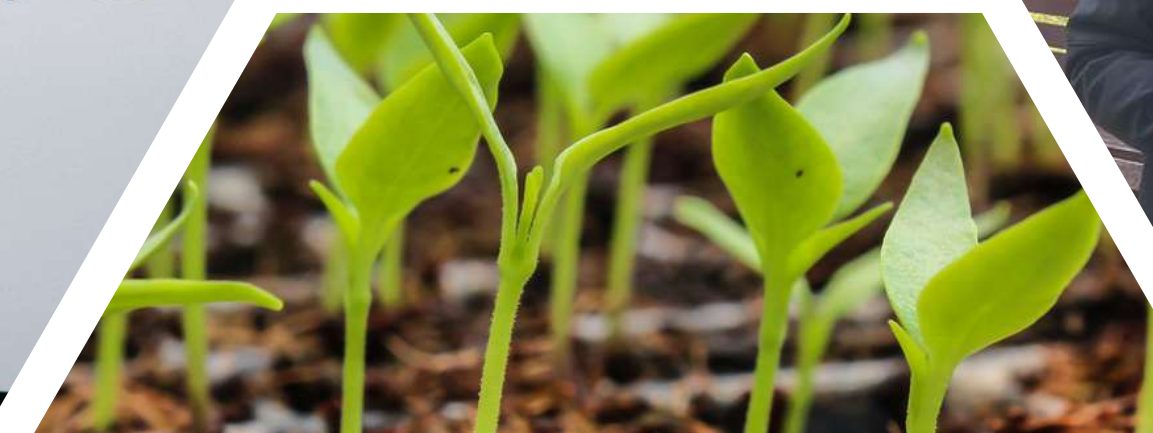




DIVRS

Darebin Information,
Volunteer & Resource Service

Connecting people
to opportunity,
community and
support



Annual Report
2022-23



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OUR VISION

A **THRIVING AND CONNECTED** DAREBIN COMMUNITY

OUR MISSION

**WE CONNECT PEOPLE TO OPPORTUNITY,
COMMUNITY AND SUPPORT**

We reduce financial stress and social isolation.
We increase access to community information and build capability.
We promote health and wellbeing, inclusion and sustainability.

OUR PURPOSE

Through free programs and services, DIVRS provides:

- Resources and support to Darebin residents on no or low income or in financial stress. Our aim is to work with them to strengthen their financial independence, encourage self-reliance and increase capability.
- Programs and services that advance the education and skills development of Darebin residents.
- A volunteer service that promotes social inclusion and strong networks creating opportunities for participation in the City of Darebin.
- Local capabilities and knowledge to address disadvantage and sustainability, contributing to the development of social policies and services that impact on the residents of our community.



“We truly appreciate all of your generous support throughout the year, it was a lifeline that helped more than you realise.”
- Community member

OUR VALUES

ADAPTIVE

We adapt when we need to by building on our strengths and knowledge



RESPECT

We recognise and value each other, people's choices and the contributions everyone makes



COLLABORATIVE

We work with all people and organisations to achieve shared goals



FEARLESS

We are bold, unafraid to take risks, active and courageous



SOCIAL EQUITY

We believe in sharing resources



OUR SDG

What we do contributes to these Sustainable Development Goals

1 NO POVERTY



2 ZERO HUNGER



3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



13 CLIMATE ACTION



OUR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK



Listen to understand



Welcoming and Accessible



Build Trust and Connect



Collaborate, Communicate and Collective Action



Evaluate and Celebrate

We take a community development approach to the way we work at DIVRS. Doing so supports our progress towards a connected inclusive community where people and planet thrive.

We use strengths-based ways of working with people to support people identify and act on the issues important to them and their community. We acknowledge that communities can shape a positive future through connected efforts and sharing responsibility.

This framework is designed to guide how we work, how we develop projects and how we monitor and evaluate the impact we have in our communities.

Through using an evidence based, best practice strategic approach to community development and strengthening, DIVRS aims to:

- Activate community by connecting people to opportunities and their community.
- Actively create welcoming spaces for the people of Darebin to connect with each other, their community and local opportunities.
- Create opportunities for people to share their gifts and skills to strengthen a sense of belonging and connection to our community.

Our Community Development Framework supports our generosity of spirit at DIVRS. Being generous with our time, sharing information and collaborating are important to us. It enables us to foster relationships and contribute to positive outcomes for the people and communities we work alongside.

We use an asset based approach to work with the community and our partners to build on our strengths and community generosity to:

- Empower people to make choices and develop skills.
- Build local capacity for social and financial inclusion.
- Build local capacity for environmental sustainability.
- Connect and organise for greater impact.

We use inclusive language to create an environment where all people feel valued and empowered. We strive to promote a sense of belonging, recognising the strengths and unique qualities of each person in our community. Through our language choices, we reinforce the principles of respect, inclusivity and care that are integral to the [DIVRS Community Development Framework](#).

OUR IMPACT IN 2022-23



27,575 volunteer and student hours of service equating to over \$1.1m (at \$41.72 per hour)



Over 2,400 households supported



6,909 conversations providing information, support, advocacy and help with complex matters



59 no interest loans approved



Over 12,700 pantry parcels, fresh food bags, outreach food parcels and food vouchers and 10,000 ready made meals shared



7,711kg of fresh produce harvested or donated



Rescued over 25,400kg of fresh produce and food that would otherwise go to landfill



40 community garden sessions and 7 urban food workshops



Helped 15 people get their licence



1,539 hours of driving experience for young people



1,620 health check and wellbeing activity participants as part of the SMILE Program



Over 50 outreach activities as part of our community development work



*"People are very nice and knowledgeable. Thank you for all the kindness and care."
- Community member*

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIRPERSON

Full-hearted thanks to everyone who has contributed to DIVRS here on Wurundjeri Country in the last year. To those who recently joined us – welcome – and to the staff and volunteers who have left your mark here and moved to a new role, you will be remembered.

A farewell that I note with special thanks is our former Chair, Anna Morgan, who led a renewal of the Committee of Governance before handing on the baton in November 2022. We are delighted that Melinda Lucas and Simon Gleeson joined the committee this year. It is a committee with diverse skills and strong connections to Darebin's people and places.

DIVRS is a living example of the power of a deeply embedded place-based organisation to connect people to opportunity, community and support. Sharing food, information and skills for the benefit of our whole community has been even more important in a year defined by a cost-of-living crisis. I am proud to be part of an organisation that shares what it has rather than leaving anyone behind. But the fact is, demand for assistance nearly doubled.

Challenges like this highlight the importance of our delivery capability as an organisation. The second year of the 2021-2025 Strategic Plan has been focused on investing in our people and practices. A significant achievement this year is the Community Development Framework. It has incorporated perspectives of the broader DIVRS community – staff, volunteers and residents – to examine and explicitly set out the knowledge and practices that make us effective.

The Community Development Framework was an affirming and uniting process. It is also the groundwork for impact measurement. The measurement framework now underway will give potential funders greater confidence to invest in DIVRS. The focus we have placed on organisational capability makes us more adaptable and able to mobilise a range of funding streams to sustain our programs and support our volunteers into the future.

Thank you to Federal MP Ged Kearney, State MPs Nathan Lambert and Kat Theophanous and to the members of Darebin City Council for your ongoing commitment to understanding local issues. Thank you also to Darebin Council and the many organisations and businesses who support DIVRS. It takes a coordinated effort to address cost-of-living and food security challenges, now more than ever.

The achievements you will see in this year's annual report are uplifting. Our Executive Officer Christina DiPierdomenico has been a tremendous leader in fostering a culture of inclusion around shared, practical priorities. Every seedling propagated, food parcel shared, every interest-free loan secured, every driver's licence passed, every bit of health care enabled, every connection made and every word of advocacy is an outcome of collaboration and a statement that every person matters.

Kate Naish
Chairperson



A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE OFFICER

This has been a year of growth for DIVRS, extending how we engage and work with the community to reduce inequality and social isolation and improve food security, health equity and access to information and support.

- 10 pop up fresh food markets in East Reservoir and East Preston in collaboration with local organisations and Darebin council as a festival of food justice.
- Introduced a Complex Support Program for people to speak with an experienced social worker about their tough or tricky issues at DIVRS and Reservoir Neighbourhood House.
- Delivered a work experience program in our Food Sharing team for students with a disability.
- Restarted the SMILE Program at seven locations across Darebin with free health checks and wellbeing activities by LaTrobe student nurses to address health and social isolation.
- Energy outreach and support to our hardly reached community members to help apply for the power saving bonus and provide energy information and advocacy to save money and reduce costs.
- Translated our flyer about DIVRS into five community languages to help more people access DIVRS.
- Developed a new school partnership to help young people get on the road driving experience.

- Rebuilding the Darebin Fruit Squad, increasing access to the urban orchard to share excess fruit with people experiencing food insecurity.
- Over 50 activities through the Our Place Our Purpose project which has built and nurtured relationships, established connections between neighbours and improved wellbeing and a sense of safety.
- Sixty per cent increase in fresh nutritious produce grown and harvested to add to the food parcels we share with people.
- And more as you will see in this report.

We saw the impact of the cost-of-living crisis across many of our programs and services. There was a 40% increase in people seeking help through our Community Information & Support program – an extra 60-80 households per week.

The inter-connectedness of what DIVRS delivers, the skill and commitment of our staff, volunteers and students and the strength of our collaborative relationships with government and local services and organisations means we can provide holistic, wrap around support and connect people to opportunity, community and support.

Our volunteers and students donated 27,575 hours of their time, skills and knowledge, a 60% increase on the previous year. We had more than 300 people volunteering or on placement across the year.

As well as developing our Community Development Framework we focused on our strategic objective of 'Engagement and advocacy with the Darebin community that builds capacity'. Given our work with community, we're able to raise issues that affect those we work with and provide insights. Doing so is an important part of elevating people's voices to address inequity and to respond to loneliness and climate change.

- Participated in a mental health community consultation and Darebin Council's Housing Strategy and Climate Emergency Strategy consultations.
- Made a submission to the Inquiry into Food Security in Australia.
- Attended a forum organised by Darebin Council with the Chair of the Senate Inquiry into cost of living to share impacts on the community we are working with and possible solutions.
- Spoke on a panel at SecondBite's launch of its Social Impact Report about food security, the cost-of-living crisis and how we work with people.
- Advocated to all levels of government about the cost-of-living crisis and what we see every day.
- Advocated to state government for funded coordination hours for all community information and support agencies.

