

Cornerstone Contact Centre Annual Report 2021

About the work of Cornerstone

Emergency Relief



(Left) Local residents, many who are asylum seekers, wait to collect a food parcel during lockdown restrictions in early 2021; (Right) our volunteer Barb with a bag of fresh fruit, vegetables and bread that has been prepared for a community member in need.

Throughout 2021 Cornerstone continued to provide emergency relief parcels to community members who were doing it tough. This includes hundreds of local families and individuals, many of whom were asylum seekers, refugees, or people with very limited or no source of income.

Our team prepared and distributed hundreds of food parcels each week, distributing up to 250 parcels weekly during lockdown periods throughout the year. These parcels contained fresh fruit and vegetables, fresh bread, pantry staples, toiletries, and where needed, supplies for children or pets.

We continued to receive calls from local families who were isolating, and provided many locals with cooked meals, pantry parcels and fresh produce delivered to their door whilst isolating. We are thankful for the support of the City of Greater Dandenong, and the State Government through the Priority Response to Multicultural Communities fund, The Andrews Foundation, along with service clubs and individual supporters, who all helped to fund this important work when people needed it the most.

Community Meals

Our community meals continue to be foundational to the work of Cornerstone. Each week, hundreds of community members share a cuppa, a game of pool or a yarn over a delicious freshly cooked meal. Many from our community struggle with loneliness or poor mental health, and the caring conversation of our team is integral to the work we do, supporting those from our community who are most in need.



CORNERSTONE



(Left) Community members enjoying a lunch service at Cornerstone. (Right) A delicious and hearty meal prepared by our team.

Community Development Programs

The Art Corner and the Writing Corner ran during 2021 between lockdowns, and were thoroughly enjoyed by many community member with some surprising artistic talent! We hosted some guest artists who shared their passion and expertise with the group, who hope to hold a show featuring their work in 2022.



Community members participating in the art group

Collaborative Community Garden Project

The garden project has been a highlight in collaboration between local agencies. A partnership between Cornerstone, the Rotary Club of Greater Dandenong and Endeavour Hills, Dandenong Baptist Church, Nourish DBC, and the Men’s Shed of Endeavour Hills, with funding provided by the City of Greater Dandenong Council, the garden has been a wonderful achievement and cause for celebration.

The garden is being enjoyed by many, with fresh produce harvested from the garden being used in our community meals, and many community members participating in the weekly Gardening Club.



CORNERSTONE



(Left) Rotarians enjoying the community garden; (Right) A nutritious Summer crop.



(Left) The Gardening Club planting and harvesting; (Right) Community member Karen tends to the plants.

Partner Organisations

Partner organisations include the One Voice shower truck, Orange Sky mobile laundry service, the Avalon Centre who provide clothing, a Bolton Clarke homeless person's health nurse, ERMHA, Job Advocates from Concern Australia and Hand Brake Turn, the Australian College of Optometry, Reaching Out Because We Can and Servants of the Two Hearts. We have also enjoyed the support of the Lion's Club, the Rotary Club of Greater Dandenong and Endeavour Hills, Noel Social Services, the Lion's Club Supper Club, Friends of the Children Foundation, and a team from the ATO and Monash Health, who each partner with us to provide our community with ongoing meals. We are continued involvement throughout the year with the City of Greater Dandenong Anti-Poverty Consortium, working collaboratively with Council and various local agencies.



Volunteers

Cornerstone has a committed team of volunteers. Through their ongoing and dedicated support, our organisation has provided support to hundreds of vulnerable individuals and families this year. Our team in 2021 has included both Social Work and Community Studies placement students and we continue to partner with Chisholm TAFE and Federation University to provide valuable placement opportunities.

Staff and Board

Naomi Paterson: CEO
Juwita Jouhari: Kitchen Manager

David Talathoti: Chairperson
Jamie Maddaford: Vice Chairperson
Grant Renkema: Secretary
Corey Van Garderen: Treasurer
Gloria Anderson: Board Member
Suzanne Van Rooy: Board Member
Cathy Bishop: Minutes Secretary

Moving forward: 2022 and beyond

In 2022 we will celebrate 30 years of Cornerstone. This is a tremendous milestone, and a real testament to the wonderful work of Cornerstone and the support from the broader community throughout the years.

We look forward to some new initiatives that are planned for 2022, including job pathways opportunities for community members and some wonderful new community development programs.



Cornerstone's Supporters and Sponsors

We extend our thanks to all our supporters, including the various levels of government, along with corporate and individual sponsors, and local churches, who make the valuable work of Cornerstone possible. Cornerstone sponsors include:

- City of Greater Dandenong Council
- State Government, with the support of Gabrielle Williams MP
- Federal Government, with the support of Julian Hill MP
- Priority Response to Multicultural Communities department
- Toyota Material Handling
- The Andrews Foundation
- Dandenong Christian Reformed Church
- The DCRC Op Shop
- Dandenong Baptist Church
- Commonwealth Bank of Australia, Dandenong Plaza branch
- Nissan Manufacturing
- The Open Door
- Various service clubs as listed on Page 2
- Our generous individual donors

We acknowledge the goodness of God in and through the work of Cornerstone, bringing hope and transformation to those we serve.

"Be strong and take heart, all you who hope in the Lord." Psalm 31:24