



Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative Ltd

# ANNUAL REPORT

2021



# WELCOME TO COUNTRY

*Kim Barne Barre Wadda Wurrung, Kitarra ngitj.  
Gin Gin bail wada nidg. Bar Nar Weering Nidj.  
"Welcome to Wadda Wurrung Country,  
let us walk together and learn in peace."*

We would like to thank and pay respect to the Traditional Owners of this land – the Wadda Wurrung people, we give respect to their Elders, past, present, and emerging. We acknowledge their living culture and unique role in the life of this region.

We acknowledge and pay respect to our Elders, both past and present to the members of the Aboriginal community and to the community leaders.

## COVER ART

*"Bunjil watching over You Yangs" by Gerard Black*

This painting depicts the landscape of the You Yangs, a place that the artist has been going since a young child and now a place that he has taken his kids. The artist has captured these past memories that this special place holds and shows the Bunjil spirit that watches over.

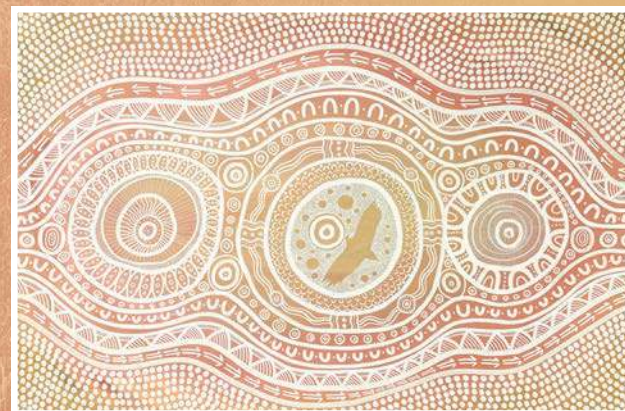


## ARTIST PROFILE

Gerard Black is a proud Worimi man living on Wadda Wurrung country.

*"I have been really blessed to grow up on Wadda Wurrung Country, when my dad moved down here not knowing anyone the first thing he did was reach out the Wathaurong Co-op and ever since then they have taken me under their wing of Bunjil and treated me as nothing but one of their own family whilst still nurturing my strong ties and connection to my birthing Country Worimi in NSW".*

Gerard has created his business, Baiyami Art, as a tribute to his ancestors with a vision to keep his peoples stories and language alive.



## OUR VISION

Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative (Wathaurong) vision is to support and politically advocate for the community: to provide culturally appropriate programs and support services and sustainable employment for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (Aboriginal) people in ways that are consistent with Aboriginal cultural practices.

## PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

Wathaurong was founded on the principles of Aboriginal Community Control that are:

- **Initiated** by the local Aboriginal Community
- **Driven** by the local Aboriginal Community
- **Owned** by the local Aboriginal Community

These three principles underpin Aboriginal Self-determination and Sovereignty which have been cultural custom and practice since the first Aboriginal organisation was formally established **'In Our Community's Hands'**.

## OUR PURPOSE

Wathaurong is committed to working together to provide a secure future for our community by upholding the dignity of our ancestors, respecting our Elders and community, and instilling a sense of cultural pride and belonging in our children and our children's children.

Wathaurong provides a self-determining organisation that is culturally sensitive and provides engagement and support service responses to meet the specific needs of our Aboriginal community. We do this by supporting our community members to:

- Connect socially,
- Strengthen cultural connections and unity,
- Have a voice,
- Celebrate culture and identity,
- Support community healing, wellbeing and advancement.

Disclaimer: While all care has been taken to ensure that information and figures contained in this report are true and correct at the time of publication, details were based on information on hand at that time, and changes in circumstances after the time of printing may impact on the accuracy of its information. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers should be aware that this document may contain images and names of deceased persons.

\*NB. For the purposes of this document, the term "Aboriginal" refers to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons.



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# WATHAURONG STRATEGIC PLAN

## Our Vision

*"We are here to support and politically advocate for the community: to provide culturally appropriate health, education, aged, disability, housing and cultural services, provide and advocate for sustainable employment for Aboriginal people in ways that are consistent with Aboriginal cultural practices."*



### Pillar 1 COMMUNITY

To continue to develop and provide quality services, programs and activities that enhance the social, economic, cultural and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal people and families who access services provided by Wathaurong.

- **1.1** Strengthen alliances with external agencies and partners to enhance service delivery
- **1.2** Cultivate meaningful relationships amongst the Wathaurong Community



### Pillar 2 INFRASTRUCTURE

Ensure that the Co-operative's infrastructure (structure, governance and management arrangements, administrative, financial and information technology systems) is capable of responding to opportunities for growth and change.

- **2.1** Meet the demand of population growth and subsequent service growth
- **2.2** Secure human and capital resources necessary to maintain and enhance the activities of Wathaurong Co-operative



### Pillar 3 HEALTH

To continue to grow and deliver a range of health programs to the Aboriginal community in a sensitive and culturally appropriate manner.

- **3.1** Improve Aboriginal peoples' access to culturally appropriate and high quality comprehensive primary health care services
- **3.2** Advocate on all levels of government for adequate resources
- **3.3** Provide holistic health and wellbeing services



### Pillar 4 SUSTAINABILITY

Our variety of programs and staff education is maintained to ensure the quality of service delivery to the Aboriginal community.

- **4.1** Be an employer of choice
- **4.2** Education and training partnerships that lead to quality workforce
- **4.3** Diversify funding sources for future sustainability
- **4.4** Sustain management structure



### Pillar 5 ADVOCACY

Ensure Wathaurong has a voice on issues that affect the whole Aboriginal community.

- **5.1** Political
- **5.2** Employment
- **5.3** Organisational

# PROFILES OF THE CURRENT BOARD MEMBERS



### PROFESSOR WENDY BRABHAM (Acting) Chairperson

Professor Wendy Brabham is a Traditional Owner from the Wamba Wamba, Wergaia, Nyeri Nyeri and Dhudhuroa first nations. Wendy is a respected academic who has been a representative on various boards and committees.



### JUDY DALTON-WALSH

Judy Dalton-Walsh is a Wadda-wurrung Traditional Owner who has always been involved in community and Wathaurong life. Judy works as a Koorie Engagement Support Officer at the Department of Education and Training.



### DAVID FLAGG

David Flagg is a proud Wamba Wamba man. David is a Regional Aboriginal Heritage Project Officer at Parks Victoria and has been involved with the Co-op since childhood, growing up on Wadda-wurrung country.



### SHANE CLARKE

Shane Clarke is a proud Bunurong man and works as the Senior Cultural Heritage Officer for Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation. Shane has decades of experience representing Community on various boards and in Aboriginal organisations throughout Victoria.



### CRAIG EDWARDS (Leave of Absence)

Craig Edwards (Leave of Absence) is a proud Gunditjmara/Wadda-wurrung family man who has previously worked for Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative Ltd. Craig has extensive experience representing his community on various boards and state-wide committees.

## Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative Ltd Board Directors for the financial year 2020-2021

Director	Date of commencement as Director	Date of cessation as Director	Number of eligible meetings for 2020/2021	Number of eligible meetings attended
Judy Dalton-Walsh	19/9/2018	N/A	12	12
Wendy Brabham	7/12/2017	N/A	12	12
David Flagg	08/07/2020	N/A	11	11
Shane Clarke	21/3/2021	N/A	3	3
Craig Edwards	26/11/2017	N/A	7	7

## Wathaurong Board Report

The Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative's Board of Directors wish to acknowledge the country that we work and live on is and has always been Wathaurong Country. Wathaurong provides support services to our Community living on Wathaurong, Gulidjan and Gadabanud country. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and to all Aboriginal people on Country who have contributed to the diverse Aboriginal Cultural Society we have today.

From a Board's perspective, the 2020-2021 year was a challenging period as we continued to navigate through the health and social challenges of COVID-19. The Board would like to take the opportunity to thank our Community Members and Staff for your patience, flexibility, and resilience in adapting to the many ongoing changes throughout the year. You will note when you read the Annual Report, our Team has done an incredible job of supporting our Community and making sure that we were at the forefront of providing the best supports and access to the vaccines in a culturally safe way.

As a Board our role is to ensure the strategic direction and governance of the Co-operative meets the needs of our Community. We are elected by Community to advocate and work for our Community. To achieve this the Board consider what are the priorities for our Community and we aim

to make decisions based on guiding principles drawn from over 41 years of experience and hard-won struggles, achieved by our freedom fighters, in their enactments as Sovereign First Nations Peoples. Many of whom contributed to the growth of the Co-operative and took seriously their Cultural responsibilities to give the next generations improved life opportunities, which ensure the longevity of us as a Community and, as First Nation Peoples, with strong Cultural Identities.

Our priority focus areas as a Board in recent times has been ensuring our cultural values are the foundation that shape and influence every aspect of our Co-operative from governance to outreach supports. This focus has enabled the Co-operative to:

- Increase Wathaurong's total revenue by 33% on the previous year mainly due to increases in grant funding and the expansion in service.
- Support our community through the many challenges of COVID-19 with our holistic approach by providing food support, accommodation, casual employment, health and wellbeing and community engagement activities.
- Successfully remove the caveat on 11 of our 22 rental properties.
- Obtain funding through the Aboriginal Housing Victoria Rapid Housing Response

program (ARHRP) to undertake upgrades and repairs to our rental properties.

- Partner with Barwon Health, Colac Area Health, VACCHO, NACCHO and other stakeholders to ensure that our community had priority access to COVID-19 vaccines and information in a culturally safe environment.
- Commence our infrastructure project that identifies 4 priority areas:
  - Priority 1 – Morgan Street
  - Priority 2 – Wurdi Youang
  - Priority 3 – Forster Street
  - Priority 4 – Surrey Street
- Implement Wathaurong's Quality Compliance Governance Framework that established:
  - Quality and Compliance Sub-committee
  - Finance, Risk Audit Committee
  - Cultural and Clinical Governance Working Group
  - Workplace Health and Safety Committee
- Successfully complete our audit review for Human Services Standards (HSS) and National Standards for Disability Services (NSDS) ensuring our continued provider registration with NDIS and the growth of the programs.

There were a few staff changes over the financial year. We welcome all our new staff and thank our outgoing staff for their work and commitment and wish them the best in their next journey.

- We said farewell to our CEO, Lisa Briggs, in July 2021. The board would like to thank Lisa for all her work over the past few years to bring our organisation to where it is today.
- Tony McCartney also stepped down from the role of Executive Manager of Family Services in late 2020, with Shellee Strickland moving into that role and Duane Luki stepping into the role of Acting Health Services Executive Manager.
- Finance Manager Kevin Bartlett moved into retirement at the end of 2020, and we welcomed Yohan Kumaran as our new Chief Finance Officer.

As we continue to navigate through this new "COVID Normal" the Board and Executive Management will review the organisational structure framework on an ongoing basis to ensure we are adaptive to the needs of our community and organisation priorities.





## Chief Executive Officer's Report

### LISA BRIGGS

Firstly, I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners on the lands we are meeting today the Wadda-wurrung people their Elders, past and present.

The past 12 months has been a significant period in Wathaurong's journey as we continue to build on last year's 40th anniversary theme commitment **Balert Tabayl Balert Ngitj (Strong Country Strong Community)**.

