a-half years. During this time, he's also taken part in a number of community-based activities with OC Connections.

Matthew enjoys connecting with his peers and taking up activities that get him out and about. He loves to socialise and learn new skills that boost his independence. He has most recently taken part in OC Connections' activities like Explore Melbourne, Train Travel Training, Bake and Taste, and has also visited the Queen Victoria Market with us. He enjoys work experience at OC Connections Enterprises and helps out in Day Support Programs.

The team at OC Connections enjoys Matthew's friendly and outgoing personality. He likes interacting with staff and peers and enjoys taking

part in our structured programs. Like many participants, in the last year Matthew's Day Support activities were interrupted by the Melbourne lockdowns. His mum, Mara, said that throughout each lockdown he couldn't wait to get back to OC Connections to see his friends and talk to the staff.

Matthew's family maintained his connection to the community and helped him work on his communication skills by arranging a weekly Zoom meeting with another friend and a facilitator. They decided to continue this activity, even when they were out of lockdown.

Thanks for being such a great part of our community, Matthew!

Peter and his dad Alex



## SPOTLIGHT ON PETER

Peter has attended our Day Support Program since 2001. His family members are essential workers, which meant he was able to access onsite support at OC Connections during COVID-19 lockdowns. Being able to attend during these times was a bonus for Peter who benefited from the consistency of routine and from seeing familiar faces.

Over the past year, Peter has made great progress towards achieving his goals of independence and social participation. He enjoys ordering and paying for his own lunch, with chicken and avocado sandwiches being his number one choice on the menu!

Peter also enjoys the company of his friends and OC Connections' staff. His family report seeing huge progress in his behaviour and maturity, and he's really enjoying life.

Peter's father Alex, the Facilities Manager at OC Connections who is responsible for providing and distributing PPE during the pandemic, said that OC Connections was the safest place Peter could be at this time. He said "OC Connections was well prepared in terms of PPE and infection control training, so we knew Pete was getting top-notch support in a safe environment."

Great work Peter. We can't wait to see what you achieve next!

# NEW AND CHALLENGING TIMES – COMMUNITY LIVING AND SUPPORT SERVICES

The 2020/2021 year turned up a number of significant changes within our Community Living and support services division. While keeping everyone safe was our top priority, our staff and participants showed great resilience and proved that wonderful things could happen, even during stage three and four lockdowns.

The family members of several participants shared their excitement with us about the progress their sons, daughters or siblings made during this time.

## EMBRACING TECHNOLOGY

During Melbourne's stage three and four lockdowns, the issue of connection became especially important. Like many people across the city, our residents were unable to visit family and friends, and access to participants' houses was strictly limited.

To combat this, many of our residents embraced new technologies, such as smart phones and tablets, and enjoyed spending time talking to their loved ones over Zoom, Teams and Skype. Several residents found this form of staying in touch gave them a new sense of independence and a better connection to the outside world.

## DOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY

In safeguarding participants and staff, we moved some of our vibrant Day Support Programs into our residential homes – and, in most cases, we were able to offer similar activities to those usually conducted at 773 Warrigal Road.

When we couldn't arrange the same activities, we offered alternatives. Having familiar staff roll out these activities was a big help, and many residents said that they enjoyed doing things a little differently. We adhered to our 'one staff, one site' policy at all times.

## LEADING BY EXAMPLE

The Leaving Allen Street documentary was placed on an education portal and made available for students studying disability and community services. We received great feedback from education providers, and the documentary also generated work placement requests from students who want to work with us after seeing what we have achieved.

**“2020 was not an easy year for anyone. Knowing that Roger was in good hands and enjoying his time during lockdown gave us peace of mind. We really appreciated the team's efforts to include our family through Facebook and video calls. This has helped us keep connected with Roger.”** Gloria Parsons.

## STAYING SAFE

Health and safety was our top priority in 2020/2021, and this commitment extended to our residential services. We implemented rigorous infection control processes and procedures, and provided training to all staff. We also engaged a registered nurse to visit all sites and identify any areas to improve. This was a useful exercise for our staff, and we appreciate their commitment and diligence during such a challenging time.



Happy couple Kathleen and Rodney

## SPOTLIGHT ON KATHLEEN AND RODNEY

On 28 February 2021, friends, family, staff and participants attended the much-anticipated commitment ceremony of Kathleen and Rodney. Originally planned for February 2020, their big day had to be postponed three times because of the pandemic.