- Spoke at the Sustainable Food Leaders forum and Circular Economy forum about our Urban Food Program and building fair, sustainable local food systems.
- Presented to Darebin Council's Welcoming Communities Advisory Group about our community development work in East Preston and East Reservoir.

I thank and celebrate everyone who has been a part of and worked with DIVRS this year; committee members, staff, volunteers, students, government, businesses, community organisations, local services, education providers and funders. Your contribution to our culture and community, your passion for making a difference, your care and kindness for the people we work with and each other all contribute to building a connected, inclusive community and making DIVRS a welcoming place to be.



OUR TEAM

We acknowledge everyone who has volunteered with, been on student placement or worked at DIVRS over the year. Thank you!

VOLUNTEERS & STUDENTS

Abdullah Mahmoud
Adele Sharpe
Akiko Saito
Alastair Rice
Alba Del Bianco
Alessandro Guerra
Alexandra Matthews-Peat
Alexia Fikiris
Alfred Ye
Amanda Hiorth
Amanda Ngo
Anastasia Gonis
Andrew Dallafiore
Angie Iizeth Caicedo
Angus Price
Angus Nevein
Anika Miller Cooper
Anthony Huber
Anthony Gravina
Anthony Vens
Anthony Tsui
Arras Quang
Ashleigh Herbert
Asia Brownlie
Atiq Maner
Barbara Horn
Bashira Basari
Bernie Hartley
Bonnie Salter
Brett Scapin
Brian Koop
Brian Ramsay
Bridget Kuch
Bridgit McMullen

Caitlin Rohr
Carrie Thomas
Cathy Arter
Cheryl Davies
Chittesha Sharma
Chris Long
Christine Banks
Christine Slatter
Christine Pang
Christopher Thomas
Claire Scarlett
Claire Diprose
Clancy Dowdle
Clare Grant
Collette Parker
Corinne Davis
Danielle Belleville
Dawn Butcher
Dawn Lowery
Dennis Southon
Domenic Dessmann
Eadaoin Doherty
Elisa Whittaker
Elizabeth Koch-Brown
Ellie Watts
Erica Clarke
Erin Lewis
Faye Vellucci
Fiona Crockett
Fozia Irum
Gayle Paech
Gemma Watson
Hannah Bolton
Hannah Broadhurst

Hannah Trotter
Harleen Rekhi
Hayedeh Sadafi
Heather Robinson
Helen Bloustein
Helen King
Ísabelle Chabaud
Ivy Lee
Jacinta Firman
Jacob Duyvestyn
Jacob Mullins
Jacqueline Fennell
James Kanggara
James Grey
Jan Washfold
Jane Caruna
Jay Aggarwal
Jenny Zhang
Jessica Ridout
Joan Taylor
Joanne Lee
John Hillier
John Pinniger
John Chandapillai
Jonathan Dunmore
Jordan Fraser-Trumble
Judith Thompson
Julia Lyons
Junko Ito
Kara Church
Karen Christous
Kari Matthews
Katherine Mackay
Keri-Ann Tochka

Kerry Wise
Kevin Te
Kevin Ferns
Kevin Vaezi
Kim Cadigan
Kim Ng
Lachlan Strong
Lan Nguyen
Laura McIntyre
Laurie Eaton
Lee Templar
Linden Stirling
Lisa Bates
Liz Fitzgerald
Lynette Mackenzie
Madeline Carney
Malcolm Thomas
Manuel Goncalves
Margaret Halliday
Margaret Ashton
Margaret Ferns
Margo Baker
Mary Taouk
Mayen Pane
Meg Robinson
Megan Kimber
Melanie Lithgow
Melannie Madarang
Melina Newman
Melinda Webb
Michael Gwynn
Michaela Bourke
Monique Lemon
Munashe Gatsi

Natasha Sakarombe
Neil Benham
Niren Govinden
Nour Kawji
Octavia Nakos
Owen Williams
Panayiota-Peta Sidiropoulos
Paul Daly
Paulina Morrison
Pei Feng
Penelope Sekeris
Premdev Anirudhra
Priyani Madan
Priyantha Wirasekara
Prue Evans
Rachel Carlisle
Ramzia Dashtani
Rebecca Smits
Rebecca Payne
Renee Stevens
Rhona May Radan
Rhonda Barson
Rhonda Otto
Rob Castagnini
Robin Steward
Robyn Bradley
Robyn Caulfield
Robyn McLachlan
Ruben Stoney
Salvatore Ferraro
Samantha Morison
Samina Hassan
Sammantha Elmes
Sarah Cowell

Sarah Nesbitt
Sarah Crivelli
Scarlett Curnuck
Shaun McCrohan
Silvia Starc
Simon Le Page
Simon Jane
Slim Loueslati
Sophie Cubit-Jones
Stella Rankin
Stephanie Bush
Stephen Chapple
Struan Jones
Stuart Brennan-Smith
Suchitra Krishnamoorthy
Susan Humphries
Susan O'Brien
Susan Payne
Tawananyasha Chimusoro
Thanh Huynh
Thomas Olejniczak
Tyrell Heathcote
Ven Margarejo
Vicky Kachrimanis
Vipul Ladoiya
Warwick Sprawson
Wendy Billington
Yasmin Kelsall
Yen Le
Yoko Goh Wei
Zac Aarons



OUR TEAM

We acknowledge everyone who has volunteered with, been on student placement or worked at DIVRS over the year. Thank you!

COMMITTEE OF GOVERNANCE

Kate Naish, Chairperson
 Ellen McNaught, Deputy Chairperson
 Retta Berryman, Secretary
 Adam Hanson, Treasurer
 Amanda Wilczynski, Committee Member
 Brook Sturdy, Committee Member
 Simon Gleeson, Committee Member
 Melinda Lucas, Committee Member
 And with thanks to former committee member Anna Morgan

STAFF

Andrew Tranter, Community Development Officer (from April)
 Angela Gilmore, L2P Program Coordinator (from November)
 Bianca Lyndon, Food Sharing and Engagement Program Leader
 Caitlin Coleman, Social Worker, Complex Support Program
 Caz Schofield, Administration Officer
 Chloe Tredrea, Food Sharing and Engagement Program Leader (from June)
 Christina DiPierdomenico, Executive Officer
 Ellie Watts, Community Information & Support Team Leader
 Emma Harvey, Communications Officer
 Fiona Scoullar, Health and Wellbeing Program Leader
 Gina Wittinglsow, Interim L2P Program Coordinator
 Holly Gallagher, Urban Food Program Leader (to February) | Darebin Fruit Squad
 Coordinator
 Julie-Anne O'Brien, L2P Program Coordinator (to September)
 Michelle Casamento, Newton St Garden Lead
 Olive Moynihan, Community Development Officer
 Vanessa Nitsos Chan, Urban Food Program Leader
 Vicky Kachrimanis, L2P Administration Officer

SMILE PROGRAM PLACEMENT

Abegael	Cherish	Kaylah	Olivia
Ajla	Connor	Keely	Pia
Alana	Dalal	Kira	Pratik Kaur
Alexandra	Daniel	Kong	Rachel
Alexia	Davin	Kwai Chuen	Reetu
Alexia	Eladio Jr	Lara	Renee
Alyssa	Elaine	Leah	Roisin
Amani	Emily	Leela	Ruth
Amber	Emma	Lola-Jane	Ruya
Amelia	Firdausi	Madeline	Saba
Andrea	Gabriella	Mary	Sabrina
Angelique	Giada	Matthew	Sally
Anna	Gladys	Mia	Sarah
Annabelle	Glory	Michelle	Sarita
Aparna	Grace	Mike	Sascha
Asmaa	Grace	Morsal	Shannon
Astrid	Gurinder	Nalani	Shinelle
Aylah	Harinder	Natalia	Shiyuan
Bhawandeep	Isabella	Navneet	Sophie
Bisruti	Janice	Neave	Taslim
Bisruti	Jasmyn	Neve	Tayla
Braella	Jaylon	Ngoc	Tiea
Cambel	Jessica	Nicole	Tiffany
Candelle	Jessica	Nicole	Victoria
Cara	Julie	Nicole	Vo Cat Anh
Carolyn	Ka Shane	Nima	Wathsala
Chantelle	Karina	Nina	Yasir
Chelsea	Kate	Olivia	Yasmin
Chelsea-May	Katrina	Olivia	Zara

Gwenn Recla-Vamenta, LaTrobe Clinical Facilitator
 Pam Jones, LaTrobe Clinical Facilitator
 Sharon Zdunic, LaTrobe Clinical Facilitator

COMMUNITY INFORMATION & SUPPORT

Our Community Information & Support program provided over 20,000 instances of direct support to the Darebin community. That equates to \$391,448 of support through food, material aid, energy and bill help, advocacy, information, referrals and complex case support to Darebin residents on no or low income, in financial stress or experiencing systemic exclusion or disadvantage.

					
6,420 CONVERSATIONS	705 INSTANCES OF ADVOCACY AND FINANCIAL HELP	489 INSTANCES OF COMPLEX SUPPORT	59 NO INTEREST LOANS APPROVED	12,700 FOOD PARCELS AND FOOD VOUCHERS	300 HOLIDAY HAMPERS

With the cost-of-living crisis, we saw a 40% increase in people seeking support - an extra 60-80 households each week. This is more people than in the long lockdown in the second half of 2021. Our team worked with an average 600-700 households each month.

With adaptability and courage, we navigated this increase in demand in the context of little extra covid-19 emergency relief funding and for the first half of 2023, a 50% decrease in food to share with community members.

- Decrease in food rescue donations because of natural disasters, climate change and the end of covid-19 additional funding.
- Increase in the cost of food we buy. Our dollar - like everyone's - does not stretch as far as it used to.

- Donations from local businesses and producers mostly stopped, as they too are feeling the cost-of-living and climate impacts.

Guided by our values, particularly social equity and our belief in sharing resources we chose to share what we were able to source with all the people who 'walked through our door'.

We advocated to all levels of government about the situation and what we were seeing every day.

And we started a one-year project funded by Sustainability Victoria to explore new local food partnerships.