The 2020/21 financial year has been one of many challenges, both for Wathaurong as an organisation, and for our community. A large part of this difficult year has been managing the ongoing challenges COVID-19 has presented. It has required Wathaurong to change our way of working and to be flexible moving away from face-to-face contact for large periods of time and limited community events. This was a difficult change for our organisation as our strength comes from our connection to our community, but I am so proud of the way our community and organisation has come together to support and protect each other, while keeping our culture alive and strong.

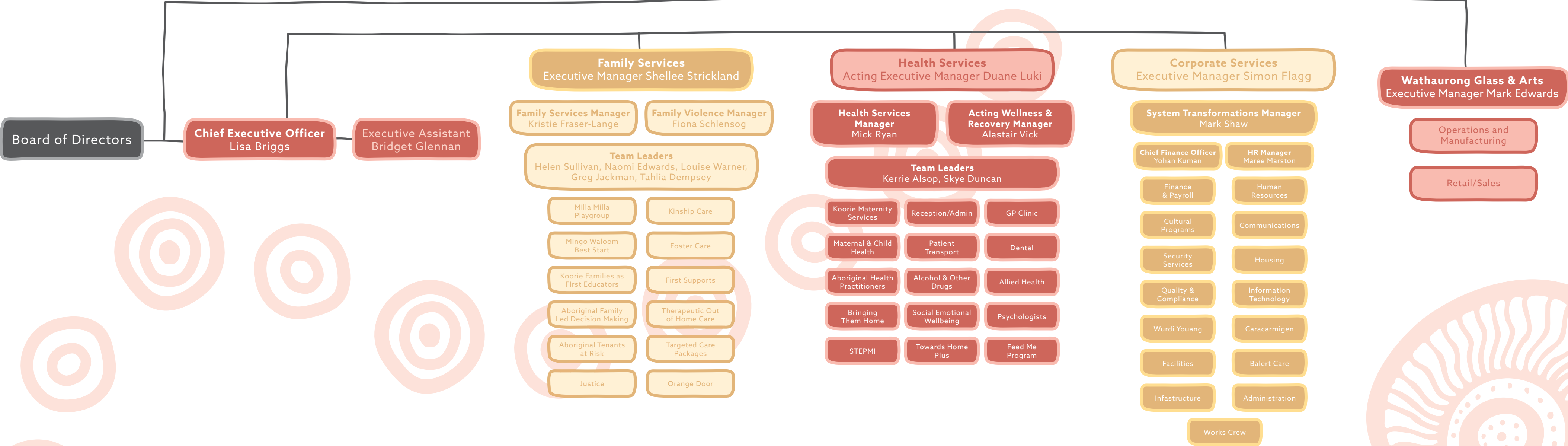
The Annual report provides a great opportunity for us all to reflect on both the achievements and the challenges we faced throughout the 2020/2021 financial year. Some of the key achievements for 2020/21 included:

- Establishment of Wathaurong's COVID-19 vaccination hub at the ford factory to ensure our community can be vaccinated, while also ensuring access to our GPs to discuss any concerns or questions about the vaccination process
- Introduced a secured printing application to ensure document privacy and confidentiality were always maintained to the highest standard, and at the same time reduced the environmental footprint of the organisation.
- Acquired an additional building at Albert Street in Geelong West to support Wathaurong's infrastructure Priority 1 – Morgan Street redevelopment.
- Reviewed and updated our internal capabilities, policies, procedures, and IT systems to strengthen our organisation to continue to support and advocate for our community.

I would like to say a big thank you to our Board, Executive Management and all our staff for the amazing work they do, it has been a challenging period, but we continue to build on our commitment **Balert Tabayl Balert Ngitj - Strong Country Strong Community**.



# ORGANISATIONAL CHART





# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

While COVID-19 restrictions meant that many of our community engagement activities weren't able to go ahead in 2020/2021, we were able to host a number of online activities which increased our ways of engagement with community, as well as host some in person activities in the brief windows of eased restrictions.

Here are some of our community engagement activities throughout the year.

NAIDOC Week  
Virtual Flag  
Raising (July)

**12,017**  
Attendees

Virtual Quest  
**22**  
Participants

AGM  
**70**  
Participants

2020/2021  
Total Community  
Engagements

**33,614**

Online Disco  
**31**  
Participants

National  
Apology Day  
**30**  
Participants

MCCC Cultural  
Training Day at  
Wurdi Youang  
**25**  
Participants



Births Deaths  
& Marriages  
Outreach Day  
**15**  
Attendees



Indigenous Literacy Day  
- Online live storytelling  
**4,137**  
Attendees

Mission Songs  
Workshop  
**9**  
Attendees

Virtual Movie  
Screening  
**25**  
Attendees



Connect  
To Country  
Virtual Run  
**132**  
Participants

Virtual Wildlife  
Xposure session  
**10**  
Participants

Wathaurong  
Scavenger Hunt  
**45**  
Participants

Pako Festa  
**40**  
Participants

Online Trivia  
**36**  
Participants

Adventure Park  
**530**  
Attendees

Angus Duo  
Facebook  
Live Stream  
**918**  
Attendees

Mission Songs  
Workshop  
**9**  
Attendees

Youth Group Forum  
**15**  
Attendees

NAIDOC Week  
Virtual Flag Raising  
(November)

**14,826**  
Attendees

YMCA  
Youth Camp  
**43**  
Participants

NAIDOC Week  
Dance Workshop  
**50**  
Participants

Christmas Party  
**400**  
Attendees

Colac  
Scavenger Hunt  
**3**  
Participants

Online Disco  
**31**  
Participants

Koorie  
Basketball Academy  
**6**  
Participants

National  
Sorry Day  
**175**  
Attendees



# NAIDOC WEEK

## NAIDOC Week

With ongoing restrictions due to the COVID19 pandemic, Wathaurong's 2020 NAIDOC Week was postponed from July until November in the hopes that in person events could be held. Unfortunately this was not the case, and our usual events such as the NAIDOC Ball and Flag Raising ceremonies were not able to be held in person.

Instead, we held an online NAIDOC event that enabled us to reach a wider audience, by live streaming the Flag Raising Ceremony on Facebook for the first time. We were able to host two virtual flag raising ceremonies, one in July, and a second in November, with a total combined audience of over 25,000 viewing the videos online.

With restrictions easing in December, we were able to present our NAIDOC Community Award Winners at our Christmas celebration.

Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative congratulates all of the 2020 NAIDOC Week Community Award Winners.



**NEDOK YOONGGA  
(ELDER/RESPECTED  
PERSON)**

Winner – **Glenn Shea**

**GLENN SHEA** was nominated for this award by members of the Wathaurong community for his tireless commitment to the 40 Year anniversary project; sharing his wealth of community knowledge; putting together videos and memories of Wathaurong's 40 years; stories for virtual quests and his work with promoting and instilling culture through new and different activities.



**NGARRWA NGITJ  
(COMMUNITY  
PERSON)**

Winner – **Tahlia Dempsey**

**TAHLIA DEMPSEY** was nominated for this award by members of the Wathaurong community for her passion and commitment to leadership in the development to the early years space; ensuring healthy and connected young mob and families; always putting community first and being the first person to help out; and keeping early years families connected through COVID.



**KOOLAY GOOPMA  
(YOUNG MALE ACHIEVER)**

Joint winners –  
**Keeden Graham & Jordan Edwards**

**KEEDEN GRAHAM** was nominated for this award by members of the Wathaurong community for being a role model for the younger generation; stepping up into challenges and thriving in leadership roles; being reliable, responsible and grounded; and his selection to the Victorian Youth Congress this year, working to amplify Indigenous voices.

**JORDAN EDWARDS** was nominated for this award by members of the Wathaurong community for his work as an elected Member of First Peoples Assembly for Treaty; working to bring the Koorie youth up with the culture; and continuing to work to bring engagement to the youth and ensuring that culture is at the front of all things at Wathaurong.



**MOORDEEMOONDEEK GOOPMA  
(YOUNG FEMALE ACHIEVER)**

Joint winners –  
**Taleena Black (not pictured) and Naomi Edwards**

**TALEENA BLACK** was nominated for this award by members of the Wathaurong community for turning her life around despite challenges; always being respectful; and growing with ambition and pride.

**NAOMI EDWARDS** was nominated for this award by members of the Wathaurong community for her continuous commitment to helping families grow stronger together; her devotion to helping children to better lives; her passion for self-determination and advocacy with a strong sense of community and culture; and her artistic side in weaving and creating earrings showing a positive role model for youth.





# OUR CULTURE, OUR LANGUAGE, OUR WAY

In 2019, Wathaurong created a Wadda-Wurrung Traditional Owner position that Jordan Edwards was appointed to. This position will assist the organisation to understand how we can improve building culture into our day-to-day business operations, through cultural awareness training, inductions and more.

In 2020/2021, Jordan co-ordinated 16 Welcome to Country's for external organisation and was an integral part of the West Vic Primary Health Network (PHN) group, alongside 6 other ACCOS, developing the cultural awareness training package to be delivered in our local area and the whole south west region.

In May 2020, Wathaurong co-hosted 25 Murray City Country Coast (MCCC) General Practitioners on country at Wurdi Youang for a cultural awareness day. Jordan also coordinated and managed 6 casual staff members to undertake the clean-up of the Wurdi Youang property prior to the rangers being employed.

In the coming financial year, Jordan and Aunty Judy Dalton-Walsh will be developing a Wadda Wurrung language course that has already had strong interest.

Other cultural activities throughout the year included:

- Cultural Dance Workshops for NAIDOC Week
- Dancing, smoking ceremonies and welcomes for NAIDOC Week, Pako Festa and more
- Youth Forums and Camps incorporating cultural activities





# CORPORATE SERVICES

## Staff

### CORPORATE SERVICES TEAM

#### Simon Flagg

Executive Corporate Services Manager

#### Jordan Edwards

Traditional Owner/ Cultural Advisor

#### Lynette Bartlett

Business Support Officer

### OPERATIONS

#### Mark Shaw

Systems Transformation Manager

#### Hayley Couzens

Facilities Manager

#### Jasmine Skye-Marinos

Quality & Compliance Officer

#### Tania Craig

Reporting Officer

#### Fiona Ryan

Board Project Officer

#### Robert Davis

Project Manager

#### Bruce Ryan

Builder

#### Chris Brown

Trades Assistant

#### Stephanie McLachlan

Receptionist

#### Mia Clay

Receptionist

#### Josephine Chester

Receptionist

#### Sharni Couzens

Receptionist

### HUMAN RESOURCES

#### Maree Marston

HR Manager

#### Rachael Knight

HR Business Partner

#### Tenaya Watts

Workforce Development Officer

### FINANCE

#### Yohan Kumaran

Chief Finance Officer

#### Kevin Bartlett

Finance Manager

#### Justin Haas

Assistant Accountant

#### Gordana Kerr

Payroll Officer

#### Kathy Davis

Finance Support Officer

### HOUSING

#### Rachel Oxford

Acting Housing Manager

### MARKETING

#### Beth Davis

Communications & Media Officer

### IT SUPPORT

#### Jack Woolford

Help-desk Consultant

#### Greg Cooper

IT Support Officer

### COLAC OUTREACH

#### Ebony Hickey

Community Development

### WURDIYOUANG

#### Reg Abrahams

IPA Manager

#### Megan Frazer

Project Officer

#### Matthew Barnes

Aboriginal Landcare Officer

#### Jamie Butcher

Aboriginal Landcare Officer

### BALERT CARE CONNECTIONS

#### Liz Abrahams

Team leader

#### Amanda Carter

Support Coordinator

#### Stacie Murphy

Support Coordinator

#### Alice Knight

Support Coordinator

#### Annmaree Wills

#### Aimee Williams

#### Cameron Craig

#### Christine Cahill

#### Cheryl Lefevre

#### Jasmine Adlam

#### Heidi Feildman

#### Sarah Harvey

#### Stacey Mercer

#### Misty Collins

#### Shirley Abrahams

Disability Support Workers/  
Aged care

#### David McLachlan

Works Crew

#### Jason Simpson

Works crew

#### Peter Surtees

Works Crew



## Corporate Services, Executive Manager Report *SIMON FLAGG*

Wathaurong's Corporate Services Team have been busy supporting Wathaurong's day to day operations, while continuing to review internal processes to ensure we support the organisation to provide the best supports for our community. Below is a snapshot of some of the activities that have been undertaken in 2020/2021.