Finally, this year, they were able to walk down the aisle and have a beautiful ceremony. The couple topped off their special day with a honeymoon at Phillip Island. Their trip included visiting the Penguin Parade and the San Remo Pelican Feeding.

They also visited the Maru Koala and Animal Park, toured the Phillip Island Chocolate Factory and checked out the Nobbies Centre Antarctic Journey. They even found time for a game of minigolf, took a trip to Churchill Island and had a look at the Phillip Island Grand Prix Circuit.

Congratulations Kathleen and Rodney! Here's to a wonderful life together.

## SPOTLIGHT ON VLADA

Vlada is an avid artist with a passion for painting and drawing. She has successfully exhibited, won awards and sold her art before and hopes to keep doing this in the future. She lives in one of OC Connections' residential support houses, and she also participates in our Day Support Program.

Between 2020 and 2021, Vlada had to work her activities around COVID-19 lockdowns. This meant that she did a lot activities at home with one-to-one support or with her housemates. During her time at home, Vlada concentrated on producing her art.

Vlada also worked hard to progress her goal of having a holiday with her friends. In April 2021, Vlada achieved this when she went on a supported girls' trip to Phillip Island with her friends Jane and Mandy. She used money she had earned from

painting sales as her spending money! She visited the Penguin Parade, held a koala, went to the zoo and enjoyed her time with her friends.

Vlada said she had such a great time that she is now creating more artworks to sell so she can save towards another holiday.

Well done, Vlada. Great work!



**Below from left:** Vlada and her friends Jane and Mandy explored Phillip Island, learning about penguins from Penguin Parade park ranger. **Right:** Vlada meeting kangaroos.





Dianne – OCC resident

## SPOTLIGHT ON DIANNE

Supported independent living resident Dianne made the most of 2020/2021 with the help of her newly acquired smart phone, given to her by an OC Connections' staff member. Her family pays the ongoing charges and it's opened up the way Dianne thinks about staying connected.

For Dianne, having a phone has increased her independence. She is excited by her ability to stay in contact with her Support Worker, her partner and her family.

Dianne has been keenly learning how to use the features of her new phone. She especially likes the voice-to-text function, which automatically converts her voice into a text message.

Well done, Dianne! We are delighted about your new-found independence.

# THANKING OUR VOLUNTEERS

## CONNECTING WITH VOLUNTEERS IN CHALLENGING TIMES

Our volunteering program was significantly affected by COVID-19 throughout the 2020/2021 financial year. Lockdowns, one-to-one support, capacity restrictions and concerns over volunteer health meant we had to pause our regular volunteer activities.

While we couldn't engage in face-to-face activities for much of the year, we quickly found other ways our volunteers could help us and stay connected to our community. We made great use of our email, phone and newsletter resources, and our volunteers absolutely rose to the challenge of supporting others in and out of lockdowns.

## FACE MASK DRIVE

We send a big thanks to Janine Frankland, Lesley Swallow and Mary Davies who made and donated over 100 fabric face masks to OC Connections for our Community Living participants.

Their use of fun patterns and colours helped staff and participants stay happy and safe when full medical masks were not required.



Family member, Lesley Swallow (right) presents CEO, Therese Desmond (left) with her handmade masks

## LOOKING FORWARD

As restrictions ease and until vaccinations increase across the community, we are still limited in our onsite capacity, and our infection control procedures will stay in place.

Despite these hurdles, we have found ways for volunteers to come on board and support participants and staff. We have also taken steps to revive our Student Placement Program, which was thriving before the pandemic.



Volunteer, Natasha working from home

## SPOTLIGHT ON NATASHA

Natasha Aulia has volunteered with OC Connections since November 2020. She is completing her Bachelor of Design/Bachelor of Media and Communication through Swinburne University, and she's put her skills to great use across our organisation.

Natasha started with OC Connections Enterprises and then expanded her volunteering to two days a week to work in the Marketing team. During this time, Natasha has mostly worked from home and has helped with tasks like database management, video production, electronic marketing, and print and online material development.

Natasha has always wanted to work for a social enterprise or a not-for-profit organisation. She attended some early volunteer intake days and decided that we were a good fit for her values.

Natasha says "My experience as a volunteer has strengthened my skills in creating content and has really developed my workplace relationships. It's also added a practical aspect to my studies, and I now have a really good insight into how I can drive change in the disability sector."