"Services and staff are all welcoming. You don't have to feel worried or guilty about coming here. The fresh food definitely helps."
- Community member

There were more people who had never had to seek support before, some who had income from employment and others who were no longer able to make their government payment make ends meet. Some people we hadn't seen since lockdowns. Financial stress was more acute for more people.

People spoke with us about the impacts to their budget, lives, health and wellbeing with the increases in cost of food, rent, transport, medical expenses, energy, bills, household goods and clothes.

Alongside cost-of-living pressures, the complexity of matters we've seen over the last couple of years has continued.

Double the number of people compared to last year spoke with us about mental health and social isolation. There was an increase in people speaking with us about family violence and family breakdown matters.

Other issues we speak with people about include:

- mental health and dental health wait times
- quality, suitability, safety of public housing and rooming houses and demand for housing
- complexity of applying for the disability support pension and NDIS
- lack of digital access
- not enough public showering facilities and free laundry services for people experiencing homelessness
- difficulty in finding bulk billing GPs taking new patients.

Cost-of-living impacts

- A 27 year old single parent with a 12 year old son has withdrawn from friends and family as she cannot afford to do activities or eat out. She plans months in advance for essentials she needs so she can pay the bills and will skip meals to ensure her son has food.
- Cost of transport impacts people's ability to access programs and services. It's usually not possible for people to put all appointments on one day to minimise costs.
- Families do not have funding for school fees and uniforms, books and devices to do their homework at home. The state school relief fund is not applicable to religious schools or for schools with a specific uniform.
- People are going without necessary medication as they cannot afford it.
- An older couple each receiving disability payments have carefully budgeted all their lives. They expressed shame that they could now not make ends meet despite their careful budgeting.
- Not using heaters or air-conditioners, heating or cooling only one room or spending the day at Northland or the library to reduce energy costs.

Our team of trained volunteer Community Support Workers, Financial Assistance and Capability workers and social work students on placement had more than 6,420 conversations with people to provide information, referrals, advocacy and support and to work with people to build capability.

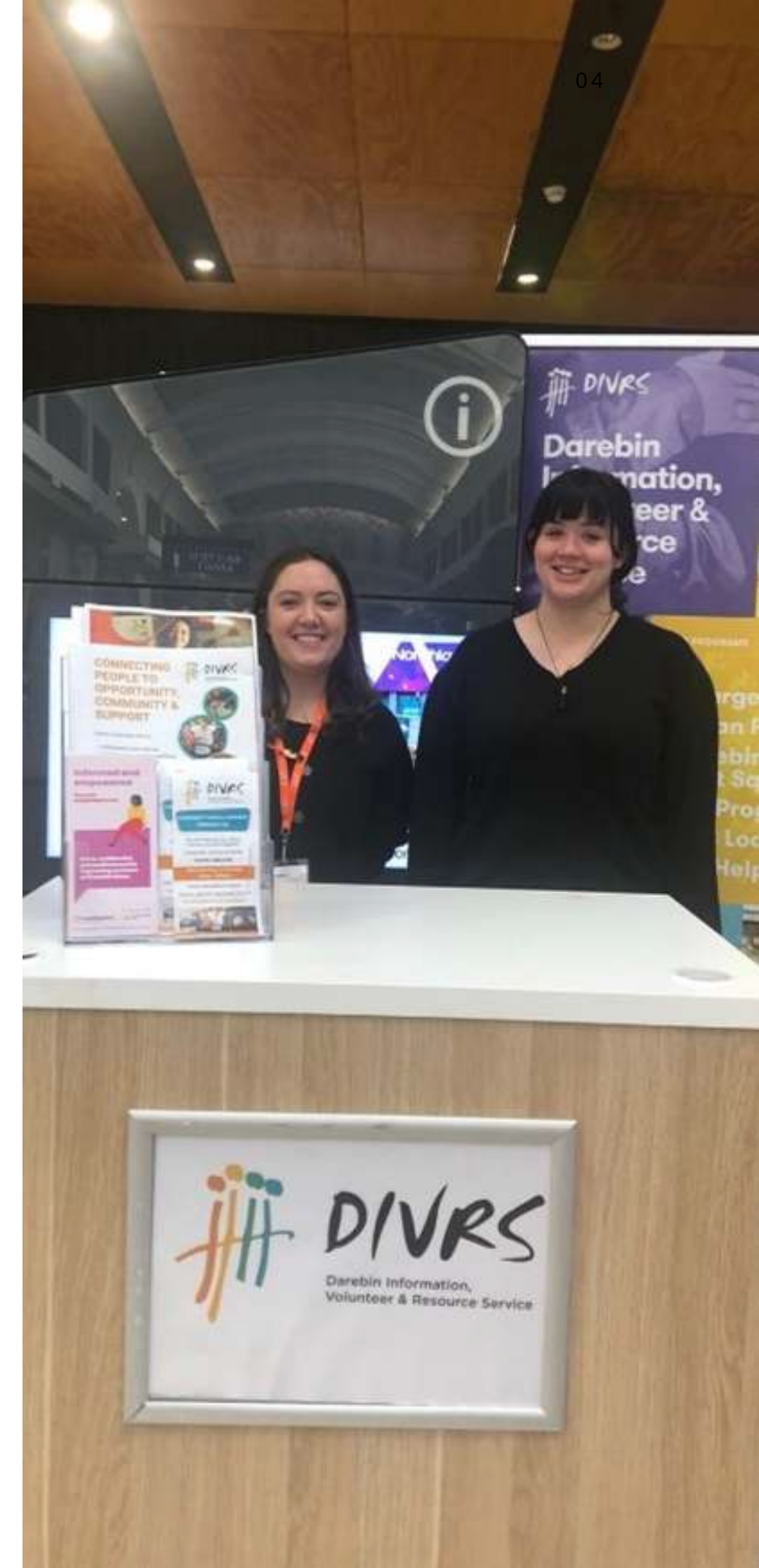
Listening is a crucial aspect of the work the team do. By listening the team can work with someone to help find accommodation, receive support for mental health concerns, access drug and alcohol programs, respond to family violence, advocate for a better energy deal, understand their financial situation or apply for a no interest loan. Sharing stories can release the load many people carry.

This year, we did a lot of work to help people experiencing energy stress. Triple the number of utility relief grant applications and power saving bonus applications - over 300 for the year. We provided information on concessions, saving energy and reducing costs and how to compare energy offers.

We ran an end-of-year campaign for two weeks in November, offering \$50 Kmart or Officeworks vouchers which people used to buy Christmas presents, pet food, school supplies for the new year and clothing.

We made 18 Big Group Hug deliveries.

We introduced drop in sessions at DIVRS each afternoon for people to speak with services in person: MOSS's Darebin Assertive Community Outreach team, Brotherhood of St Laurence about NDIS and Services Australia.





We called the Telstra hardship program and advocated with an asylum seeker who had a very high phone bill. They were not on the right plan for how they used the phone. The phone is important for social inclusion and mental health.

We were able to get the bill reduced by \$1,000, an appropriate plan for the person and the hardship team to revisit the plan with them in six months.

Amir* is on a bridging visa with no income. He has limited English and limited memory retention. People from a rooming house Amir had been at for two weeks bought him to DIVRS one afternoon as his time at the rooming house had ended and he had nowhere to sleep that night. Prior to the rooming house he had been in hospital.

Our Community Support Workers called 10 relevant housing, refugee and community organisations to see if they had a place for Amir. They were either not available for emergency help or their funded places were all allocated.

We were able to work with Darebin Assertive Community Outreach who support people sleeping rough and the Preston Mosque who knew of a foundation with funding to help people of Islamic faith. As a result Amir had accommodation for the next few weeks and people to work with on what to do next. We shared a food parcel with Amir including a no cook pack.

Sophia* is 82 and first came to DIVRS during covid lockdowns. We regularly share food parcels with her and conversation. Recently Sophia needed new dentures. Her ability to chew food and her physical health was being impacted. The two year waiting time for the public dental program meant Sophia chose a private dentist. Sophia worked with DIVRS's Financial Assistance and Capability Team volunteers to look at her options to pay the bill. As a no interest loan was not an option, DIVRS used some of its flexible funding to pay for the dentures, meaning Sophia can again eat well.

The high cost of dental work affects many people DIVRS works with. Without good dental health it is difficult to ensure a nutritious and well-balanced diet, which has flow on health effects.

Josephine* is a single parent with a seven year old son. She is gluten intolerant. We've been working with Josephine for about seven months. She loves the fresh food we share with her, especially as the cost of fresh food keeps rising.

The support of the food parcels we share means Josephine can allocate money to her electricity bills, buy gluten free food and buy the items needed for her son to attend his first school camp.



COMPLEX SUPPORT PROGRAM

With funding from Darebin Council, we started the Complex Support Program (CSP). CSP operates from the DIVRS hub in Preston and Reservoir Neighbourhood House (RNH), staffed by a social worker with 25 years' experience.

The program offers support with any issue a person brings (family violence, court matters, child protection, NDIS, housing, alcohol and other drugs (AOD), mental health, financial matters, legal matters, social isolation, aged care assistance and more).

CSP fills a gap in the community services environment which is often over-stretched, increasingly automated, digitalised or remote and where many organisations can only provide their specialised support such as AOD or mental health or housing and not address other issues. As CSP has become more well known it is receiving referrals from other organisations such as Your Community Health, MOSS and Darebin Council or through word of mouth from community members.

CSP support is provided in person and over the phone. It is offered as:

- short-to-medium term case management over several appointments
- one-off support
- crisis support
- consultation and mentoring for our community support workers.

The social worker provides counselling, consultation and casework (heart, head and hands approach). Appointments include listening to the person, explaining or confirming systems' operations and limitations, advising on potential pathways, consultation as people make decisions on what actions they will take next, developing plans and goals with people, advocacy and referrals including suggesting what other services could be doing with the person, building capacity and general counselling.

We emphasise simple entry to CSP, rapid uptake of referrals and timely follow-up with advocacy. In the seven months of the program we've provided:

- 270 appointments with 106 individuals at DIVRS
- 55 appointments at RNH
- 132 drop in sessions at RNH providing general information about all types of matters.

We can already see the difference the program is having. As one participant said, "At the start I was crying, now I feel much better. My ears are filled with knowledge and happiness from talking to a nice person."