### Human Resources

Across the 2020/2021 financial year, Wathaurong employed a total of 185 people (an average of 165 at any one time). Of those, 51% identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, which is the same as the previous financial year.

We recruited 70 people in the 20/21 financial year, helping to ensure services continued to be delivered to community during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

We had 14 staff members successfully complete their Diploma of Community Services Training, as well as over 175 staff members participate in elective training programs including:

- Employee Contact Training
- Aboriginal Cultural Safety Training
- Therapeutic Treatment Seminar

- Understanding Family Violence and Cultural Safety
- Court Skills Training
- Working Together to Prevent Youth Suicide
- Child Welfare Family Case Noting
- Workplace Manslaughter Training
- Social Emotional Wellbeing Training of LGBTIQA + Young People

A new payroll system (KeyPay) was implemented in March 2021. Following on from this project, we are implementing a new HR System which is due to go live early in 2022.

Wathaurong's Workforce Development Officer, Tenaya Watts, was awarded a special scholarship at the 2020 City of Greater Geelong "Women in Community Life" Awards for Leading in Education, for her work in supporting Wathaurong employees undertaking studies during the COVID-19 lockdowns and working with many training and education providers to make sure our staff could continue via online learning.

### Housing

Wathaurong takes pride in our tenancy services. Access to adequate housing is a universal human right. But we like to

think, that what we do is more than housing, it's about our mob, community and providing a house people can call 'home'.

Wathaurong has 22 properties under management with several units in the process of being sold to fund further purchases. We still have a few of our properties with a caveat against them limiting what we can do with them.

However this year has seen almost half the portfolio having the caveat removed. This is true self-determination and will enable Wathaurong to have the freedom to decide how these properties are used in the future.

Wathaurong is also excited to be part of the Aboriginal Housing Victoria Rapid Housing Response program (ARHRP) which is a project that will deliver upgrades to all properties that we manage. From 1 July 2021, Wathaurong will undertake all aspects of tenancy and property management, after previously outsourcing some tenancies to a local real estate agent. Returning the management of these properties back to Wathaurong management will ensure we provide the best housing for our community.



## Corporate Services Report

### Facilities

The reception team has worked hard the past 12 months in transitioning our reception services to work remotely due to the numerous COVID-19 lockdowns and they have done a great job limiting the impact on community connecting to Wathaurong and our supports.

During this year Wathaurong has been working hard to review and refresh numerous systems to better support the needs of the organisation to provide the best supports to community this included:

- Updating our security and IT systems
- Implemented a new car fleet booking process that will assist in improved maintenance and coordination
- Undertaking Occupational Health & Safety audits through all our sites to ensure the buildings are safe from injury risks and hazards to keep our staff and community safe.
- Fit out of the new building at Albert St Geelong West, OH&S oversight and supporting all areas to ensure the building is available to open for community in 2022.



### TENANT PROFILE

Jenny Warburton lives in one of the Wathaurong's properties in Norlane and has for three years. Her occupancy has been a success in this property due to it being built with her disability in mind. Jenny is permanently in a wheelchair so wide passage ways/door ways and a low line kitchen, bathroom enables her to live comfortably. She is very happy in her unit and applauds the Co-op for all they have done for her to give her the independence that we all deserve. Her property is her sanctuary and the Co-op are always looking at ways to improve the property to ensure Jenny is comfortable.

### WURDI YOUANG

Proudly owned and managed by Wathaurong, Wurdi Youang is 369 hectares of reclaimed farmland that is slowly being restored to when our ancestors walked these ancient volcanic plains. Maintaining our usual activities during the pandemic has proved challenging, but we still achieved some great things during 2020/2021, largely thanks to focused leadership, increased staffing and some amazing partners.

Our capacity for conservation work grew significantly for Wurdi Youang this year with growth in the team. We employed two Aboriginal Landcare Officers, funded by Working Victoria, the new workers join property coordinator Reg Abrahams in delivering comprehensive environmental and cultural heritage management. Together the team has rejuvenated a weed-infected 17-hectare patch with native grasses and plants, including nurturing critically endangered species such as the spiny rice flower and the golden sun moth.

At the invitation of the Honourable Richard Marles MP, we successfully applied for \$20,000 grant for farming equipment from the Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources. This equipment will improve our conservation of scarce volcanic plains habitat, while also providing the opportunity

to re-establish skill development and vocational pathways for local Aboriginal people.

Our long-term partnerships with Trust for Nature and Koala Clancy Foundation continued, extending our native tree and shrub planting projects along the riverbank and grassy gully lines. This work contributes to healthy waterways, while providing koalas and other native animals and birds a safe corridor to clean water.

Although we have not received Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) funding from the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) this year, we continue to fulfil our cultural management responsibilities, and to advocate for the heritage protection of Wurdi Youang as Victoria's first registered Aboriginal heritage site.

We thank our partners and funders, and look forward to building on 2021's successes.

### COLAC – THE GATHERING PLACE

Over the course of the financial year amidst the COVID-19 pandemic we had to implement changes and restrictions on the way Caracaramigen House – The Colac Aboriginal Gathering Place operates, with varied hours and a significant impact on face-to-face engagement and services. Despite these challenges and through

significant investment from Wathaurong, external stakeholders, and local community businesses we have been able to provide over 400 PPE packs, COVID-19 screening sessions both onsite and offsite, continue to support the GP Outreach Clinic that visits Colac weekly, increase engagement in the form of Telehealth appointments for community and deliver well over 300 care packages to community in need.

As the year progressed so too did the uncertainty of re-opening and commencing community activities, throughout breaks in lockdowns we were able to host smaller NAIDOC Celebrations at Red Rock Regional Theatre and Gallery in November with an exhibition of 3 local artists. We were also able to participate in a range of events throughout inclusive but not limited to; In The Skies Gallery exhibitions which saw community showcase contemporary artworks and poetry highlighting the importance of language associated with place and belonging, a number of engagement opportunities with local primary schools and kindergartens around caring for country, Uncle Archie Roach perform live at COPAC, Safe Our Way Forum, Colac Otway Arts Trail, installation of bollards at the Colac Police Station, Aboriginal Children's Day scavenger hunt, International Womens Day and Beginning Steps and All About Me natural dye workshops at Tarndie.





## Corporate Services Report

We have continued to have important conversations year-round but this time involving lots of use of Zoom, Teams and Webex discussing varying levels of need and services that just aren't reaching the South West of the Barwon Catchment in the Colac and Otway Region and although making considerable gains, we still have a long way to go to improve the level of service in a timely manner available outside of Geelong; this will be an ongoing conversation. Partnerships at Caracaramigen House continue to bloom, with Eastern Maar and Colac Otway Shires Beginning Steps Project all co-located and we have continued to strengthen our relationships with a range of local services and government departments to ensure we are best meeting the needs of community.

We look forward to continuing the cultural growth and strength of the Colac Aboriginal Gathering Place and thank the Colac Aboriginal community for their continued leadership and determination in this space.

### Balert Care Connections

Balert Care Connections provides NDIS and Aged care services to over 110 Community members. The Team strives to provide the best possible services to enhance the lives of the community members we support. We believe we do our utmost to ensure the

care and support is provided in a culturally appropriate manner so they can live a comfortable and connected life. We do not provide a one-size-fits-all solution, our service centres our client's needs.

As a registered NDIS provider, we offer a comprehensive range of supports, including advice, support coordination, daily living skills, and personal care. Through our Connector Program, this year we assisted numerous families with a disability to access the NDIS and implement their plans. We also provide services that assist people with the changing needs as they age and continue to participate in community. Our Works Crew also provide lawn and garden maintenance services. The crew also undertake works at various Wathaurong sites such as Morgan Street, keeping the gardens in check. Last year Balert Care provided over 6,893 hours of support to clients, aged care and NDIS.

The year in review has been busy for the Team as we attempt to grow our services and prepare for Aged Care registration which will allow us to manage packages rather than rely on other organisations. This year we successfully implemented a new client management system called SupportAbility. This system has created several efficiencies in rostering, completing

tasks and updating notes and plans. Staff also now have access to the National Disability Services training platform and are working their way through a range of required modules.

Wathaurong also successfully completed our audit review for Human Services Standards (HSS) and National Standards for Disability Services (NSDS) ensuring our continued provider registration with the NDIS.

COVID-19 has brought many unexpected challenges; however, we have been able to maintain our key services during the pandemic and increase our staffing numbers.

### Information Technology

In the 2020/2021 period an internal IT team has been established at Wathaurong. Stepping into the IT management role, Jack Woolford, and his diligent team have worked to achieve some major milestones in improving Wathaurong's IT infrastructure and systems.

All existing systems and contracts are under review to decrease costs, increase features available to staff, improve usability of systems, provide better documentation, processes and policies, and uplift the security of all systems.

The following projects have been reviewed and completed:

- ✓ An Internet Service Provider contract overhaul was undertaken and has been completed leading to major upgrades and savings across all office locations.
- ✓ A Telstra mobile internet and data service overhaul was undertaken and has also been completed resulting in significant savings.
- ✓ Security of systems have already been greatly improved with Multi-Factor Authentication being enabled across the board. Along with Single Sign On, a feature that requires only the use of one username and password across all systems but ties into Multi-Factor Authentication ensuring staff accounts are kept secure.

The following projects are currently in progress:

- ⌚ The Microsoft Azure cloud hosted system is under review, resulting in a planned redesign of the server infrastructure and associated systems. This will create an easier to use environment for staff, that provides a more reliable experience and is more secure by design. Due to automatic scaling that will occur, this will also become cheaper overall.
- ⌚ On-premise infrastructure is also being reviewed, with old equipment being removed, updated, and replaced with equipment that will allow more flexibility as to where staff work and how they choose to do so.
- ⌚ The Mitel desk phone system used across all office locations is currently under review with new features planned to be implemented.
- ⌚ An effort is also underway to make alliances with other ACCOs and mutually bolster each other's IT knowledge and infrastructure.

There are still many further improvements and works being discovered each day, leading to further plans to improve the staff's user experience and ensure efficient delivery of services to the community. Overall, the 2020/2021 period has been a very busy and successful time for the IT department.