Natasha now coordinates a team of five Supported Employees in the car wash enterprise, working on site at BapCare one day per week, while still committing to her volunteer duties. She aims to complete her degree in 2022 and hopes to gain work in a communication-based role in a social enterprise or a not-for-profit business.

"Working at OC Connections has made me want to continue working in the not-for-profit sector where I can make a difference to those who need it most" she said.

Well done, Natasha, and thank you for the wonderful contribution you are making.

## CORPORATE VOLUNTEER IN PROFILE

### INSURANCE AUSTRALIA GROUP

The OC Connections Enterprises (OCCE) packaging team experienced a surge in orders in 2020/2021. While this was great for our organisation, some at-risk, Supported Employees were unable to work on-site because of restrictions imposed by the Department of Health and Human Services. Capacity issues also limited how many employees we could have on-site.

Thankfully, the team at Insurance Australia Group (IAG) came to the rescue. During October 2020, six staff from IAG's Project Office donned full PPE gear and helped with packing for a full day. Their support meant the OCCE team was able to fulfill their orders and meet new contracts.

Gail James, Senior Supervisor at OCCE, said she was humbled by the contribution of the IAG team. "They really got stuck in and helped with the contracts we were working on. Everyone stayed safe, and there was plenty of chatter between the volunteers and employees."

IAG Executive General Manager, Anthony Haberfield, who initiated the activity said "A volunteer opportunity like this aligns with IAG's values and mission – to make the world a safer place."

We extend a warm thank you to the entire IAG team who volunteered:

- **Anthony Haberfield** – Executive General Manager, Strategic Change and Partnering
- **Alexis Bateman** – Manager, PMO
- **Val Boswell** – Manager, Process Management
- **Kathryn Jolly** – Manager, Portfolio Governance
- **Kate Maestri-Wright** – Assistant to EGM
- **Claire Salvas** – Senior Manager, Knowledge Management.



IAG Volunteers Kathryn Jolly and Anthony Haberfield at OCCE



Gail James on site at OCCE

## STAFF MEMBER IN PROFILE: GAIL JAMES

As a Senior Supervisor in the OC Connections Enterprises (OCCE) packing department, Gail James is responsible for supervising and coordinating one of OCCE's major business outputs. Gail helps to ensure production targets are met. She also coordinates the supervisors, Supported Employees and volunteers, depending on work demand in the factory.

Over the past year, we have really appreciated Gail's grit, determination and agility. Not only has she been asked to meet the demands of increased job contracts, she's also had to deal with a reduced workforce because of COVID-safe capacity limits and at-risk staff who have had to stay at home.

According to Learning and Assessment Manager, Athena Kontonis, Gail has been instrumental in keeping operations on track throughout the

pandemic. She worked hard to provide work-from-home opportunities for at-risk staff and coordinated online catch ups so that people could feel connected and supported. Gail also supervised the corporate volunteers who helped the packing team when our vulnerable employees could not work in the factory.

Gail is always learning on the job and looking at ways to improve. She actively sought feedback on the packing process from the Insurance Australia Group corporate volunteers. The team was impressed with the operations and processes that Gail had already put in place and could not fault her procedures.

Thanks Gail for your hard work and dedication during these unprecedented times.

## STAFF MEMBER IN PROFILE: KAI WANG



Kai Wang at 773 Warrigal Road

Kai joined OC Connections in 2014 after working as a nurse in the aged care sector. “I had been speaking with a colleague who was working in the disability sector and I thought it sounded interesting. I’m really interested in communicating with people and was also looking for a career change” he says.

Kai was a Disability Educator in our Day Support Program, spending time working with participants and their families to find the right activities and support to help them reach their goals. He also worked with the Day Support team on the transition to the NDIS.

When asked about the highlights of his role, Kai said “I really enjoy educating and supporting participants to achieve their life goals and build upon their independence.” However, he says “It can also be emotionally challenging at times and sometimes difficult developing the skills necessary to adapt to different styles of communication.”

Kai’s passion and commitment to working with adults with intellectual disability was evident and recognised through his appointment to Team

Leader within the Day Support Program. As part of a team of four, Kai was responsible for resourcing staff and activities, timetabling, liaising with families, recruiting, and training and working with staff to ensure they applied a person-centred practice.

Kai’s knowledge of the disability sector and how OC Connections operates, together with his compassion for and understanding of people with disability, have helped him work as an effective communicator and supporter in this field.