To make the program even more accessible, next year CSP will also be operating from the East Preston Community Centre.

Our social worker spoke with Randall*, a 65 year old man who had terminal cancer. He asked for help to organise services to assist him to continue to live in his home for as long as possible, as he was finding things too complicated to organise. He shared painful incidences of discrimination he had experienced from the health system and how this shook his confidence and whether he would be treated with dignity and respect. Together we rang Darebin Council Supported and Connected Living and reconnected him to their worker, services recommencing soon afterwards.

Randall then started attending DIVRS for regular food sharing. When he became too unwell to attend he would speak with our social worker over the phone. Having no carer or support from family or friends, he would update us on his health and treatment and request the CSP to advocate with his palliative care service.

We chatted about his life in the queer community, sharing memories and discussing how things have changed over time. We were able to point him to other supports available to him from the queer community that he may want to connect with.

On his final call from hospital palliative care, as we said goodbye, he told CSP, "You got the ball rolling with services. I can't thank you enough for all your help."

FOOD SHARING PROGRAM

This year we changed the name of our food services team to food sharing in line with our community development approach. We share food with people at DIVRS's Preston hub, through deliveries to people with accessibility issues (almost 700 this year) and at locations across Darebin to increase access to food in areas of place-based disadvantage.

Fortnightly on Wednesday mornings we are at the East Preston Community Centre (EPCC) with fresh fruit and veg and frozen meals. We have our SMILE program health checks available at the same time. On the alternate Wednesdays we are at the Jika Jika Community Centre.

At both these locations we aim to reach nearby public housing residents and people who are older and who are culturally and linguistically diverse. From April, locals to Jika Jika manage the program on site. We continue to provide the fresh food, collateral and data collection platform.

On alternate Mondays we are at LaTrobe University, with almost 400 students accessing fresh produce. In Semester One we added free health checks so students could speak with the student nurses about their health concerns and nutrition. We also had Darebin Council Job Advocates join several sessions providing employment support and information.

Resident advisors aged 18-25 helped our volunteer leader manage the 'fresh food corner'. Through our building the capacity of the LaTrobe residential team, they will deliver the program from August 2023.

LaTrobe's Residential Life Coordinator said, "The students are thoroughly delighted with the fresh food corner and appreciate the wide array of produce. Thank you for your invaluable support."

Through engaging with East Preston Islamic College on food insecurity and healthy eating, DIVRS donates fresh fruit weekly to their early learning centre - 1,650kg of fresh fruit shared with around 40 families who are refugees, asylum seekers, single parents and others with low income.

We also donate produce to Bridge Darebin's weekly Friday laneway lunches.

We worked in partnership with Your Community Health to deliver two, three week cooking and nutrition programs at EPCC. This engaged people on low income interested in gaining cooking skills using contents from DIVRS food parcels and in learning about healthy eating.

And we delivered the first two of four 'Share the Harvest' community food events reaching people on low income in partnership with EPCC and local businesses. The first was an Italian feast with Umberto's Espresso Bar and the second a taste of Japan with Donguri Cafe, who also ran a kimchi workshop.

One participant said, "I enjoyed the whole experience, the music, the menu, the incredible food and being waited on like at a real restaurant. I felt welcomed."

DIVRS continued partnerships with food rescue organisations Foodbank, SecondBite and Ceres Fair Food and with FareShare who provide frozen meals.

Our project exploring new local food partnerships confirmed what we had been experiencing; most businesses are themselves impacted by cost-of-living pressures and do not have excess to donate. We're grateful to have received regular donations from Northcote BakeShop, MKA Spice, Local Pantry Co, Sessions Northcote, Melbourne Farmers Markets and Alex Makes Meals.

Through our existing and new partnerships, all up this was over 25,000kg of food sources that would otherwise go to landfill; which is good for food justice and environmental justice.

We're always on the look out for new partnerships or one-off food donations, so if you're interested get in touch.

With our commitment to sustainable practices:

- Boomerang Bags Thornbury/Northcote in partnership with Jika Jika supplied us with 700 handmade produce bags to share with people, reducing plastic use.
- We donated over 700 cardboard boxes to Bridge Darebin's paperloop project which repurposes them into 100% biodegradable packaging.





SUMMER FOOD JUSTICE FESTIVAL

We received a large stream grant from the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing to deliver the summer food justice festival in partnership with five local organisations. We held 10 pop up fresh food markets between November and April in East Preston and East Reservoir (two of the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods in Victoria) to connect people to services and each other and make food fair.

We shared 4,890 kilos of food with 805 households across the 10 markets (about 100 people at each market) reaching more than 2,200 people.

Our aim was to reach people on no or low income, culturally diverse families and social housing residents.

- 89% of residents from Preston or Reservoir
- 55% born outside of Australia and 35% spoke a language other than English
- 70% of people on a government payment.

Each market was tailored to reach specific sub-groups within the neighbourhoods through the timing, location and activities. Markets were held at Reservoir Neighbourhood House, East Preston Community Centre, Oakhill Food Justice Farm in East Preston and TW Andrews Reserve in East Reservoir. Activities included free health checks, covid vaccinations, learning about growing food at home with free seedlings and plants, cooking demonstrations, workers from DIVRS and local services, live music, coffee carts and kids activities.

This was a large project to deliver and with the commitment, collaboration and significant effort from all partner organisations - Your Community Health, Darebin Council, Sustain, Melbourne Farmers Markets and Reservoir Neighbourhood House - was very successful.

Markets ran smoothly and attendees particularly commented on the friendly and welcoming atmosphere and people, being able to chat and connect with neighbours, the quality of the produce and having access to fruit and veg that is normally too expensive for them to buy such as berries, and how great it is to have community events like this.

The markets:

- Increased people's access to fresh, healthy and culturally appropriate produce. With the grant we were able to buy fresh quality produce.
- Increased people's physical and mental health and wellbeing, learning and skills.
- Encouraged and enhanced social inclusion, community participation and connection. 92% of respondents said the markets had a positive impact on their feelings of connection with their local community.
- Meant more people have access to social and other supports with 83% of respondent's increasing their awareness of local services and supports.

"People were chatting with each other while waiting to get some produce and even after they had visited the stalls. I felt a real sense of community spirit."

- Project partner

COMMUNITY PROFILE

DIVRS worked with over 2,400 households through community information, support, advocacy, bill and energy help emergency relief and sharing food reaching more than 14,400 people (non-unique)

COMMUNITY SURVEY

Each December we ask our community about our service and their experience of food security. This year, we collected 74 responses.

KEY INSIGHTS

- 46% of people in contact every fortnight.
- 78% working with DIVRS for more than a year.
- 47% of people heard of DIVRS through word of mouth.

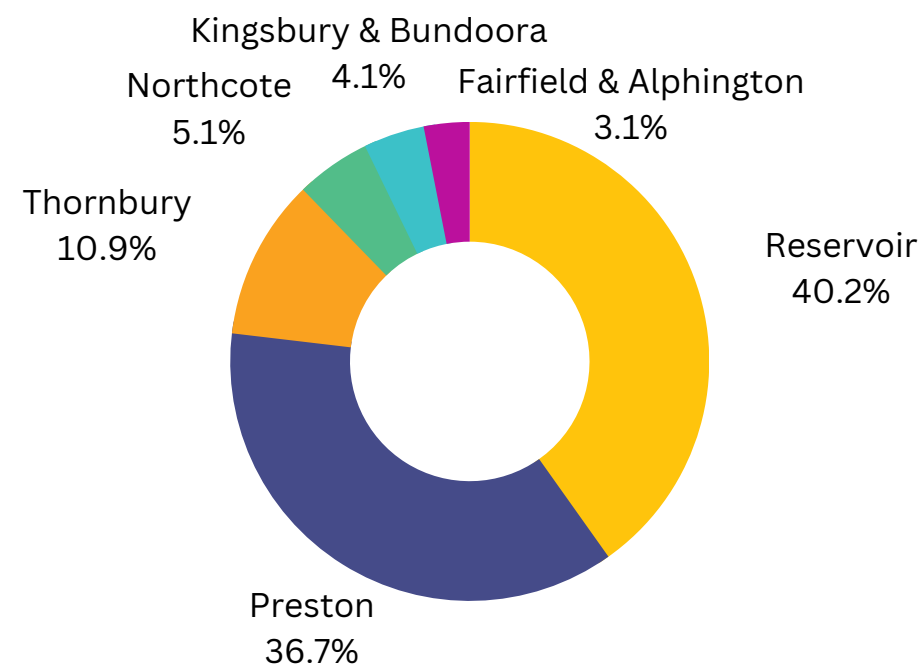
FOOD SECURITY

We define food security as 'when all people, at all times, have physical, social and financial access to necessary, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life'. We asked people if they had experienced any effects of food insecurity in the last fortnight.

- **64% experienced food insecurity, 8% more than in 2022**
- **38% were worried there was not enough food to eat**
- **31% were unable to eat healthy, balanced food**
- **69% had less than \$100 per fortnight to spend on food after paying regular expenses, 18% more than in 2022**

Utility bills, rent and medical expenses were the top three contributors to people's experience of food insecurity.

- **46%** new to DIVRS
- **12%** experienced homelessness
- **42%** live with a disability
- **92%** on a government payment or no income
- **57%** live on their own or are sole parents with dependants
- **10%** identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- **23%** from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds from 60 countries
- **4%** asylum seekers
- **20%** aged 65 or over
- **65%** public or private rental



WHERE PEOPLE LIVE



"DIVRS has always provided us with a lot of support, physically and mentally."

- Community member

URBAN FOOD PROGRAM

The Urban Food Program strengthens our local food systems, ensuring they are secure, healthy, sustainable and fair. We facilitate urban food production, home food growing and community gardening so fresh, nutritious produce can be shared with Darebin locals experiencing food insecurity. The program also builds community by connecting locals, householders and businesses to share skills, gardening materials and friendship.



GREW AND HARVESTED 2,379KGS OF HERBS, FRUIT AND VEGETABLES



LOCAL FARMERS AND PRODUCERS DONATED 5,374KG OF PRODUCE



PROPAGATED 5,535 SEEDLINGS



40 GARDENING SESSIONS AND 7 WORKSHOPS



COMPOSTED 2,519KGS OF FOOD WASTE

With the care and nurture of our volunteers we harvested the benefits of our increased growing space and of project coordination funding for the Darebin Fruit Squad, with a 60% increase in food grown and harvested compared to 2022.