# FAMILY SERVICES

## Staff

### FAMILY SERVICES MANAGEMENT

**Shellee Strickland**  
Executive Manager of Family Services

**Kristie Fraser-Lange**  
Manager of Family Services

**Helen Sullivan**  
Family Services Team Leader

**Naomi Edwards**  
Family Services Team Leader

**Louise Warner**  
Out of Home Care Team Leader

**Greg Jackman**  
Out of Home Care Team Leader

**Tahlia Dempsey**  
Early Years Team Leader

**Fiona Schlenso**  
Manager Family Violence

### FAMILY SERVICES CASE WORKERS

**Cheryl McCormack**

**Emily Welsh**

**Hayley Boehm**

**Maya Saunders**

**Ruby Bennett**

**Adele Welsh**

**Jane Clements**

**Michelle Haywood**

**Leonie Gloster**

**Rebecca Mayberry**

**Pepa Castro**

**Leah Kolega**

**Penny Jenkins**

**Deegan Searle**

**Jessica McDonald**

### OUT OF HOME CARE

**Francisco Rodriguez**

**Kylie Gleeson**

**Andrea Sullivan**

**Jayden Hickey**

**Tahlia Anderson**

**Tahlia Easton**

**Penny Henderson**

**Kerry McKenzie**

**Linda Tanner**

**Case Worker Support Officers**

**Esteban Santos**

**Therapeutic Practitioner**

**Darren Martini**

**Targeted Care Packages Key Worker**

**Paige Keating**

**Aboriginal Family Led Decision**

**Making Convener**

**Cherie Houldcroft**

**Cultural Support Plan Officer**

**Stephanie Lamont**

**Foster Care Recruitment Worker**

**Mikayla Anderson**

**First Supports**

**Penny Jenkins**

**First Supports**

**Tyler Cole-Frost**

**Navigator Program**

### FAMILY VIOLENCE

**Naomi Surtees**

**Virginia Murray**

**Bek Condello**

**Orange Door Family Violence  
Practitioners**

**Terri Khan**

**Natalie Sullivan**

**Family Violence Accommodation  
Support Worker**

**Mark Thompson**

**Family Violence Worker**

### COMMUNITY SERVICES

**Sandra Manning**

**Local Justice Worker**

**Ann Last**

**Youth Justice Worker**

**Rory Charles**

**Aboriginal Tenants at Risk Worker**

### Early Years Team

**Kristi Watts**

**Milla Milla Playgroup Facilitator**

**Shantelle Baillie**

**Best Start Facilitator**

**Jackie Brown**

**Gina Chapman**

**Emily Dehon**

**Shannon Moulton** (maternity leave)

**Koorie Families as**

**First Educator Practitioners**



## Family Services, Executive Manager Report

### SHELLEE STRICKLAND

The Family Services unit continues to grow in the number of programs provided to the community as well as the number of community members we are supporting. We have seen significant changes and growth within all our programs with an increase in client referrals and stronger networking relationships with our funding bodies.

Over the last 12 months we have had a significant focus on strengthening our relationship with Child Protection. Wathaurong staff live and breathe the community we work with, it's our family, our people. We are their strongest and biggest advocates for the best interests of our children and families and to ensure the best outcomes are achieved for our families we know that we need to work closely with Child Protection as they are the ultimate decision makers. Whilst we will always advocate that children need to remain in the care of their parents there are times where we need to support the removal of children in their best interests, whilst we then work closely with the parents to ensure their capacity is strengthened to meet all the needs of their children's safety, protective and nurturing for reunification to occur

It's because of these strong relationships now that we have been able to get on the front foot with Child Protection. This is

an absolute change in the process of the way we have worked previously - we would normally be the last one to hear about the intentions of Child Protection, where we are now cohesively part of the journey.

Retaining staff continues to be an issue and we are working hard to address this. Wathaurong are supporting and upskilling staff and are continuously exploring ways to help staff better support our community members and families.

Throughout this year our staff have continued to face the impacts of COVID-19 on both our personal and work lives. This has been a challenge that the team has worked through, finding different ways working and continuous support to all of our clients and the community. We would like to acknowledge the dedication of the staff who put in many extra hours and effort to ensure that our clients weren't left behind or forgotten through this period, providing additional support, both physically and emotionally. We would also like to acknowledge all the hard work that all of our families have put in to get through this time, working through lockdown, supporting children with remote learning and supporting one another.

We would like to thank the whole of the family services team who continuously

go above and beyond to support our community. The team are continuously focusing on a holistic approach, considering all external issues that may prevent families from reaching their full potential; including health or housing issues, physical or social isolation, financial difficulties, relationship issues, family conflict, substance use, disability and more. Each situation is different and we build on the strengths of the families in our service to empower people giving them the skills and abilities to make lasting change.

Network meetings and client focused meetings have continued throughout this year. These are important in ensuring that we work with mainstream agencies to support community members accessing their support programs as well as other agencies who are involved in the care teams of our clients. We meet regularly with our funding bodies and have built strong relationships with them as well as other agencies in the area, some of the network meetings that Wathaurong has been involved with are as follows;

- High Risk Youth Panel
- Intensive Infant Panel
- Entry into Care Panel meetings
- Leaving Care Panel meetings
- Best start



## Family Services Report

- Transition of Aboriginal Children into Aboriginal Care meetings
- Better Futures Project Control Group meetings
- Barwon Child and Family Service Alliance meetings
- Family Preservation and Reunification Alliance
- Cultural Planning Implementation Group meeting/ Cultural Portal Steering Group meeting
- Colac Otway and Corangamite Child and Family Services Alliance
- Risk Assessment Management Panel (RAMP)
- Regional Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committee (RAJAC)
- Orange Door Hub Leadership Group

As there continues to be constant pressures from the Department and Child Protection and we were finding that we were consistently behind the eight ball and needing to become more proactive we have now engaged a strategic policy lawyer. Melissa O'Donnell is a Practising Lawyer who has come on board with Wathaurong and is supporting our leadership team to provide strong advocacy to on policy and legal reforms as well as supporting our position when it comes to attending and supporting in the court rooms. Having our

own Practising Lawyer has been fantastic and ensures us that we are aligning where we need to with our legal stance and has strengthened our advocacy within the court space. It has not only supported us with giving a wider knowledge base with knowing what to expect, but also given us the tools to be able to speak in the court language. Already through having this support we have been able to see the considerable impact of this position in strengthening Wathaurong's position when advocating in court, we acknowledge that we still have so much work to do in the court space and committed to the ongoing work to get the outcomes that we require.

The team look forwards to a challenging year ahead as we continue to work towards great outcomes together both for and with the children, youth and families within community. Over the next 12 months the leadership team looks to have a focus on strengthening our relationships in the Family Violence and Justice spaces.

### Integrated Family Services

The Integrated Family Services program is part of a partnership with Barwon Children and Family Services Alliance which consist of other family services providers in Geelong; Diversitat, BCYF, Bethany and CoGG. The program supports families with

children 0-18 years old where there may be concerns of parenting capacity, neglect, mental health, family violence or various other issues that impact on the childrens lives. The aim of the program is to improve the safety, stability and development of children and for Wathaurong it is about doing this in a way which puts culture at the forefront of what we do. We respectfully work with families to improve the capacity of parents and care givers in their interactions with their children. Over the course of the year we have worked with 38 families.

### Aboriginal Cradle to Kinder

Cradle to Kinder (C2K) provides an intensive, wrap around case management service from pre-birth and continue supporting the family until the child is four years old. C2K accepts referrals for families who have complex needs, and who may be at risk of Child Protection involvement. Cradle to Kinder supports families to remain outside the Child Protection system, and empowers families to work towards social independence in up to a four year intervention. Cradle to Kinder supported 30 families during the 2020/2021 financial year.

### Aboriginal Stronger Families

The Aboriginal Stronger Families Program is an up to 12-month intensive program that works with Families who have child

protection involvement to help Families to actively address the protective concerns raised by Child Protection in a culturally appropriate manner, in order for Aboriginal children to safely remain with their Families or be safely reunified back into the care of their biological parents.

The program provides a holistic and creative support service to our Families. Our intervention can consist of therapeutic supports, youth engagement activities, educational support, mental health and wellbeing support, access to child care and supports to create independence and self-determination within families.

Throughout this financial year we supported 27 Families through the ASF program.

### Family Preservation & Reunification (FPR)

The Family Preservation and Reunification program (FPR) commenced in 2020. Wathaurong partnered with Bethany Community Support in their funding application for the FPR program and as a result received funding to support 6 families.

The FPR program is an evidence-based, outcome focused intensive child and family support model that aims to promote strong families - with children who are safe, healthy, resilient and thriving; and parents and caregivers who are supported to create a safe and nurturing home environment.

The FPR program works closely in partnership with Child Protection to work alongside and advocate strongly with decisions that are being made, ensuring that everything is in the best interest of the children, and ensuring that we are supporting families to reach the best possible outcomes.

Through this program we supported 6 families this year. Moving into next financial year we see this funding coming directly to Wathaurong rather than being sub-contracted by Bethany which provides us with more opportunity to ensure that all our work is tailored to our community's needs throughout all interventions.

This year we have seen our staff work hard to ensure that our Family Services programs are delivered in a cultural way whilst also in a professional, empathetic manner, and that client needs and the best interests of the children are at the forefront of everything we do. Next financial year there is significant change being made to our Family Services programs as we see our ASF and C2K funding streams merge into the FPR funding stream. Whilst we are excited at the new opportunities that this is going to bring in training and support for our staff we do see there being some slight barriers to the intake process for our community. Our team has been and will continue to push back against the governments departments to ensure that our programs are being run the best possible way for our community.



# Family Services Report

## OUT OF HOME CARE

### Aboriginal Family Led Decision Making (AFLDM)

The Aboriginal Family Led Decision Making (AFLDM) Program is based on traditional Aboriginal values and decision making processes where the responsibility for growing kids is shared by parents, extended family and the community and guided by the knowledge and experience of Elders.

AFLDMs encourages family members, extended Family, Elders, other significant people in the child's life and when appropriate, the child and /or young person to get together, make decisions and develop a plan that promotes the safety and wellbeing of children and young people who are involved in the Child Protection system. All referrals come from Child Protection and the AFLDM Community Convener works alongside the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing AFLDM Convener.

The last 12 months has been incredibly difficult for the AFLDM program as ideally these meeting should be happening in person, however our facilitator has worked closely with the families and Child Protection to supporting families to be utilising the online platform Microsoft Teams to host the meetings and ensure

the meetings can be as meaningful as possible. Throughout the year there has been a total of 60 meetings facilitated.

### Cultural Support Planning

Wathaurong is funded to provide oversight of the Cultural Planning for Aboriginal Children. The Cultural Advisor provides support to develop, endorse, review and implement cultural plans for all Aboriginal children and young people living in Out of Home Care.

The program works closely with Wathaurong Kinship Services, Child Protection DFFH and community service organisations to meet the requirements of the cultural plans in partnership with the Cultural Support and Awareness Officer in Child Protection at the Department of Families Fairness and Housing (DFFH). The program helps makes sure child protection practitioners and case managers are culturally sensitive and aware of the differences in growing up our Aboriginal children and young people.

This year there was significant work done with Wathaurong, DFFH, Department of Justice and Community Safety (DJCS) and Department of Education and Training (DET) to come together to create 'One Cultural Plan' for children. Prior to this some children might have two Cultural Plans as they interacted with with the Justice System

and Child Protection, the creation of one plan ensures children and families are not having to go through the process several times and rather the systems are talking to one another to make the process smoother for everyone.