It was these skills that resulted in Kai’s recent secondment to the role of Manager, Independence. In his seconded role, he is responsible for overseeing OC Connections’ Day Support Programs, with a focus on strategic planning, program and business development, and staffing and performance outcomes.

Laurelle Edwards, Kai’s General Manager, said “Kai is a quiet achiever who is softly spoken, with effective people skills. He brings a lot to the Day Support team.”

# PEOPLE, LEARNING AND CULTURE

While maintaining a stable and supportive work environment throughout the pandemic was a primary focus of the People, Learning and Culture (PLC) team over the past year, the team also moved forward with some major projects.

## TRAINING PROVIDERS

Formalising OC Connections’ preferred training providers was a significant undertaking this year, and this was successfully completed. Providers responded to an Expression of Interest for the opportunity to work with OC Connections, and we were pleased with both the process and outcome of this initiative. We now have a full year of training scheduled that will be provided by high-quality providers and accessible to all staff. This will ensure we will meet our compliance requirements in an efficient and timely way.

## NDIS WORKER SCREENING

During the past year we implemented the National NDIS Worker Screening compliance initiative, which ensures that our staff meet the required standards for offering high-quality support to participants.

## EMPLOYEE CONNECT

Our Employee Connect Human Resource Information System rolled out more features this year, with a focus on streamlining recruitment and employee administration. The program successfully reduced the administration burden on PLC staff and gave employees self-service access to basic HR functions that relate to their personal information.

		ACCOM.	DAY SUPPORT	OCCE	CORPORATE SERVICES
EMPLOYEE STATUS	FULL TIME	4	18	22	19
	PART TIME	60	66	124	10
	CASUAL	54	14	6	4
	TOTAL	118 (29%)	98 (25%)	152 (38%)	33 (8%)
GENDER	FEMALE	61	70	74	23
	MALE	57	28	78	10
AGE	18-24	8	9	10	2
	25-44	72	48	71	9
	45-54	28	22	40	16
	55+	10	17	21	6

## TREASURER'S REPORT AND FINANCIALS

The financial year to 30 June 2021 saw significant disruption to the day-to-day routines of participants, families and staff. From a financial perspective, the COVID-19 pandemic dramatically reduced support hours and income across the organisation. Fortunately, the government's JobKeeper program supplemented lost income and, as a result, OC Connections managed to report a surplus.

As with last year, the challenges posed by the pandemic required us to find new ways of working. This included how we delivered support to our participants. In our Day Support Program, one-to-one support was again significantly above pre-COVID-19 levels and was offered almost exclusively from within our centres and Community Living homes.

Social distancing requirements reduced the number of employees that we could have onsite. The COVID-19 lockdowns also saw the temporary closure of some employment areas, including the OCCE car wash.

Over the past year, we continued our service provision to Community Living homes. We also operated our Day Support and Employment services to the best of our ability while staying compliant with government-sanctioned guidelines and lockdown procedures.

Work on our strategic growth initiatives also continued. Key highlights included:

- opening of a Day Support hub in the City of Casey.
- receiving Board approval for OC Connections Enterprises to progress its transformation strategy.
- progressing through the early stages of a multi-year project to refurbish existing Community Living homes and to build additional homes.



Michael Dillon | Treasurer

The socioeconomic environment remains uncertain; however, the Board and Executive Management Team are confident that the organisation is operationally and financially well prepared for next year.

In closing, I would like to acknowledge the work performed by Anthony McAvaney, my fellow Board Director. I'd also like to thank Greg Patterson, who, as the General Manager of Corporate and Commercial Services, has once again skillfully guided the organisation through the financial challenges of COVID.

OC Connections gratefully acknowledges our donors and community supporters. We also acknowledge the Commonwealth Government for providing the JobKeeper program, which allowed us to retain staff at pre-pandemic levels.

**Michael Dillon**  
Treasurer

# GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

## OUR BOARD DIRECTORS

Our Board of Directors has provided governance oversight and support during this challenging year. We would like to offer our thanks for the guidance and support provided by our volunteer directors.



**TOM BAXTER**  
Chair



**SARA BRENTNALL**  
Deputy Chair



**MICHAEL DILLON**  
Treasurer



**TONY MCAVANEY**  
Director



**ALAN BERGMAN**  
Director



**KAITLYN GULLE**  
Director



**KYLIE PAYNE**  
Director

## COMMITTEES

### Finance & ICT Committee

Michael Dillon – Chair  
Tony McAvaney

### Compliance, Audit, Risk & Quality Committee

Sara Brentnall – Chair  
Kaitlyn Gulle

### Governance, Remuneration & Succession Planning Committee

Tom Baxter – Chair  
Sara Brentnall

### Strategic Development Committee

Tom Baxter – Chair  
Michael Dillon  
Tony McAvaney  
Kylie Payne

## OUR EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT TEAM

Our Executive Management Team is responsible for steering OC Connections. The team structure reflects our commitment to having a positive impact on the lives of people living with disability.