- Our Darebin Urban Growers focus on growing fresh leafy and salad greens and herbs which are hardest to source via food rescue and highly nutritious. This year there's been beetroot, snow peas, kohlrabi, tomatoes and pumpkins too.
- Our Darebin Fruit Squad harvest all kinds of fruit from lemons and oranges to pears and persimmons.

Combined with donations from our partners, this is over \$80,000 of produce we were able to share with people experiencing food insecurity.

Given the 50% decrease in donations from food rescue partners due to climate change and natural disasters, growing and sourcing local food direct from community was more important than ever. A big thank you to Melbourne Farmers Markets who obtained a grant to buy quality produce from farmers, which made up 90% of the donated produce.

We contribute to the circular economy by propagating our own seedlings - which we've shared with local primary schools, at our pop-up markets and planted in our own gardens - and composting food waste from food rescue donations - 2.5 tonnes this year. We use the nutrient rich compost for our garden beds.



"I enjoy working in the garden with the vollies and staff and being part of the team that grows and harvests beautiful veggies for the community. I have learnt a lot about growing veggies and enjoy putting that knowledge into practice in my own garden."

- Darebin Urban Grower volunteer



"I love the fact that the fruit grown in my backyard can become a healthy and free addition to someone's grocery parcel. Even with a small back garden, you can still grow a tremendous amount of your own fresh produce and share it with others."

- Darebin Fruit Squad householder

We love sharing our knowledge, building capability and addressing climate change.

- Held seven free workshops for Darebin locals including making native bee hotels, growing your own tomatoes, fruit tree care, dealing with Queensland fruit fly and gardening with nature.
- Ran a tour of our growing site at the Alphington Community Food Hub and an information stall as part of Urban Agriculture month in November.
- Spoke at urban food and community garden events about our Urban Food Program.
- Held regular hands-on volunteer sessions with volunteer garden leaders and staff sharing practical knowledge and fostering community connection and inclusion.

The Newton St Community Garden continues to provide an engaging welcoming space for community members and visitors to the centre at East Preston. A core group of locals care for the space and its produce dropping by to check on favourite plants and watering through the week outside of the regular Wednesday morning garden sessions. One community member passionate about the link between gardening for health and wellbeing and food started a 'Medicinal Herb Garden' in an empty space behind the raised vegetable beds. In June, we shared pumpkin soup with the community from pumpkins grown in the garden.

With funding from Sustainability Victoria through the Circular Economy Communities Fund we started a one year project in December to rebuild the Darebin Fruit Squad (DFS) following covid lockdowns.

Volunteers harvest excess fruit from registered DFS households to share with people experiencing food insecurity in Darebin through DIVRS's community support program.

We developed a multi-pronged communication and engagement plan to increase fruit squad householders to 100 and recruit and train new volunteers.

New collateral, letterbox drops, articles in the [The Age](#), [Il Globo](#) and [SV news](#), ABC Breakfast radio, workshops on fruit tree pruning and tree care for volunteers and the local community, updated website, promotion of workshops in local food newsletters, regular social media posts and speaking about DFS at events like the CERES Harvest Festival and SV's Circular Economy capability forum. We also have [DFS t-shirts](#) for sale to support the squad.

The workshops and events have been popular, increasing involvement in our project and equipping and inspiring people to join us in caring for the urban orchard through joining DFS or at their own homes.

At the mid-way point of this project we have 66 householders registered and 22 volunteer harvesters.

TAC L2P PROGRAM

The TAC L2P program matches young people aged 16-21 who don't have access to a car or supervising driver with a volunteer mentor to gain the 120 hours of driving experience they need to get a probationary licence.

The program contributes to improved road safety, increased access to education and employment and enhanced community engagement for young people and mentors.



AVG. 25 ACTIVE MENTOR DRIVERS PER MONTH



72 HOURS OF PROFESSIONAL DRIVING LESSONS



1,467 HOURS OF VOLUNTEER DRIVING



23 - 30 ACTIVE LEARNERS PER MONTH



15 LICENCES GAINED

In July we celebrated 10 years of the L2P Program in Darebin (having reached that milestone in 2020 with celebrations delayed due to the pandemic).

In those 10 years there have been 139 volunteer mentors (five have been with the program since it started!), more than 20,000 supervised driving hours and over 500 learners helped. Thank you to everyone who has been involved over those 10 years (now 12!) for making a significant difference in the lives of young people in Darebin and our community.

In October we also celebrated the 200th program licence.

We onboarded and trained 17 new mentors across the year. L2P mentors participated in youth mental health training and mentor refresher training. We continued to improve program resources and processes for mentors and learners.

The pilot of having one of our three program cars in the north of Darebin for mentors and learners to use went well. We moved the location from on site at PRACE to Reservoir police station to make the car accessible seven days per week.



"It was a joy to reflect on and celebrate the impact the Darebin TAC L2P Program has had over the last 10 years to the lives of hundreds of young people and mentors in Darebin and for our community in increasing road safety."

- Christina, Executive Officer



"I really appreciate the time my volunteer mentor driver spent with me over the last 12 months to help me get my 120 hours. Without the L2P program I wouldn't have been able to get my licence, thanks again L2P Darebin...this was life changing for me."

- Learner driver

This year, we partnered with two schools who work with young people disengaged or excluded from mainstream education, to help those young people get driving experience. We continued our partnership with PRACE College in Reservoir and started a new partnership with The Pavilion School in Preston.

Finally, we're also seeing in this program the impacts of the cost of living pressures. Many more young people in Darebin asked about joining the program with 95 enquiries and a growing wait list of more than 50 learners. We're working on increasing mentor numbers to meet the growing need in our community.

If you'd like to be part of this vibrant program that makes a difference to young people and road safety, you can do so with as little as two hours a week. We have everything you'll need to be a driving force for good. Find out more at <https://www.divrs.org.au/driver-mentors>

What is the best thing about the TAC L2P Program?

The L2P program is such a great program as it supports families who have difficulty getting their driver's license. It is quite difficult to find a driving program that doesn't require me to pay for it.

Mentors also are great in the program, they helped to make my driving safe and made me become a confident driver.

What is one tip you would like to share about safe driving?

Most definitely is always checking the mirrors, when turning, changing lanes and before you start driving.

How will getting a licence make a difference in your life?

As I am working having a licence would be quite useful and also when I'm going to uni. It would benefit my family as well.

- Learner driver

HEALTH & WELLBEING

The SMILE Program (Student Managed Initiative in Lifestyle Education) is delivered in partnership with LaTrobe University. Student nurses provide free health checks, health and wellbeing information and social and creative activities at seven locations in Darebin.



1,175 HEALTH CHECKS



445 WELLBEING ACTIVITY PARTICIPANTS



34 WELLBEING ACTIVITY SESSIONS



7 LOCATIONS ACROSS DAREBIN

After a two year break with the pandemic, in August we reintroduced the popular SMILE Program. SMILE stands for Student Managed Initiative in Lifestyle Education - a community nursing placement in partnership with La Trobe University to:

- Develop students' skills in primary health nursing care.
- Provide the community with equitable access to health and wellbeing information and address social isolation.

Student nurses, clinically supervised by a registered nurse, operate the program at DIVRS and partner organisations across Darebin including Reservoir Neighbourhood House, Bridge Darebin, East Preston Community Centre, Haven Home Safe, Thornbury Church of Christ and for residential students at LaTrobe University.

At the health kiosks, participants can get a health check including blood pressure and heart rate and talk with the student nurses about their health issues such as their physical, mental or emotional health, sleep, stress, social isolation and medication. The nurses provide health, lifestyle and wellbeing information, make referrals to GPs and health professionals and to other relevant organisations.

38% of participants are aged 40-64; 30% are over 65. 33% are culturally and linguistically diverse from over 50 countries.

With a focus on providing a welcoming, safe and comfortable setting, often people will share stories of their family, culture, life, work and past which influence and intersect with their health. This provides students with a holistic understanding of primary health care.



"A great opportunity for students to learn about primary health in a practical way, build communication skills and have a positive impact on people's health."

- Student nurse



"I've enjoyed stARTalking since it first started at DIVRS and been going to it since it returned at EPCC. It's something to look forward to each week. I like to talk with the friendly students, other participants and love learning each week with the health info presentation."

- stARTalking participant

The SMILE program has two wellbeing activities.

stARTalking runs Wednesdays at EPCC. These are fun and informative sessions where the student nurses present on a health topic – often suggested by participants – and facilitate creative activities. Topics covered this year included diabetes, stroke, sleep health, hypertension, thyroid conditions, dementia, my aged care, allergies, anxiety, back pain, pneumonia, ulcers and mental health conditions. Participants share their experiences of the topic and there is lots of Q&A. Creative activities involved scrapbooking, making dream catchers, heat packs, Christmas and pop-up birthday cards, flower pressing, origami, painting and jewellery making.

At the social activity morning at EPCC, participants play games like bingo, trivia and card games, listen to music, chat and watch a simple and healthy cooking demo like banana oat bites, rice paper rolls, cauliflower pizza.

Most participants are over 50 with many returning each week for the community, connection and creativity.

Adam* is a regular at the wellbeing activity sessions. He enjoys the craft and art activities, socialising, teaching the students about topics he is passionate about and sharing his love for art. He will often get a health check too.

Through his engaging with SMILE over the year, the students have encouraged and supported Adam to reengage with his GP and health services. He now regularly sees a mental health professional and has noticed an improvement in his health and says he feels less isolated.

We have also spoken with Adam about his eligibility for NDIS and referred him to DIVRS's community support team who helped him reapply for public housing.

At one of our health checks, Sam* had very high blood pressure. He said he'd been experiencing chest pain, shortness of breath and numbness in his left arm. Given these are all signs for possible heart-attack we suggested Shane go to hospital. He was worried about costs to do so including ambulance costs. We spoke with him about the public health system and Ambulance Victoria's financial hardship discretion. Sam agreed to the ambos coming, who took him straight to hospital.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

'Our Place, Our Purpose' is a community development project with residents of public housing, newly arrived and culturally and linguistically diverse community members in East Reservoir and East Preston. We work collaboratively with Your Community Health, Darebin Council and other local organisations. DIVRS's focus is working with public housing residents.