### Foster Care Recruitment

Foster Care Recruitment aims to recruit Aboriginal carers and to support non-Aboriginal carers through cultural training to take Aboriginal children into care. This program specifically focus' on strengthening the supports and improving the outcomes for our kids and their families through supporting them through the recruitment and training process. Over the course of this year we have had contact with a number of individuals, couples and families who are expressing an interest in providing care for Aboriginal children and whilst it has been difficult to engage over COVID-19 we have six carer households currently in the process of becoming accredited carers.

As Wathaurong continue to progress the Transitioning of Aboriginal Children into Aboriginal Care the Foster Care recruitment program is proving to be more and more important. As an Aboriginal organisation Kinship Care is and will always be our first option of care for children, but this isn't always possible and we would like to be

able to support our Aboriginal children in care ensuring that they are with carers who understand and are supported to embrace culture in their homes.

We strongly encourage community members who have been thinking about caring for children to give Family Services a call and have a yarn about the process, we will support you the whole way through and be there to support you once children enter into your care.

### Targeted Care Packages (TCP)

A Target Care Package (TCP) is an innovative and flexible program that provides targeted supports for children and young people who are living in Out of Home Care to aid their stability throughout a placement. The focus of all packages is to meet the individual needs and ensure children and young people are safe, respected, nurtured and are able to reach their full potential. The packages provide the young person with access to a range of wrap around individualised services. Throughout this year we have received one TCP to support a young person to return to the care of his parent, which would not have been possible without the support wrap around of the TCP.

### Kinship Care and Home Based Care (Foster Care)

The Kinship and Foster Care programs contract the case management of Aboriginal children who are on a child protection order living within a kinship placement or living with Foster Carers. We support the children, young people and carers by strengthening and maintaining cultural identity and connection to the Wathaurong community, ensuring connection to immediate family as well as with some practical day-to-day needs. The program assists to establish and maintain child placements. The staff in this program regularly: visit clients at home, organise and supervise access visits with other family members, arrange education and training sessions to ensure carers are able to meet the needs of the children and young people, ensure children are safe within their placements, encourage/support children's access to Community and Cultural events and support young people with the leaving care process. The program works closely alongside Child Protection however Wathaurong takes the lead as we are the contracted agency.

This year we have been working closely with DFFH as we continue to transfer Aboriginal Children into Aboriginal Care. This is closely linked with the Victorian Governments commitment to self-determination and

self-management for Aboriginal people.

Throughout the year we supported a total of 74 children and young people who were contracted to Wathaurong for case management from Child Protection. Through this time we had two young people turn 18 who we were able to support to transition into independent living, we supported six children to reunify with their parent/s. Where reunification has been determined not possible for a number of children we have supported the carers to go through the permanent care process. Throughout this year we were successful in achieving permanent care for eight children to create stability for both the child/young person and carer.

### First Supports

First Supports provides the initial support to Kinship Carers of Aboriginal children and young people. We receive referrals within the first three weeks of an Aboriginal child entering into a Kinship placements and work with the carers to ensure that they have all the supports in place that are required for them to provide the full care that the children and young people need. In this time we also complete the Part B assessment. At the end of this assessment we send it back through to Child Protection highlighting the ongoing needs to ensure the placement



## Family Services Report

stability for the children and either endorse or not-endorse the placement, this goes heavily into supporting Child Protections case planning.

Throughout this year we supported 18 new carer households in completing the Part B assessment for Child Protection.

### Therapeutic Home Based Care

Within the Out of Home Care programs Wathaurong has a Therapeutic Home-Based Care practitioner. This role is to support and provide secondary consultation regarding children in care. The Therapeutic Home-Based Care practitioner has provided an intensive level of support to our Kinship carers and children in care with strategies to manage difficult behaviours and therapeutic interventions to support the trauma of children in the OOH system. With such growth and demand on this program over the next financial year we are focusing on growth funding to be able to meet the needs of all our carers and children and strengthened relationships with other therapeutic services in the region to support.

### Navigator

The Navigator program supports young people aged between 12-17 years to re-engage with education and actively support them transition back to school. Navigator

works with young people, their families and support networks to support and identify strengths and skills to help make school a positive experience.

Navigator is available to young people who:

- Are between 12 and 17 years of age
- Have attended less than 30% of the previous school term (if enrolled in a school)
- Either live in or have most recently been enrolled in education across the Greater Geelong region

The Navigator program is delivered through Barwon Child, Youth and Family (BCYF), however BCYF subcontract Wathaurong to provide cultural advice and support. We have only just commenced this work with BCYF and the Navigator program and we are excited to get in and provide the youth the support to reengage in education and/or find a pathway that best suits their wishes for their future.

## EARLY YEARS

### Best Start Program - Mingo Waloom

The Mingo Waloom Best Start program is funded by the DET and operates within a broad early years services partnership. Our partners include City of Greater Geelong, Bethany, Barwon Health, Barwon Child Youth and Family, Goodstart Early Learning, Colac

Area Health, Colac Otway Shire, DET, Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (LAECG), DHHF, Geelong Regional Library Corporation (GRLC), Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Association Limited (VACSAL) and Deakin University Institute of Koorie Education.

The Best Start facilitator engages services from other services within Early Years Education and Maternal and child Health as appropriate. Every year Wathaurong puts a large focus on ensuring the voice of Aboriginal community members and Elders are heard right throughout the Mingo Waloom Partnership. Mingo Waloom has facilitated bimonthly meetings with Aboriginal representatives within our partnership a week before the Wathaurong/ CoGG co-hosted Partnership meetings throughout the year. Further to that in 2021 we held two half day workshops with all partners, co-hosted by CoGG Best Start Facilitator Seona Murphy and facilitated by July Mundy (Partnership Brokers Association). These workshops looked at what barriers we were facing working collaboratively and making the most impactful positive change possible.

Through the workshops the Partners developed a set of Principles that underpin the work we do together and the value that every individual brings to the partnership.

These principles include Value Add, Voice, Shared Understanding of Best Start, Collaboration, Courage, Trust and Commitment.

### Koori Pre-school Assistant Program (KPSA)

The KPSA program focuses on supporting access and participation of Aboriginal children in mainstream kindergartens within the Geelong region, as well as assisting early childhood educators with providing culturally appropriate care and creating inclusive environments for Aboriginal children and their families.

During the financial year, the KPSA role has celebrated the following achievements that support the focus areas of the program, including:

- Facilitating Kinder Information Sessions via Milla Milla Playgroup's online learning platform so that families can learn more information about the kindergarten programs and process'
- Providing ongoing support online during COVID-19 for early childhood educators surrounding Aboriginal cultural inclusion in the early childhood setting. This assistance includes support with understanding the importance of and development of an acknowledgement of country for different services, sharing stories, creating art, sharing dance with the children and educators, and

sharing further resources and knowledge for additional support. These activities encourage educators to be more confident with including Aboriginal culture within their everyday practice at their services.

The KPSA program has also been a part of an Early Years working group with the City of Greater Geelong's Aboriginal Outreach Support program and other early years professionals from Wathaurong, The Department of Education and City of Greater Geelong which has focused on ensuring families are feeling supported and are provided with the information and knowledge to make informed decisions about their children's early years education. This work has particularly had a focus on the Whittington and Norlane areas.

### Milla Milla Playgroup

Milla Milla Playgroup provides Aboriginal Children a culturally safe and inclusive space for them and their parents, carers, Aunties, Uncles and other family members to attend. We provide a space and program that strengthens their cultural identity, gives them a sense of belonging in the community and help them develop skills they need for their next journey to kinder or school. Milla Milla works alongside the KPSA and KESO workers to help support parents in get their children enrolled and ready for kinder or school.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Milla Milla Playgroup still provided children and their families with a cultural connection via 'Milla Milla Playgroup at Home,' an online learning platform via Facebook. Whilst restrictions permitted, we were also able to meet face to face at various locations which we called 'Milla Milla Playgroup Out on Country.'

Each session online and out on country consisted of language, songs and stories. For the sessions online, this also included a fun activity for families to try at home with their children. Playgroup sessions where livestreamed every Thursday and Friday from 11.30am till 12.00pm which aligned with Milla Milla playgroups usual routine for when we do group time together.

The 'Milla Milla Playgroup at Home' Facebook page has also been a platform to share other resources and information for families of young children including parenting strategies from the KFFE team, updates of the pandemic and other health and allied health information pages.

There are currently 127 members in the Facebook group. This consist of 16 families that already attended playgroup before the pandemic, 18 families that reconnected that had attended Milla Milla in the past and 56 new families. We also have staff from Wathaurong as members as well as others from the broader community



## Family Services Report

who want to be involved and are also seeking inspiration. Milla Milla Playgroup acknowledges the many partnerships with mainstream services including City of Greater Geelong, Barwon Child Youth and Family, Geelong Art Centre and Korayn Birralelee Family Centre. We will continue to value these networks and utilise them in the most supportive way for outcomes for our children in community.

Some exciting news that has occurred during the financial year includes our site getting a makeover with some new additions to resources, toys and a paint job! We also have the MCH Nurse sitting on site at Milla Milla Playgroup each week now to promote more of a 'one stop shop' for families. Milla Milla Playgroup was also acknowledged as Best Practice in continuing the ongoing connection to culture for our community during the pandemic and the lockdowns.

In the next 12 months Milla Milla will look forward to welcoming community back on site and continuing to support community through providing a holistic approach with our new structure. We hope to provide more playgroup sessions targeted to parents with babies under 12 months and providing more Parenting Support Programs with the KFFE team.



### Balert Gerrbik: Koorie Families as First Educators (KFFE)

KFFE is an early intervention program to assist families with supporting and strengthening their parenting capacity and improving the health, development, learning and wellbeing of Aboriginal children aged 0-5 years.

The KFFE team focuses on promoting positive family functioning and reducing the stressors that impact on caregiving. The KFFE team does this by utilising a strengths-based approach and supporting families with systematically identifying and managing family risk factors, and providing additional supports to set and successfully complete achievable goals that support their children's early learning and development.

Our KFFE staff are trained practitioners in the Indigenous Positive Parenting Program (Triple P) and recently completed training in the Circle of Security Parenting (COSP) Program. The team use these programs to provide supports to families either in a one-on-one capacity in a culturally safe and comfortable setting, or in a group setting. More recently during COVID-19, the team have been utilising technology and have also been able to adapt service delivery of the program over Zoom, as well as produce videos discussing particular strategies to post on Wathaurong community Facebook pages.

KFFE is a secondary program that can support families who may also be involved with other case management programs. The KFFE team make referrals to more specialised, intensive services where case management and additional supports are required. Families and children at high risk,

with needs that go beyond the objectives of KFFE are assessed for potential referral into tertiary services that can better meet their needs.

Throughout the financial year the KFFE program supported 49 families through both one on one and group work directly through the KFFE program. Whilst most service delivery has been occurring in a one on one capacity during the pandemic, the team is also celebrating community members who completed the Indigenous Triple P program in a group capacity online via zoom early in 2021.

The KFFE team also supported many more community members through posting videos of strategies and self-care support via community Facebook pages during the pandemic.



### Anecdote from Community Member who participated in the Triple P Program via ZOOM:

*"I recently engaged with the PPP online course & have already found it extremely helpful & inciteful. It is so nice to meet up with other Indigenous mums & the KFFE team to have a nice yarn about our challenges & triumphs so far & get more ideas on how to best support our children on this rollercoaster of a journey we are all on whilst teaching & learning in a culturally safe place. For anyone considering doing this program, I highly recommend it because as I say, "knowledge is power" there is always something new to learn & what may not work for you, may work for others & vice versa 😊"*



# Family Services Report

## FAMILY VIOLENCE

### Family Violence Accommodation Support

The impacts of COVID-19 and the continued working and learning from home restrictions unfortunately saw an increase in family violence in the 2020/2021 financial year. Many parents reported that it was difficult to get children to grasp the changing rules and restrictions around social gatherings and visits to the home.