**THERESE DESMOND**  
Chief Executive Officer



**GREG PATTERSON**  
General Manager  
Corporate and Commercial  
Services



**SHARON ROXBY**  
General Manager  
Innovation and Customer  
Experience



**LAURELLE EDWARDS**  
General Manager  
Independence and  
Community Living



**STEVE BETINSKY**  
General Manager  
Employment and Enterprises

Jack tends to the garden at 773 Warrigal Road



## PARTICIPANT REFERENCE GROUP

- Tricia Malowney – Independent Chair
- Sara Brentnall – Director representative
- Tom Baxter – Board Chair
- Jules Rogers – Secretariat
- Lauren Bourne
- Greg Brown
- Kathleen Forscutt
- Aidan McCallum
- Ben Meade
- Mark Roberts
- Sandra Williamson
- Michael Miniapen

The Board would like to thank all members of the Participant Reference Group for:

- being committed and taking the time to speak directly with the OC Connections' Board Directors at quarterly meetings
- contributing to the development of the organisation.

The Board feels privileged to hear directly from people who use OC Connections' services about what they like, what they think could improve and any other matters they choose to discuss.

OC Connections would also like to thank Ms Tricia Malowney OAM for independently chairing this important group. Her advice, guidance and continued support in how to best engage the people that use our services helps to:

- capture participants' input, making sure their voices are heard
- use the information to further develop the services we provide
- guide organisational progress for the people we serve.

## SUPPORTING OC CONNECTIONS

**As a not-for-profit organisation, we are immensely grateful for the support we receive from our community and business sponsors.**

Our fundraising program is the primary way we raise money for additional or unfunded items. These items include aids, programs, recreational opportunities and resources that we know will enhance participants' confidence and the choices and options available to them.

Our fundraising events also rely heavily on the support of our outstanding team of volunteers, and we are very appreciative of their efforts.

### FUNDRAISING

**Our traditional avenues of fundraising were hampered throughout 2020/2021 due to the various COVID-19 restrictions that affected Melbourne. As with much of the coronavirus story, it turned out to be a case of swings and roundabouts.**

#### Annual Christmas Tree Festival

During October 2020, we made the difficult decision to cancel our Annual Christmas Tree Festival, due to safety and population density concerns around COVID-19.

As supporters of OC Connections will know, the festival is a cornerstone of our fundraising efforts. It is also an event that many families within our community look forward to.

Cancelling the event meant a significant loss to our fundraising income for 2020 and created a sense of disappointment among many of our loyal supporters.

To extend the Christmas spirit, we supported our long-term supplier The Dandenong Christmas Tree Farm, by promoting their trees to all of our regular customers and community members. We are pleased to note they reported their best year yet and, in return, they donated a significant amount of their profits to our OC Achieve Fund.



Neil and Robyn from the Dandenong Christmas Tree Farm



Our golf day was sold out to 200 players from the community.

### Annual Charity Golf Day

OC Connections has enjoyed an ongoing relationship with The Metropolitan Golf Club, and we are grateful for the continued support of its members in their commitment to providing fundraising opportunities for the people we support.

You wouldn't think it could get better than that. Even so, our longstanding relationship with The Metropolitan Golf Club reached new heights this year.

During lockdown, The Metropolitan Golf Club Women Members stayed motivated to raise funds for us through raffles and prizes, to make their donation as they do each year.

Even though they had not been able to see each other, the wonderful Women Members provided us with a significant donation that will help us to buy furnishings and homewares for our Community Living participants who are currently updating their homes.

Because of the generosity of The Metropolitan Golf Club members and a small but lucky window in COVID-19 restrictions, we were able to hold our 25th Annual Charity Golf Day in June 2021. The event felt more special because last year's event was cancelled, and this year Melbourne was only just emerging from its fourth lockdown in mid-June.

The event sold out to 200 players, it was supported by 12 sponsors, our Board Directors, 20 volunteers and 9 staff.