**50 OUTREACH
ACTIVITIES**



**105 REFERRALS TO
SERVICES AND PROGRAMS**



**4 PUBLIC HOUSING
INFO SESSIONS**



**17 MEETINGS INVOLVING
STAKEHOLDERS AND
COMMUNITY GROUPS**

We are now in year two of this project. We've developed the Our Place Our Purpose Community Advisory Group where residents share issues of importance to them and guide the work of the project.

We've met with many locals over 50 community outreach activities including door-knocking, morning and afternoon teas at public housing estates and attending local events. This has built and nurtured relationships, established connections between neighbours and improved wellbeing and a sense of safety.

Through this outreach we have referred community members to services and programs that support their physical and mental health, access to food and essential services.

Activities initiated by the community and facilitated by the project included piloting a homework club for primary-age children in

East Reservoir, an EID event for Somali families in East Preston and East Reservoir, a weekly parents and children's group for Somali women in East Preston, workshops on employment and anti-racism and public housing estate project groups to enable bench seating and a covered outdoor space in a communal area.

We've built a collaborative and constructive relationship with the Preston Office – Department of Families, Fairness and Housing that enables advocacy of resident's needs and rights. This included four public housing information sessions to re-establish in person connection between residents and housing officers, share information on maintenance and transfers and for people to have their concerns heard. Housing officers are now at the East Preston Community Centre fortnightly and we are working with the department to have drop in sessions at East Reservoir too.

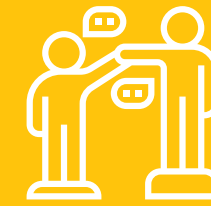


"A lot of the residents really look forward to the fortnightly afternoon teas as they don't get out of their units much and this allows us to be together in the common area."

- Public housing resident

OUR VOLUNTEERS & STUDENTS

As a volunteer powered organisation, we simply could not do what we do without the wonderful people in our community who give their time, skill, experience and energy. Thank you!



ONBOARDED 119 NEW VOLUNTEERS & STUDENTS



130 PEOPLE ON AVERAGE VOLUNTEER EACH MONTH



27,575 VOLUNTEER AND STUDENT HOURS VALUED AT \$1.1M

Our volunteers and students are from all backgrounds, experiences and ages from late teens to late 70s. They make a difference every day. Roles include parcel packing, picking up and delivering food, managing outreach programs, delivering big group hug items, community information, support and advocacy, emergency relief, energy and financial help, reception and administration, driver mentoring, garden harvesting, maintenance and growing, seed propagation, health checks and wellbeing activities, homework help, policy and research, grant writing and projects.

We provided placements for students across social work, community services, nursing and health promotion from LaTrobe University, RMIT, Melbourne Polytechnic, Australian Catholic University and Federation University.

We also hosted a placement for Bridge Darebin's Community Network Course (aims to get women back in the workforce after a break) with the participant supporting our energy resilience project.

We continued promoting volunteer leadership across our programs, providing on-the-job skill development and mentoring for future employment.

Much of our training and skill-building is on-the-job. Students and volunteers also participated in courses and workshops in cultural awareness, handling food safely, family violence, mental health, fruit tree care, NILS and community support work. We have a program of speakers year-round from services and organisations to up-skill our community support workers and nurses help people with the many and varied matters they raise.

In partnership with Melbourne Polytechnic's Work Education Program, DIVRS established a 10-week work experience program for students aged 17 to 25 who identify as having a disability. Working within the Food Sharing team the students received on the job-training, focusing on practical skills such as sorting, ordering, picking and packing, and building their communication and teamwork skills and overall confidence.

The program began in term three 2022. By week 10, we saw an increase in student leadership and communication and collaboration between the students and volunteers. The program ran again in term two 2023 adding more practical tasks and job ready resources. The Work Education Program teacher let us know that "Welcoming the students to DIVRS has really sparked a lot of happiness and made for a great learning environment." Given it's success, we'll keep operating the program.

We held several onsite excursions inviting other students studying within the Work Education Program to see the food sharing program in action, meet the team and to hear about DIVRS's services and volunteer opportunities.

Finally, as part of our welcoming culture we make connecting with each other a priority including what's app groups, morning teas, cuppa and a chat, newsletters and an end of year celebration to say thank you!

A key strength of DIVRS's social work placement program is the way they work with students and are experienced in supporting students with their study. The embedded debriefs and group learning in daily team meetings are fantastic elements of the placement and really contribute to students developing their skills.

The new opportunities that are being offered such as being able to work with the complex case support program and spend time at other locations such as Reservoir Neighbourhood House add to this placement experience.

The placement has helped integrate theory and practice by discussing key values, theories and other important topics in team meetings and asking students to share their thoughts and discuss how they can be incorporated into practice in the DIVRS setting.

It is a great introduction to speaking to community members from diverse backgrounds who are experiencing a range of issues and living life in varied ways. It is also a great space to learn about the many services offered within a community and how to refer between them.

- Social work placement student



"Thank you for the awesome work experience. I have learnt a lot of different skills. I enjoyed packing the food and helping the community."

- Work Education Program student

GET TO KNOW OUR VOLUNTEERS & STUDENTS

This year we congratulated Lynette, one of our Urban Food volunteers who received the Darebin Sustainability Award and joint Darebin Citizen of the Year 2022.

Lynette volunteers multiple days a week with DIVRS to grow fresh produce alongside the Darebin Urban Growers volunteer team across three gardens including at the Oakhill Food Justice Farm and at the Alphington Community Food Hub.

Committed to sustainability, Lynette applies and shares her knowledge of organic and sustainable gardening. Lynette also runs the DIVRS propagating team who grow seedlings for the DIVRS gardens and to share at community events.



Meet Lynette

As one of her fellow volunteers reflected, "Nettie is a gardening genius. Under her care, a garden will become a vibrant, thriving, pulsating food-producing masterpiece. Nettie is also a joy to work with: a team player, hard-working, thoughtful and good fun."



Meet John

I was seeking an opportunity to give back to younger members of the community and accidentally came across the L2P program. So I became a mentor to young drivers at the Pavilion school, helping them gain sufficient hours to successfully pass their licence test.

Outside of mentoring I enjoy travelling in our caravan with my wife and three children and spending time with close friends. Hobbies include anything automotive, drawing, surfing, kayaking and learning to drive in the historic NB class in my newly acquired 1964 Austin Cooper S (Mini).

For anyone considering becoming a Mentor - Do it! You'll learn and grow just as much as the young person you are helping out.

I'm Keri-Ann and I am completing my social work placement within the Community Information and Support program. I enjoy yoga and meditation, spending time with friends and my three kids and exploring the Melbourne area. (I moved here from the US about six years ago but still feel like there's so much to see!)

I love the variety of services that DIVRS provides and was excited to see how it all comes together in practice. As a social work student, I was really interested in learning more about the field of emergency relief and to have some exposure to the various services available both within DIVRS and in the wider community.

The team at DIVRS is so supportive and welcoming, which makes each day enjoyable and rewarding. I also love that each person who comes in for community support brings their own unique story and set of needs, which means that every conversation is different and every day brings new questions and challenges.



Meet Keri-Ann

GET TO KNOW OUR VOLUNTEERS & STUDENTS

Like many people I found myself with too much time on my hands upon retiring. Gardening and spending time with my grandchildren filled some of that time and volunteering at DIVRS has certainly helped.

I joined the Food Sharing team six years ago packing pantry parcels and volunteer most Wednesdays. The friendships I've made here help make light of the work.

My advice for people thinking about volunteering is to do it. It's so much fun to do with people and for yourself. It's very rewarding.

Meet Faye



I'm Elisa and I'm one of the Urban Food Program's Tuesday crew working in the garden at DIVRS HQ.

I love my volunteering role at DIVRS. I've learnt so much from the Urban Food program staff and other volunteers who are more experienced gardeners than me. Each week I leave DIVRS inspired to get out into my own garden.

It's also a lot of fun gardening in community - after a couple of hours of working (and chatting) we stop and share a morning tea made with fresh herbs we've grown, usually accompanied by home-made treats courtesy of a fellow volunteer who's an excellent cook.

I also enjoy cycling and nature - so cycling up to DIVRS each Tuesday along the Darebin Creek trail is an added bonus.

Next month I will celebrate 32 years of living in Darebin - there's nowhere else I'd rather be, and volunteering with DIVRS makes me feel even more connected with my community.



Meet Elisa

I'm Malcolm, a volunteer mentor driver with the L2P Program. I like to take photographs and work on my house. I have taken up maths online recently.

I taught both our sons how to drive and thought hmmm...here is way I can give back and contribute in some way to my community. I like being part of something that you can see progress: learner drivers increasing in confidence.

If you have some time available and have patience, helping a young person learn to drive can be very rewarding.

Meet Malcolm



GET TO KNOW OUR VOLUNTEERS & STUDENTS

I'm Panayiota and I am completing my social work placement within the Community Information and Support program. Outside of DIVRS I enjoy reading, baking and spending quality time with my loved ones.

I expressed interest in DIVRS as it offers a multitude of services, programs and support for community members within the Darebin region which seek to promote capability, sustainability, social inclusion and health and wellbeing.

At DIVRS, I enjoy the opportunity for hands-on experience across numerous areas of the organisation and the ability to develop my skills and knowledge further.

The DIVRS team is extremely supportive, diverse and experienced in various ways which grants volunteers a sense of safety, trust and inspiration.

Meet Panayiota



Meet Penny



Hi, I'm Penny and I enjoy tap dancing and yoga, reading and walking my dog. I also love pottering in my garden and cooking and preserving with any harvest I may get.

It felt natural to volunteer at DIVRS, being outside in the garden, helping to maintain it and grow produce essential for the Urban Food Program. Doing this alongside like-minded individuals, for me, is so rewarding.

I feel that the work DIVRS does in the local community is so vital and I wanted to be a part of it and help out too.

Not only does volunteering at DIVRS give you the opportunity to help out in an organisation that supports local people, it also offers you the chance to obtain real, valuable skills and meet interesting people. You will make a difference!