Through Family Violence Accommodation Support we were able to assist 36 individuals and families with a total of 18 Flexible Support Packages in partnership with Bethany Community Support. We were also able to access additional funding through COVID-19 support to assist 26 people in providing emergency accommodation, food, and clothing to those in immediate crisis.

The Family Violence Accommodation and support team continue to support community who are experiencing family violence by lodging Victorian Housing Register Applications for transfers, getting safety audits conducted followed by the implementation of safety and security

measures in the home, emergency relief, and immediate crisis intervention.

As we continue to work on the structure and service delivery models in the Family Violence programs, you will see more opportunities for early intervention, prevention, and healing in 2021/2022.

### Indigenous Tenants At Risk (ITAR)

Indigenous Tenants at Risk Program was able to provide support to 59 households across the 2020/2021 financial year, with 24 of those community members also accessing Private Rental Assistance Program Brokerage.

Support provided ranged from assistance to establish new tenancies or assistance stabilise their current housing to prevent eviction, and to prevent the need for community having to register for homelessness services advocacy at VCAT hearings, referral to legal support.

Homelessness continues to be a service that we are not funded to provide, however we have seen some community members who are sleeping rough in the Geelong area be supported by Towards Home Plus in conjunction with Wathaurong. We hope to continue to have conversations with local services and strengthen relationships with

them to prevent gaps in service delivery for our Mob who may be experiencing homelessness.

The ITAR program also provides food voucher assistance through Give Where You Live and the Geelong Food Relief Centre. In the past financial year we provided 69 vouchers.

### Men's Case Management

Wathaurong's Men's Family Violence team supported 16 referrals from family violence pathways in the 2020/2021 financial year. The team has worked closely with the Wathaurong Health Service, Wathaurong Mental Health team, Wathaurong Alcohol and Other Drugs team and external programs such as Dardi Munwurro to increase men's participation in community and men's business.

The team continues to work to engage local community to attend weekly yarning circles, Men's behaviour change programs, and provide residential support services.

We look forward to continuing the work in this space to promote engagement, health and wellbeing and ultimately reduce the use of violence in the community.

## CLIENT CASE STUDY

Men's Family Violence Worker, Mark Thompson, started working with a client while the client was on remand for family violence related charges in July 2020. They met weekly through Zoom meetings while he was in Marngoneet Correctional Centre.

The client had been in remand for about 5 months when he started engaging with Wathaurong's services. Mark collaborated with the Aboriginal well-being team at corrections, the client's legal team and Dardi Munwurro to advocate for the client to be bailed to the Dardi Munwurro residential men's healing and behaviour change program. After 8 months incarceration on remand (first time offender – no criminal history) the client was bailed to the residential program – a huge battle which was won. The client completed the 3-month

residential program and bail conditions were varied so the client could come back to the Barwon region and live with family.

Since returning to the area client has continued weekly support meetings with Family Violence case workers, including court support. The client has not had any further offenses or breaches of bail or Family Violence IVO.

The client is participating in the weekly Wathaurong men's group yarning circle online and has participated in men's group face to face gatherings and activities when COVID-19 restrictions have allowed. The client has been very engaging with group and contributes greatly in discussions.

The client recently completed a large painting to be hung up at the new Albert Street office.

### Orange Door

Orange Door staff made 146 referrals out for community members and families.

The Orange Door was established as part of the Victorian Government's response to the Royal Commission into Family Violence. Community members and anyone identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander can self-refer to The Orange Door,

or may be referred by agencies such as Victoria Police, Child Protection, GPs, Family Services agencies, mental health services, hospitals etc.

The Orange Door provides initial support to those in need. Services available include:

- risk and needs assessment
- safety planning
- crisis support



# Family Services Report

Wathaurong is a partner agency with Barwon's Orange Door Safety and Support Hub. We have an Aboriginal Practice Lead and two Aboriginal Hub Practitioners who can support adults, children and young people who are experiencing or have experienced family violence, and families who need extra support with the care of children.

As well as providing service through direct contact with the Orange Door, the Wathaurong team also advocates for improvement in outcomes for Community at a systems level, by representing Community in Family Violence related forums, groups and workshops.

The Wathaurong Orange Door team have been working with Victoria Police and other groups such as Dhelk Dja, to establish The Police Aboriginal Community Protocols Against Family Violence (PACPAFV). PACPAFV aims to strengthen the police response to reports of family violence in the Barwon Aboriginal communities with the longer-term goal of reducing both the number of family violence reports, and the rates of families experiencing repeated reports of family violence.

We have further finalised the establishment of our Aboriginal Advisory Group, working on who we would like present at the meetings and what the Group would most like to achieve/focus on. Trying to ensure a diverse range of community voices are being heard.

We have begun to build on and stabilise the team at The Orange Door and worked hard to build connections to relevant partner agencies, in order to provide greater cultural safety and access to services on offer.

We have spent a lot of time reviewing processes and assessing any changes implemented by Family Safety Victoria to ensure we keep our unique point of difference in service provision. This is a key aspect of our partnership with FSV within the Orange Door, that assists us in ensuring we break down any barriers for community in accessing these vital services, particular at times of crisis.

Unfortunately, we have seen an increase in Family Violence in our region with COVID-19 affecting programs, schools, services and family dynamics. Family Violence incidents jumped by 20% in the year to September 2020, with police called to an average of 2.7 cases of Family

Violence in Greater Geelong every day. Further figures released by the Crime Statistics Agency have revealed there was an increase in incidents recorded to the year ending June 2021.

We are extremely proud of the work the team at Orange Door has continued to provide, in spite of the increase in Family Violence combined with the challenges of providing a service during a pandemic.

## Local Justice

This year we successfully completed registration for the WDP Program (Work and Development Permit Scheme) designed to help community work off their fine debt.

A Work and Development Permit (WDP) is a new option to help eligible people to address their infringement fines. A WDP allows a person to 'work-off' their fine debt by participating in certain activities. To undertake a WDP, an eligible person must be engaged with a sponsor. A sponsor is an organisation or a health practitioner accredited by Fines Victoria to participate in the WDP scheme.

It has been a slow year for the Local Justice Program with a halt to a lot of our community work due to ongoing COVID-19 restrictions.

We have focused our work on continuing to support adults on statutory orders to see them reach compliance by referring to the required supports such as Alcohol and Other Drugs program, Mental Health, relationship support, employment readiness and training opportunities.

We continue to look for new work and training opportunities for community take part in and have renewed our Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Corrections, and when restrictions allow, we will review all our current and future opportunities for community work placements.

## Youth Justice

Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative Youth Justice Program provides a culturally supportive service for young people aged 10-24 years.

This service is provided to young Aboriginal people who have been involved, or are at risk of becoming involved with the criminal justice system or court system. Young people are provided advocacy, support and referrals to other services within the organisation or external agencies. The Youth Justice Worker works closely with young people who are on Youth Justice Orders which have been handed down from the Magistrate for criminal offending.

It's all about supporting our youth in becoming strong, respectful, independent, healthy individuals. We are invested in providing a community focused approach -identifying strengths and building positive relationships. Our goal is to help our young people become confident and courageous in making real, positive choices.

This past financial year Wathaurong's Youth Justice program supported 18 young people across Geelong and Colac.

There was a mix of young people on Diversion, Probation, Good Behaviour orders and some who just needed a little support due to being at risk of having formal contact with the Justice System.



# HEALTH SERVICES

## Staff

### HEALTH SERVICE TEAM

**Duane Luki**  
Executive Manager of Health Services

**Mick Ryan**  
Health Services Practice Manager

**Kerrie Alsop**  
Clinical Team Leader

**Skye Duncan**  
Clinical Team Leader

### RECEPTIONIST/ADMIN

**Lynne Lancaster**

**Savanna Couzens**

**Maxine Milo**

**Cheryl Meath**  
GP Support/Peads

**Donna Lusher**  
Medicare

### TRANSPORT OFFICER

**Eileen Smith**

**Allison Wellington**

### OUR DOCTORS

**Dr Ed Poliness**

**Dr Kevin Chang**

**Dr Brigitte Agostinelli**  
(Maternity Leave)

**Dr Lucy Dobson**

**Dr Eimir Diviney**

**Dr David Corbett**

**Dr Mark Dalgleish** (Mental Health GP)

### OUR GP REGISTRARS

**Dr Sneha Kini**

**Dr Sourav Saha**

**Dr Brent Venning**

**Dr Rachel Driscoll**

### SPECIALISTS

**Dr Sam Worboys**  
Endocrinologist

**Dr Jane Standish,**  
**Dr Kate McCloskey,**  
**Dr Margaret Fulton**  
Paediatric

**Dr Emily Hunning and**  
**Dr Sajeewa Rathnayake**  
Obstetric Clinic

### ALLIED HEALTH TEAM

**Olga Lutzko**  
Diabetes Educator

**Lisa Hanrahan**  
Maternal and Child Health

**Penelope Woods**  
Pharmacist

### ABORIGINAL HEALTH PRACTITIONERS

**James Jose**

**Kerrie Alsop**

**Kiralee Hogema**

**Jessica Mitchell**

### NURSES

**Todd Fry**

**Tim O'Callaghan**

**Jackie Myers**

**Skye Duncan**

### KOORI MATERNITY SERVICE

**Lauren Kittelty** (Midwife)

**Claire Galbraith** (Midwife)

**Kiralee Hogema** (AHP)

### MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH

**Lisa Hanrahan** (CoGG)

**Jess Mitchell** (Cultural Support)

### WELLNESS AND RECOVERY

**Alastair Vick**  
Wellness and Recovery Team Leader/  
Manager

**Matthew Ladner**  
Alcohol & Other Drugs Worker

**Adrian Huddart**  
Alcohol & Other Drugs Worker

**Shirley Cooper**  
Duel Diagnosis Therapist  
Aboriginal Mental Health worker

**Michelle Gray**  
Mental Health worker/ SEWB

**Andre Kufe**  
Mental Health worker/ SEWB

**Judy Rosson**  
Bringing Them Home

**Julia Bryan**  
Bringing them Home (Maternity Leave)

**Gwenda Black**  
Cultural Consultant

**Alfie Oram**  
Cultural Consultant

**Gemma Evans**  
Prevention, Early Intervention  
Co-Ordinator

**Ben Gray**  
STEPMI

**Emily McDonald**  
Towards Home Plus

**Ruel Abcede**  
Mental Health Registered Nurse

**Natasha Ling**  
Psychologist

**Kimina Lyall**  
Provisional Psychologist

**Caitlin O'Carroll**  
Project Officer for Youth Engagement  
and Youth Mental Health

**Adam Lampton-Nicholls**  
Aboriginal Wellbeing Officer/  
Family Violence Worker

### FEED ME PROGRAM

<b>Seth Clay</b>	<b>Jack Brogden</b>
<b>Tegan Edwards</b>	<b>Tyson Neal</b>
<b>Bri Apma Hayes</b>	<b>Shanika Jenkins</b>
<b>Matt King</b>	<b>Lily Graham</b>
<b>Herschelle Car</b>	<b>Gemma Evans</b>







## Health Services, Acting Executive Manager Report

### *DUANE LUKI*

The 2020/2021 financial year presented many challenges in the way we could support our community's health needs, while managing the ongoing impacts of COVID-19 restrictions, but I am proud of the way our staff responded with innovation and commitment in finding ways to continue supporting our community during this difficult time.