We would like to express our sincere thanks to The Melbourne Metropolitan Golf Club and its supportive and benevolent members.



**From left:** Metropolitan Golf Club Women's President, Caroline Nicholson, OCC resident, Aly, OCC CEO, Therese Desmond, and Metropolitan Golf Club representative, Kate Kemp.

## GRANTS

We extend our gratitude to the following individuals and organisations for their generous grants over the past year:

- Gandel Philanthropy
- Temporary Viability Support
- Department of Health
- City of Monash

## DONATIONS AND BEQUESTS

We are greatly appreciative of the following bequests that we received during 2020/2021:

- The Estate of Francis Andrew Howard:  
\$170,503.12
- The Estate of Esther Margaret Cummins:  
\$31,293.48

Thank you also to those who have donated to our OC Achieve Fund:

- Dandenong Christmas Tree Farm
- Steve Dimopoulos MP
- Estate of Edmund George Barker
- Margaret Blandon
- Dinah Cragg
- Mike Joyce
- Woodards Foundation
- JW and JJ Hunter

# HOW YOU CAN HELP

As a not-for-profit organisation, we rely on fundraising and donor support.

The money we raise from fundraising, donations and bequests helps us to pay for items and programs that we would otherwise be unable to fund. All contributions make a direct and positive difference to the lives of OC Connections' participants and their families.

## DONATE

To donate to OC Connections or subscribe to our newsletter and receive updates about current appeals, visit [OCConnections.org/donate](https://occonnections.org/donate) or phone **03 9569 0603**.

Donations over \$2 are tax deductible.

## LEAVE A BEQUEST

Leaving a bequest to OC Connections is one of the most valuable gifts you can give. A bequest lasts more than any one lifetime, and your gift will help us to provide services for participants and their families into the future.

Bequests are most commonly made by leaving a gift in your will. A will is a legal document and should be made with the advice of your solicitor or a trustee company. This will ensure that your intentions are carried out in the exact way that you wish.

Find out more at [OCConnections.org/bequests](https://occonnections.org/bequests).

## VOLUNTEER

OC Connections relies on its wonderful team of dedicated volunteers. If you would like to volunteer with us, visit [OCConnections.org/volunteer](https://occonnections.org/volunteer), or email [volunteer@occonnections.org](mailto:volunteer@occonnections.org) or call **03 9569 0603**.

# CONTACT

## OC CONNECTIONS CORPORATE OFFICE AND CENTRE-BASED DAY SUPPORT

773 Warrigal Road, Oakleigh, Vic. 3166  
 Postal address: PO Box 127, Oakleigh, Vic. 3166  
 Phone: (03) 9569 0603  
 Fax: (03) 9568 4328  
 Email: Administration@OCConnections.org  
 www.occonnections.org

## OC CONNECTIONS ENTERPRISES

1088 Centre Road, Oakleigh South, Vic. 3167  
 Phone: (03) 9575 4200  
 Fax: (03) 9575 4244  
 www.occonnections.org

## TOOTGAROOK HOLIDAY HOUSE

Morris Street, Tootgarook, Vic. 3941  
 For bookings phone: (03) 9569 0603  
 Email: Administration@OCConnections.org

OC Connections Limited has a number of other locations, listed below. Phone us on 03 9569 0603 for more information.

### Community hub sites

- Cranbourne West Community Hub
- Monash Seminar and Training Centre
- Hughesdale Community Centre
- Oakleigh Anglican Church
- Oakleigh Holy Trinity Anglican Church
- Fregon Hall
- South Oakleigh Bowls Club
- Wellington Reserve Community Centre

## CAR WASH SITES

Our 16 car wash sites are located across Melbourne, from Sunshine through to Mordialloc and Cranbourne.

## COMMUNITY LIVING HOMES

OC Connections operates and provides support in 13 homes across Melbourne's South East, including:

- Ashwood
- Chadstone
- Clayton
- Hampton East
- Mount Waverley
- Oakleigh
- Oakleigh South

## DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE

Defence Administrative Assistance Program (DAAP),  
 Victoria Barracks  
 256–310 St Kilda Road, Southbank Vic. 3006

## A WORD OF THANKS

Our thanks go to the Anglican Church of Oakleigh, the City of Monash, the Oakleigh Bowls Club and the City of Casey for the wonderful partnerships we have established that enable us to further our work in supporting people across these venues and other sites.

Thank you to all OC Connections' participants, families, staff and volunteers who have shared their time and stories for this Annual Report.

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