Hello, I'm Thanh and I've been a part of the Food Sharing program since 2018. You'll usually find me in the pantry warehouse packing food parcels for delivery and onsite pick up on a Thursday. I started volunteering because as a refugee man, I wanted to give back to the communities who helped me a lot when I came to Australia.

There are so many things I enjoy about volunteering at DIVRS: the environment, being able to work outside and the people who make it such a great place to work in. Everyone at DIVRS has a big heart. I took a break to study and am now back at DIVRS, it's nice to be back with the Thursday team.

Meet Thanh



BE INVOLVED

VOLUNTEER

Interested in volunteering and working with the local community? We welcome people from all backgrounds and experience.

Find out more at:
<https://www.divrs.org.au/volunteer>

BECOME A MEMBER

Any person who supports DIVRS's purpose can become a member. By doing so, you contribute to community direction of a local organisation working with the people of Darebin.

Complete the form online [here](#).

DONATE

You can donate through our website at
<https://www.divrs.org.au/donate>

You can also donate fruit and veg through our urban food program.

PARTNER WITH US

We can do more, together. If you'd like to invest in the work we do or partner with us to help our local community thrive and connect, get in touch.



TREASURER'S REPORT

It is my privilege to present the financial report for the 2022-2023 financial year (FY23) which to the best of our knowledge, provides a true and fair view of DIVRS's financial position as audited by Collins & Co.

FY23 has been a year of growth and challenges for DIVRS. Our total income increased to \$817,819, up from \$632,749 in FY22, reflecting our ongoing efforts to secure funding and welcome additional staff to support the expansion of our programs and services to meet the growing needs of our community (an additional \$100k in employee costs).

The Community Information & Support Program continued to be the primary focus of our funding allocation. While overall expenses for this program were again down, reflecting the ending of additional COVID-19 funding, demand for support again increased due to the rising cost of living. This underscores the critical nature of our services and the importance of our mission.

Our asset position remains strong, with total assets amounting to \$763,191, an increase from the previous year's \$675,212. This financial stability is crucial as it ensures our capacity to continue to provide essential support for our community including emergency relief.

It also positions us well to address any future changes such as the need for new premises to accommodate our expanded services.

While FY23 ended with a deficit, the accumulated funds of \$395,608 at the end of FY22 (now \$377,712 at the end of FY23) have been strategically used to grow the capacity of DIVRS, allowing us to respond effectively to the increased demand for our services.

In my third year as Treasurer and as a member of the Committee of Governance, I remain deeply inspired by the dedication of our staff and volunteers. Their unwavering commitment and the breadth of expertise they bring to DIVRS are invaluable assets that empower us to serve our community effectively.

In conclusion, while FY23 presented fiscal challenges DIVRS's financial health and strategic planning have enabled us to navigate these successfully. We are committed to maintaining the trust placed in us by our community and funders, and we are optimistic about our ability to sustain and expand our services in the coming years.

Adam Hanson
Treasurer

DAREBIN INFORMATION, VOLUNTEER & RESOURCE SERVICE INCORPORATED (DIVRS)
ABN 80 927 699 259
SPECIAL PURPOSE FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

DAREBIN INFORMATION, VOLUNTEER & RESOURCE SERVICE INCORPORATED

ABN 80 927 699 259

**SPECIAL PURPOSE FINANCIAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023**

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Your Committee of Governance presents the special purpose financial report on the Association for the financial year ended 30 June 2023.

Committee of Governance Members

The names of committee of governance members throughout the year and at the date of this report are:

Kate Nash	Chairperson	From 9 November 2022
Annabelle Morgan	Past Chairperson	Resigned 9 November 2022
Ellen McNaught	Vice chairperson	
Adam Hanson	Treasurer	
Retta Berryman	Secretary	
Brook Sturdy	General member	
Amanda Wilczynski	General member	
Melinda Lucas	General member	Appointed 17 April 2023
Simon Gleeson	General member	Appointed 17 April 2023

Principal Activities

The principal activities of the Association during the financial year were:

Darebin Information, Volunteer & Resource Service (DIVRS) is a not-for-profit volunteer powered organisation that delivers free services, programs and information for people living, studying, and volunteering in Darebin. DIVRS's mission is to connect people to opportunity, community, and support. DIVRS reduces financial stress and social isolation, increases access to community information and builds capability, promotes health and wellbeing, inclusion and sustainability, and Provides opportunities for community participation.

DIVRS provides:

- Resources and support to Darebin residents on no or low income, or in financial stress. Our aim is to work with them to strengthen their financial independence, encourage self-reliance, and increase capability.
- Programs and services that advance the education and skills development of Darebin residents.
- A volunteer service that promotes social inclusion and strong networks, creating opportunities for participation in the City of Darebin.
- Local capabilities and knowledge to address disadvantage and sustainability, contributing to the development of social policies and services that impact on the residents of our community.

Significant Changes

No significant changes in the nature of the Association's activity occurred during the financial year.

Operating Results and Accumulated Funds

The deficit for the year attributable to the Association amounted to \$17,896 (2022: \$14,0175 - deficit).

The accumulated funds of \$377,712 (2022: \$395,608) is partly due to an increase in funding received due to COVID 19 in 2021, which continues to be used to support the growing demand for Emergency Relief and Support Services in future financial years. The association has been accumulating funds to grow the capacity of the organisation to meet the increase in demand for services. The Association requires more space and staff to deliver services safely and effectively. These funds will contribute to the cost of fit-out for new premises, asset replacement, and investment in capacity building.

After Balance Date Events

No matter has evolved since 30 June 2023 that has significantly affected, or may significantly affect:

- the entity's operations in future financial years, or
- the results of those operations in future financial years, or
- the entity's state of affairs in future financial years.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Committee of Governance.

Chairperson



Kate Nash

Treasurer



Adam Hanson

Dated this

4th day of October 2023

DAREBIN INFORMATION, VOLUNTEER & RESOURCE SERVICE INCORPORATED (DIVRS)
 ABN 80 927 699 259
 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

	2023 \$	2022 \$
INCOME		
Grants	726,398	606,828
Operating Income	86,361	25,786
Interest Received	5,060	135
TOTAL INCOME	<u><u>817,819</u></u>	<u><u>632,749</u></u>
EXPENDITURE		
Administration Expenses	209	230
Advertising & Fundraising	-	-
Audit & Legal Fees	2,500	2,400
Bank Fees	108	119
Bookkeeping Fees	6,600	-
Consultants	2,200	8,541
Emergency Relief & Foodstore Expenses	159,144	165,498
Computer Expenses	12,057	654
Depreciation	8,516	8,817
Insurance	1,088	1,052
Interest Paid on Business Loan	210	491
Light & Power	3,252	4,056
Membership & Subscriptions	2,816	1,857
Portable Long Service Benefits Scheme Levy	6,713	5,158
Project Expenses	110,986	54,919
Printing & Stationary	1,371	943
Provision for Leave Entitlements	20,106	16,442
Repairs, Maintenance & Cleaning	6,680	615
Salaries and Wages	432,902	330,027
Staff Training / Workforce Development	937	6,129
Superannuation	45,051	32,823
Telephone & Internet	2,716	2,768
Volunteer Expenses	3,378	651
Worker's Compensation insurance	6,175	2,634
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	<u><u>835,715</u></u>	<u><u>646,824</u></u>
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR	<u><u>(17,896)</u></u>	<u><u>(14,075)</u></u>

DAREBIN INFORMATION, VOLUNTEER & RESOURCE SERVICE INCORPORATED (DIVRS)
 ABN 80 927 699 259
 STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

	2023 \$	2022 \$
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR	(17,896)	(14,075)
Other Comprehensive Income for the Year	-	-
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) ATTRIBUTABLE TO THE ASSOCIATION	<u><u>(17,896)</u></u>	<u><u>(14,075)</u></u>

DAREBIN INFORMATION, VOLUNTEER & RESOURCE SERVICE INCORPORATED (DIVRS)
ABN 80 927 699 259
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2023

	2023 \$	2022 \$
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash at Bank	690,594	548,837
Accounts Receivable	28,714	62,366
Prepayments & Gift Cards and Vouchers on Hand	24,574	41,989
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	743,882	653,192
NON-CURRENT ASSETS		
Office Furniture and Equipment	27,980	27,980
Less Accumulated Depreciation	(25,978)	(23,535)
	<u>2,002</u>	<u>4,445</u>
Motor Vehicles	84,538	78,732
Less Accumulated Depreciation	(67,231)	(61,157)
	<u>17,307</u>	<u>17,575</u>
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS	19,309	22,020
TOTAL ASSETS	763,191	675,212
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Trade and Other Creditors	16,285	6,567
ATO GST & PAYGW Payable	19,396	14,197
Grants Received in Advance	300,977	220,172
Provision for Annual Leave	47,640	32,781
Secured Business Loan: Motor Vehicle	734	4,954
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	385,032	278,671
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Provision for Long Service Leave	447	933
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES	447	933
TOTAL LIABILITIES	385,479	279,604
NET ASSETS	377,712	395,608
EQUITY		
Accumulated funds	377,712	395,608
	<u>377,712</u>	<u>395,608</u>

The Statement of Financial Position is to be read in conjunction with the audit report and the notes to the financial statements.

DAREBIN INFORMATION, VOLUNTEER & RESOURCE SERVICE INCORPORATED (DIVRS)
ABN 80 927 699 259
STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

	Accumulated funds \$	Total \$
Opening Balance as at 1 July 2021	409,683	409,683
Surplus/ (Deficit) attributable to the Association	(14,075)	(14,075)
Balance as at 30 June 2022	395,608	395,608
Surplus/ (Deficit) attributable to the Association	(17,896)	(17,896)
Balance as at 30 June 2023	377,712	377,712

The Statement of Changes in Equity is to be read in conjunction with the audit report and the notes to the financial statements.