Wathaurong provides a range of Health programs for our community that aim to support our community's physical health, emotional wellbeing, and mental health. As part of our care model we promote cultural pride, independence, and health awareness for our community. In a recent report provided by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW, 2020) Wathaurong's Maternal and Child Health, Preventative Health and Chronic Disease Management performed above the national and Victorian state averages reinforcing the culturally appropriate, high quality comprehensive primary health care Wathaurong Health Service is providing.

In the financial period of 2020/2021, the Health Services Team were able to maintain operations and continued service delivery for community to access during the ongoing presence of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Although this had impacted our ability to deliver a face to face services we were able to continue service delivery through Telehealth consults and precautions that were advised to be implemented by the state Government Health Department and the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). To reduce to the risk of infection spread, our Leadership and Management team worked hard to mitigate risk of Virus Infection spread of COVID-19, and by having the capacity to deliver telehealth appointments to our community we had an increase in the number of appointments that were being attended and an increase in the number of patients accessing the Health Service.

Wathaurong Health Service has a registered active client list of 3016 up from the previous financial year of 2793 patients with 2018 patients that accessed the service face to face or via Telehealth.

Within this financial year of 2020/2021, a total of 265 Health Checks and 107 GPMP 91 Team Care Arrangements.

We also provide a GP service 1-day per week to Colac Otway's Shire which has 27 regular clients.

Wathaurong's top five major conditions were:

#### **1. COVID-19**

#### **2. Mental Health/ Social Emotional Wellbeing**

#### **3. Type 2 Diabetes**

#### **4. Respiratory**

#### **5. Cardiac Disease**

#### **Koori Maternity Services**

KMS Provides culturally appropriate care for Aboriginal women and support to their families. The overall aim of the program is to:

- Optimise the health and wellbeing of women and their babies
- Identify and manage maternal and foetal risk factors, particularly early in pregnancy
- Reduce perinatal morbidity and mortality, including incidence of preterm birth and low birth weight

It is important for Aboriginal women to have available access to KMS (Koori Maternity Service) so that both mum and baby are healthy for when the time comes to have the baby.

Our services provide support to mum during labour and prior to when they are in hospital.

When it's time for both mum and baby to be discharged, we provide a home visiting service. This financial year our KMS program would see 40 expecting mums with 25 births.

Our midwives Lauren Kittelty, Claire Galbraith, and Aboriginal Health Practitioner Kiralee Hogema within this financial year provided over 400 client contacts as there are ten standard visits provided during pregnancy which can increase depending on the mum and bubs individual needs.

#### **Barwon Health Dental**

Dental services are provided each Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. This has been sporadic due to COVID-19 and the Government Lockdowns. The Wathaurong Health Services have had an increased patients count accessing the services provided at Wathaurong Health Service, this has seen an increase in the number of patient contacts and episodes of care with approximately 20% across the service.

This has been a great effort by all the Health Services staff to have achieved this, due to the restrictions of face-to-face services and staff working off site.

#### **Wellness and Recovery**

The Wellness and Recovery team is overseen by manager, Alastair Vick, and Acting Executive Manager, Duane Luki. Wellness and Recovery brings the programs that address Social and Emotional Wellbeing issues in the community all under a unified structure. We are located in the Administration building in Morgan Street, but will be moving to the new building in Geelong West in late 2021, the move will improve access for community. The team comprises of Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD), Social Emotional Wellbeing (SEWB), Bringing Them Home (BTH), Darrabarook Karndorr (New Track) – Mental Health

project, STEPMI Program and Towards Home Plus NEAMI partnership, and Healthy Community Voices.

#### **Bringing Them Home (BTH)**

The Bringing Them Home (BTH) program is funded by the Government in recognition of the impact of past trauma, dispossession, separation of families, ongoing social disadvantage, racism and other historical, social and cultural issues that impact on the social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals, families and communities. BTH assists in the process of healing for people affected by past removal policies and who have particular issues and unique needs

The BTH program aims to strengthen social and emotional wellbeing wherever possible by providing counselling and/or other supports for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, prioritizing the needs of the Stolen Generations. The BTH program will continue to support strong, healthy and resilient individuals, families and communities, which in turn may enhance pathways to education and employment and to reduce substance abuse, violence and contact with the criminal justice system.

Judy Rosson and Julia Bryan were the BTH workers in 2020/2021 and worked collaboratively with Gwenda Black and



## Health Services Report

Michelle Gray on cultural training and insight for BTH clients and needs. During this reporting period we have managed to conduct 20 group sessions, coordinate Apology Day and Sorry Day events, work on over 50 family trees and 18 family closures. Referrals are continually received from within Community, the Health Service, Link-Up, DHHS Child Protection. These referrals are collated and the potential clients have been notified in regard to current vacancies for the BTH program.

### Darrbarrok Karndorr (New Track)

Darrabarrook Karndoor is Wathaurong language for 'New Track'. It is a demonstration project launched in 2017 providing culturally appropriate person-centred care while involving families, carers, support people and significant others. It is funded by DHHS in partnership with the Victorian Mental Health Branch under a new model to provide mental health services within Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services instead of the Area Mental Health Service (Barwon Health). We deliver a recovery orientated and trauma informed service to Community members who experience moderate (e.g. personality disorder/s, substance related disorder, moderate anxiety and/or depression) to severe (e.g. psychotic disorders, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, severe

anxiety and/or depression) mental illness or mental disorders and associated: trauma, multiple health needs, social support needs (e.g. homelessness, family supports) and/or alcohol and drug issues, involvement in child protection/ out of home care service system, frequent interaction with police or involvement in the corrections system.

Primary client outcomes are being collected to measure the success of the project:

- Improved mental health and/or symptom stability
- Improved ability to manage mental illness and self-care (maintaining tenancy and independent living)
- Reduction in self-harm and suicide in the community
- Reduction in alcohol and drug use and/or harm minimisation
- Improved physical health; (medication review and management)
- Improved social and economic outcomes (e.g. housing stability, employment, partner agencies)
- Reduced involvement with police and the criminal justice system (where relevant)
- Reduction or cessation in protective concerns of dependents and family reunification (where relevant).

The Mental Health and Social Emotional Wellbeing needs of our local Aboriginal Community are extremely high. The Darrabarrook Karndorr (New Track) in collaboration with the Health Service Doctors will support the ongoing needs of our local Community. We are currently reviewing our Mental Health service model to ensure that our Aboriginal community has timely access to the services they need.

### Feed Me

During COVID-19, Wathaurong worked in partnership with Feed Me Bellarine by offering food drops to Community's doorsteps in Geelong, the surrounds, and Colac to support Community who were doing it tough, unable to get to the shops or needing to self-isolate.

The program was available to all Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people, as well as anyone caring for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people.

Pre-packaged ready-made meals and food boxes were delivered on set days during the week including a combination of protein (meat dish) carbohydrate (rice/pasta) and dessert where possible, along with food boxes including a combination of vegetables, fruit, bread products and other staple pantry items.

At the height of our service delivery, the feed me team were getting out 1,365 meals per week to 240 families total which were being packed by the team in Wathaurong's own food warehouse. The Feed Me program employed 5 of our youth from Community,



and number of staff across the Mental Health team and wider organisation also helped with packing, delivering, and supporting the Feed Me team to ensure the high demands for Community assistance was being met.

### Women's Group

Women in Community were able to stay connected and supported during COVID-19 lockdowns, with Gemma Evans, Michelle Gray and Gwenda Black engaging with Women online and with face-to-face groups where possible. There were regular catch ups on a Wednesday, where Women were able to get together, share lunch and take part in arts and craft including creating placemats, magnets, suncatchers and weaving, along with mindfulness and games.

Fortnightly Zoom catchups were held for yarnning about day to day lives, challenges, mental health and wellbeing, the Community, and how Wathaurong can best support them during these challenging times. A Facebook group was also utilised so that our Women could keep in regular contact with each other, receive up to date health and Community information, as well as a safe place to connect to culture, have a laugh and learn something new.





## Health Services Report

### Men's Group

Uncle Alfie Oram and Adam Lampton-Nicholls regularly have 10-15 men from Community participating in Men's Group activities. Where possible and when restrictions eased, there was an array of face-to-face activities including fishing, day trips to Wurdi Youang, BBQ's, bowling, painting, catch ups at Forster Street yarning about culture, how the men are going and what they have been up to.

Whilst in COVID-19 lockdowns and during restrictions, the Men were able to continue yarning over Zoom. The Men were encouraged to join in on different activities and support each other, such as talking about bringing them home, learning how to play the didgeridoo, learning how to paint, employment, and having the chance to yarn and listen to guest speakers such as Jida Gulpilil, Dale Kickett, Anthony Hume and Ben Muir.

There has also been a number of those in the Men group take part in regular online fitness sessions with Benjamin Silva, along with the opportunity to discuss diet, health and overall wellbeing.







I would like to first pay my respect to our Elders past and present and to those community members who have passed during the last 12 months. I would also like to thank my staff, Executive management and the Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative Board for their commitment shown to this business over this period.

Wow, 2020/2021, not the year of the cow or monkey but the year of the lockdowns, open up, closedown, open but with restrictions, in a nutshell bloody difficult to gain consistency and momentum. So, I will keep it short and to the point.

Started operating out of 18 Rodney Rd, new kiln was wired and fired, and what a kiln it is, took some time to figure out the operational process but thankfully we succeeded, we were able to double our firing capacity immediately with great effect and efficiency. Received a number of large orders over this period and having the kiln next door really aided in productivity. Once the restrictions become less intrusive I will be putting more staff on and implementing more of the business plan in the coming months.

Working from home! Its something we have all had to navigate through, placing trust

in people to do the right thing, finding solutions to problems and yes pivoting! But what a pivot, Ammie god bless having to deal with work and 6 kids at home, wow what a soldier!. Jarrod same boat less kids. We had 2 new staff trial and Daniel Brown came through with shining colour's (may be just Black 😊) Daniel's work ethic, ability to adapt and problem solve is outstanding, both he and Jermaine (legend) smashed it when it came to getting orders out the door in such challenging times. So again, I say a massive thank you to Jarrod, Ammie, Jermaine and Daniel, you guys are Wathaurong Glass.

In one word "Success". The workload did not slow, it increased and in the process, we have ticked a major box by providing 70m<sup>2</sup> of quality slumped glass to a major Government building project, Lara gaol. It is great to have back to back net profits, this is what sustains and help to grow business.

Event closures impacted on the corporate award market again, awards ceremonies pretty much ceased as people just didn't have the confidence to spend the time to arrange an event to no avail, so those who proceeded went online. Jarrod watched the HESTA awards and said he was super

impressed by the online event and this is something we will possibly be seeing more of in the future until confidence returns to this market segment. Until then we just must do our best in other market segments until confidence returns.

While 10.7% is a decrease I'm confident once we are able to open our doors to walk in customers this market will bounce back, online orders maintained if not increased, but in reality, our doors were closed for a good deal of time hence the decline in sale for this market sector.

We did have an increase in this space, although it doesn't reflect in the percentage basis but that is due to an increase in COVID support which pushes down the sales by %, but in dollars term it was an increase. The increase was primarily driven by a \$160k order from Heritage glass for the Lara gaol project.