	Note	2023 \$	2022 \$
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Receipts from Grants		807,203	725,548
Receipts from Operating Income		120,013	(33,040)
Payments to Suppliers and Employees		(780,284)	(593,211)
Interest Paid		(210)	(491)
Interest Received		5,080	135
Net cash generated from/(used in) operating activities	(i)	151,782	98,941
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
Payments for Property, Plant and Equipment		(5,806)	-
Proceeds from Disposal of Property, Plant and Equipment		-	-
Net cash (used in)/provided by investing activities		(5,806)	-
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES			
Proceeds from Borrowings		-	-
Prepayment of Borrowings		(4,219)	(3,938)
Net cash (used in)/provided by financing activities		(4,219)	(3,938)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash held		141,757	95,003
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of financial year		548,837	453,834
Cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year	(ii)	690,594	548,837

DAREBIN INFORMATION, VOLUNTEER & RESOURCE SERVICE INCORPORATED (DIVRS)
 ABN 80 927 699 259
 NOTES TO THE STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

	2023 \$	2022 \$
Note (i). Net cash generated from/(used in) operating activities		
Net surplus for the year	(17,896)	(14,075)
Non-cash flow item: depreciation	8,516	8,817
Non-cash flow item: profit on disposal of fixed assets	-	-
(Increase)/decrease in accounts receivable	33,652	(58,826)
(Increase)/decrease in prepayments	17,415	22,720
Increase/(decrease) in trade and other payables	14,917	5,142
Increase/(decrease) in grants received in advance	80,805	118,720
Increase/(decrease) in provisions	14,373	16,443
	151,782	98,941
Note (ii). Cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year		
Cash at Bank	690,594	548,837
Petty Cash	-	-
	690,594	548,837

Note 1. Statement of Significant Accounting Policies

This financial report includes the financial statements and notes of Darebin Information, Volunteer & Resource Service Incorporated (DIVRS), a incorporated association, which is incorporated in Victoria under the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission Act 2012 and the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012.

Basis of preparation

This financial report is a special purpose financial report prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission Act 2012 and the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (Victoria). The Committee of Governance has determined that the association is not a reporting entity and also a not-for-profit association.

The financial report has been prepared on an accruals basis and is based on historical costs, modified, where applicable, by the measurement at fair value of selected non-current assets, financial assets and financial liabilities.

The following is a summary of the material accounting policies adopted by the Association in the preparation of the special purpose financial report. The accounting policies have been consistently applied, unless otherwise stated.

Accounting Policies

a. Property, Plant and Equipment

Each class of property, plant and equipment is carried at cost or fair value less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation and impairment losses.

Plant and Equipment

Plant and equipment are measured on the cost basis less depreciation and impairment losses.

The carrying amount of plant and equipment is reviewed annually by directors to ensure it is not in excess of the recoverable amount from these assets. The recoverable amount is assessed on the basis of the expected net cash flows that will be received from the assets' employment and subsequent disposal. The expected net cash flows have been discounted to their present values in determining recoverable amounts.

Subsequent costs are included in the asset's carrying amount or recognised as a separate asset, as appropriate, only when it is probable that future economic benefits associated with the item will flow to the Association and the cost of the item can be measured reliably. All other repairs and maintenance are charged to the income statement during the financial period in which they are incurred.

Depreciation

The depreciable amount of all fixed assets are depreciated over the useful lives of the assets commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use.

The asset's residual values and useful lives are reviewed and adjusted, if appropriate, at each balance date.

An asset's carrying amount is written down immediately to its recoverable amount if the asset's carrying amount is greater than its estimated recoverable amount.

Gains and losses on disposals are determined by comparing proceeds with the carrying amount. These gains and losses are included in the income statement.

b. Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, deposits held at-call with banks, other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities on the balance sheet.

c. Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office. In these circumstances the GST is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of the asset or as part of an item of expense. Receivables and payables in the Balance Sheet are shown inclusive of GST.

Note 1. Statement of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

d. Revenue

Revenue is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable.

AASB 15 Revenue from Contracts with Customers and AASB 1058 Income of Not-for-Profit Entities

The Association applies Australian Accounting Standards AASB 15 and AASB 1058.

AASB 15 involves the use of a five-step recognition model for recognising revenue, the steps are:

- Step 1 – Identify the contract with the customer
- Step 2 – Identify the sufficiently specific performance obligations to be satisfied
- Step 3 – Measure the expected consideration
- Step 4 – Allocate that consideration to each of the performance obligations in the contract
- Step 5 – Recognise revenue

AASB 1058 measures income by reference to the fair value of the asset received. The asset received, which could be a financial or non-financial asset, is initially measured at fair value when the consideration paid for the asset is significantly less than fair value, and that difference is principally to enable the entity to further its objectives. Otherwise, assets acquired are recognised at cost.

Where the asset has been measured at fair value, AASB 1058 requires that elements of other Accounting Standards are identified before accounting for the residual component. These standards are:

- AASB 15 Revenue from Contracts with Customers
- AASB 16 Leases
- AASB 1004 Contributions
- AASB 137 Provisions, Contingent Liabilities & Contingent Assets
- AASB 9 Financial Instruments

Interest revenue is recognised on a proportional basis taking into account the interest rates applicable to the financial assets.

Revenue from the rendering of a service is recognised upon the delivery of the service to the customers.

All revenue is stated net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST).

e. Income Tax

By virtue of its aims as set out in the constitution, the Association qualifies as an organisation specifically exempt from income tax under the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997*.

f. Employment Entitlements

Provision is made for the Association's liability for employee benefits arising from services rendered by employees to balance

g. Provisions

Provisions are recognised when the Association has a legal or constructive obligation, as a result of past events, for which it is

Note 2. Related Party Transactions

The Committee Members act in an honorary capacity and are not paid for their services as Committee Members.

There were no transactions with related parties during the 2023 year.

The Committee of Governance has determined that the association is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements.

In the opinion of the Committee of Governance, the financial report as set out on pages 3 to 9, satisfy the requirements of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 and:

- 1 a. comply with Australian Accounting Standards applicable to the association; and
b. give a true and fair view of the financial position of Darebin Information, Volunteer & Resource Service Incorporated (DIVRS) as at 30 June 2023 and its performance for the year ended on that date.
- 2 At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that Darebin Information, Volunteer & Resource Service Incorporated (DIVRS) will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This declaration is signed in accordance with subsection 60.15(2) of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013.

Chairperson



Kate Naish

Treasurer



Adam Hanson

Dated this

4th day of October 2023

DAREBIN INFORMATION, VOLUNTEERS & RESOURCE SERVICE INCORPORATED
ABN 80 927 699 259
INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS

Opinion

I have audited the accompanying financial report of Darebin Information, Volunteers & Resource Service Incorporated (the Association), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2023, and the income and expenditure statement, statement of changes in equity and cash flow statement for the year ended on that date, a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory notes and the statement by the members of the Board.

In my opinion, the financial report of the Association is in accordance with the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission Act 2012 and the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (Victoria), including:

- i. giving a true and fair view of the Association's financial position as at 30 June 2023 and of its performance for the year ended; and
- ii. complying with Australian Accounting Standards as per Note 1, the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission Act 2012 and the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (Victoria).

Basis for Opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report section of our report. I am independent of the Association in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the financial report in Australia. I have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Emphasis of Matter - Basis of Accounting and Restriction on Distribution

I draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist the Association to meet the requirements of the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission Act 2012 and the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (Victoria). As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. My opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Report

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with the financial reporting requirements of the applicable legislation and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, management is responsible for assessing the Association's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Entity or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Association's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit 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 registered entity's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the responsible entities.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the responsible entities use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the registered entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the registered entity to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal controls that I identify during my audit.

Auditor: Frederik Ryk Ludolf Eksteen

Address: Collins & Co Audit Pty Ltd, 127 Paisley Street, FOOTSCRAY VIC 3011

Signature:



Date: 4 October 2023

THANK YOU

It's through working together with the support and partnership of so many in the community and our funders that we are able to achieve so much. Thank you!

Alex Makes Meals
Alphington Neighbourhood House
Australian Catholic University
Bakers Delight, Clifton Hill
Big Group Hug
Boomerang Bags Darebin
Brett Scapin Photography
Bridge Darebin
Brotherhood of St Laurence, Preston
Bunnings, Preston
CERES Fair Food
Christmas Box
Community Information and Support Victoria
Darebin City Council
Darebin Councillors
Darebin Emergency Relief Network
Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action
Department of Families, Fairness and Housing
Department of Social Services
Department of Transport
Donguri
Dorcas Ministry
Dr Traffic Driving School
East Preston Community Centre
Energy and Water Ombudsman, Victoria
FareShare
Fitstop Preston
Fitzroy Legal Service
Foodbank Victoria
Ged Kearney MP Office

Glenroy Bakery
Good Shepherd Microfinance
Grand Wash Auto
Haven Home Safe
Heidelberg Magistrates Court
Housing Choices
In2Gear Driving School
Individual Donors and Supporters
Inner North Foundation
Jika Jika Community Centre
Kat Theophanous MP Office
La La La, la chorale française de Melbourne
La Trobe University
Local Co.
Melbourne Farmers Markets
MFM stall holders
Melbourne Polytechnic, Preston Campus
Merri Outreach Support Service
MKS Spices N Things
Moon Rabbit Cafe
Nappy Collective
Nathan Lambert MP Office
NEAMI
Nelson Alexander
Northcote Bakeshop
Northcote Lions Club
Northern Community CareWorks
Northland Shopping Centre
Paperloop
PRACE

Preston Connected Community
Preston South Primary School
Purcell Family Foundation
Reservoir East Primary School
Reservoir Neighbourhood House
RMIT
Rotary Club of Preston
Salvation Army Support Services Preston
SecondBite
Services Australia
Sessions Northcote
Share the Dignity
Somali Australia Council of Victoria
SPAN Community House
Sporadical City Mushrooms
St Gabriel's Primary School
St Stephen's Primary School
Sustain - the Australian Food Network
Sustainability Victoria
The Mushroomery
The Pavilion School
Thornbury Church of Christ
Transport Accident Commission
Umberto Espresso Bar
Uniting
VicRoads
Victoria Police, Darebin
Victoria University
Your Community Health





DIVRS

Darebin Information,
Volunteer & Resource Service

Published by the Darebin Information, Volunteer & Resource Service

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Darebin Information, Volunteer & Resource Service is incorporated under the Incorporated Association Act 1981. It was formerly the Northcote Community Information and Support Service and Northcote Citizen's Advice Bureau and Information Centre No.A0020287B. It is endorsed as a deductible gift recipient under the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997, ABN 80 927 699 259

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DIVRS acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as the traditional caretakers of the land on which we live and work. We recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and culture. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.