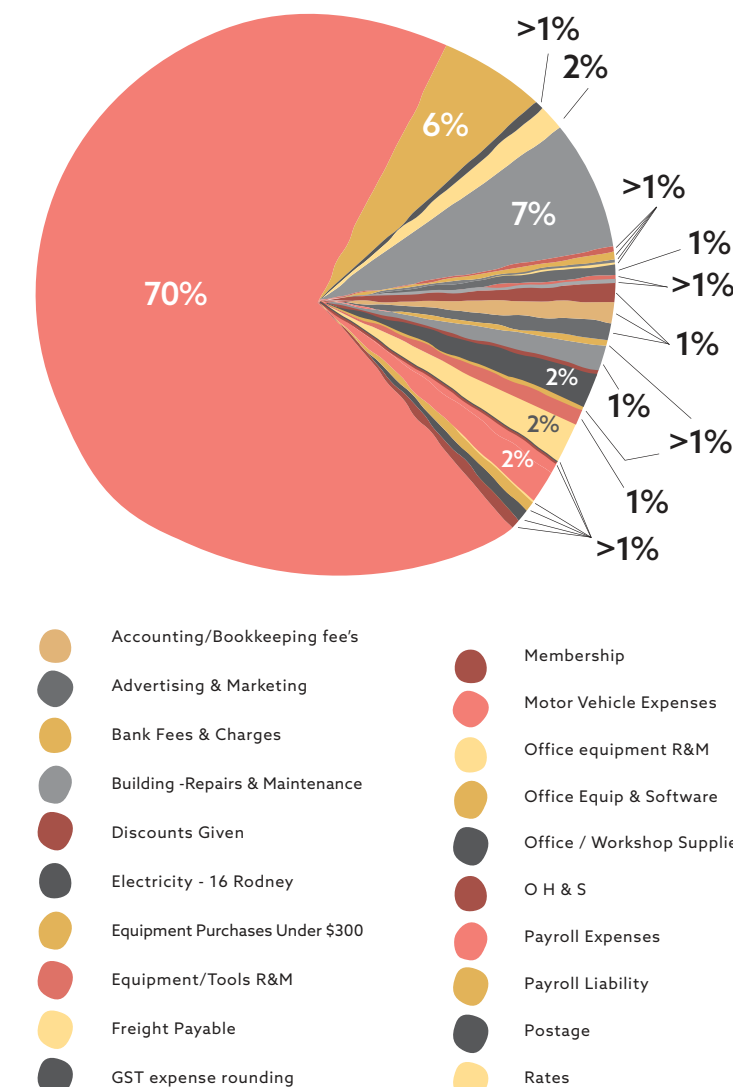
There has still been a great deal of orders in the Acknowledgement plaques, this was very pleasing not just with the income but on personal note its great to see organisations acknowledgement for the first nations peoples from each corner of this great country of ours.

Without this support there would have been some very difficult decision make on the future of this business, so I do say a big thank you to the federal & state government for these packages that help keep people employed over the last 12 months.

These sales are installation of glass splashbacks, goods that we buy in and on sell like chrome display stands, pine presentation boxes and in-house design services we provide customers and freight charged.

A pie chart illustrating the distribution of respondents by sector. The chart is divided into five segments: Architectural (46%, red), Covid (21%, yellow), Corporate (18%, dark red), Retail/Online (11%, dark grey), and Sales Other (4%, brown). A legend below the chart maps the colors to their respective sectors.

Sector	Percentage
Architectural	46%
Covid	21%
Corporate	18%
Retail/Online	11%
Sales Other	4%





# OUR PARTNERS

The partnerships at Wathaurong are fundamental to our work across our organisation. Strong partnerships provide expertise and experience that can be used to develop innovative and collaborative responses to the issues faced by our local Aboriginal community. We continue to maintain and develop new partnerships and working relationships with organisations and agencies throughout the Barwon South West Region and Bellarine Peninsula. We would like to acknowledge that some of these partnerships have been in place for several years now and only continue to build strength. Some of the organisations we partner with and support include:

- Commonwealth Department of Health
- Commonwealth Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet
- Commonwealth Department of Social Services
- Department of Families Fairness and Housing
- Department of Justice and Community Safety
- Department of Education and Training
- Barwon Health
- Australian Hearing
- Sexual Assault and Family Violence Centre (SAFV)
- National Indigenous Knowledges Education Research Innovation (NIKERI) Institute
- Deakin University - School of Medicine
- Deakin University - School of Psychology
- Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO)
- Clinical Labs
- Pharmacy Guild of Australia (QUMAX)
- Labuan Square and other pharmacies across Geelong and the Bellarine Peninsula
- City of Greater Geelong (COGG)
- Colac Otway Shire
- Colac Area Health & Youth Hub
- The National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Health Worker Association (NATSIHWA)
- National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO)
- Beyond Blue
- MacKillop Family Services
- Bethany
- Neami
- Western Victoria Primary Health Network
- Kangan Institute
- Swinburne University
- Belmont Lions Football Netball Club
- Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Association Limited (VACSAL)
- Barwon Local Area Education Consultative Groups
- Orange Door
- Diversitat
- Murray City Country Coast GP Training
- Geelong Magistrates Court
- Victorian Police
- Head Space
- Dementia Australia
- YMCA Anglesea
- Geelong United Basketball Association
- AFL Barwon
- Barwon Child, Youth and Family
- Geelong Kindergarten Association
- Geelong Regional Library Corporation
- Goodstart Early Learning
- Child First
- Colac Otway Shire
- Greening Australia
- Indigenous Land Corporation
- Northern Bay College
- One Fire Reconciliation Group
- Peter Włodarczyk - Gagin Pty Ltd
- Pharmacy Guild Australia
- Surfing Victoria
- Barwon Water
- Corangamite Catchment Management Authority
- Workplace Legal
- LBW Auditors
- Lifeworks
- The Salvation Army
- Feed Me Geelong/Bellarine
- Geelong Chamber of Commerce
- Geelong Arts Centre
- Adcell
- The Marquee Guy
- Total Events
- Geelong Screenprinting

# FINANCIALS



# Financial Report

## DIRECTORS REPORT

Your Directors submit their report for the financial year ended 30 June 2021 made in accordance with a resolution of the directors.

### Directors

The names of the directors of the Co-operative at the date of this report are:

**Craig Edwards** (elected 24th November 2019, Chairperson on leave from February 2021)

**Wendy Brabham** (elected 21st March 2021, Acting Chairperson from February 2021)

**Judy Dalton-Walsh** (elected 21st March 2021)

**David Flagg** (seconded 8th July 2020, elected 21st March 2021)

**Shane Clarke** (elected 21st March 2021)

Directors have been in office since the start of the financial year to the date of this report unless otherwise stated.

### Principal Activities

The principal activities of the Co-operative during the year were the provision of a central meeting place for members and to deliver services including Health, Education, Justice, Aged Care, Family, Youth, Housing and Cultural Heritage services and pursue economic development on behalf of the Community.

### Review of Operations

The total comprehensive surplus of the Co-operative for the year was \$1,335,584 (2020 surplus - \$1,115,231). The surplus is primarily due to and an increase in the asset revaluation reserve of \$1,310,770 (2020 increase -\$586,769) after revaluation of our rental properties and Wurdi Youang. Operational surplus was \$24,814 (2020 surplus - \$528,462) and this was due to building the organisations capacity. Wathaurong not only increased its staff during the year but has also commenced operations of its mental health services at Albert St, Geelong.

Total revenue of \$18,030,072 increased by 33% on the previous year mainly due to increases in grant funding and the expansion in service delivery. Grant funding accounted for 85% of total revenue, trading activities contributed 13%, while rental income and other income contributed a total of 2%. Non-operating revenue, (interest received) of \$19,417 has reduced due to lowering interest rates compared to the previous year.

Expenses of \$18,005,267 is an increase of 38% on the previous year, mainly due to increased employee costs which were up by 45%. Other expense categories to increase were client support by 15%, rental properties expenses by 15%, occupancy expenses by 39%, and staff training & development reduced by 4%. The increases in expenditure were consistent with our growth in staff numbers.

The comprehensive surplus of \$1,335,584 included an operating surplus of \$24,814 and asset revaluations of \$1,310,770.

We would like to acknowledge our Commonwealth, State and Local funding bodies whose support for the organisation enables us to deliver many services to our members and broader community. Their ongoing support is greatly appreciated. Our major funding bodies are:

- Victorian Department of Health and Human Services,
- Commonwealth Department of Health,
- Victorian Department of Education and Training,
- Commonwealth Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet,
- Victorian Department of Justice, and
- Western Victoria Primary Health Network.

The directors (before the “Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income” and “Statement of Financial Position” were completed) took reasonable steps to ascertain what action had been taken in relation to writing off bad debts and making provisions for doubtful debts, and to cause all known bad debts to be written off and adequate provision to be made for doubtful debts.

At the date of the report the directors were not aware of any circumstances which would render the amount written off for bad debts or the amount of the provision for doubtful debts inadequate to any substantial extent.

The directors (before the “Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income” and “Statement of Financial Position” were completed) took reasonable steps to ascertain whether any current assets were unlikely to realise in the ordinary course of business their value as shown in the accounting records of the Co- operative and, if so, to cause –

- i) those assets to be written down to an amount which they might be expected so to realise; or
- ii) adequate provision to be made for the difference between the amount of the value as so shown and the amount they might be expected to realise.

At the date of the report the directors are not aware of any circumstances which would render the values attributed to the current assets in the accounts misleading.

At the date of the report there does not exist:

- i) any charge on the assets of the Co-operative which has arisen since the end of the financial year and secures the liabilities of any other person; and
- ii) any contingent liability which has arisen since the end of the financial year.

At the date of the report the directors are not aware of any circumstances not otherwise dealt with in the report of accounts which would render any amount stated in the accounts misleading.

The results of the Co-operative's operations during the financial year were not in the opinion of the directors, substantially affected by any item, transaction or event of a material and unusual nature.

There has not arisen in the interval between the end of the financial year and the date of the report any item, transaction or event of a material and unusual nature likely in the opinion of the directors, to affect substantially the results of the Co-operative's operations for the next succeeding financial year.

### Director's benefits

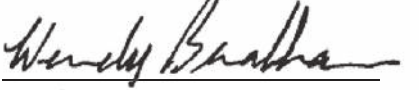
Since the end of the previous financial year, no director of the Co-operative has received or become entitled to receive a benefit (other than a benefit included in the aggregate amount of emoluments received or due and receivable by directors shown in the accounts or the fixed salary of a full-time employee of the Co-operative) by reason of a contract made by the Co-operative with the director or with a firm of which he is a member, or with a company in which he has a substantial interest.

### Indemnities

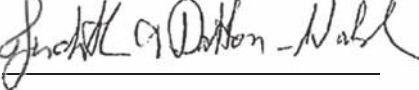
The Co-operative has not, during or since the financial year, in respect of any person who is or has been an officer or auditor of the Co-operative or of a related body corporate:

- indemnified or made any relevant agreement for indemnifying against a liability, including costs and expenses in successfully defending legal proceedings; or
- paid or agreed to pay a premium in respect of a contract insuring against a liability for the costs or expenses to defend legal proceedings.

### On behalf of the Board



**Chairperson – Wendy Brabham**



**Director – Judy Dalton-Walsh**

Signed on the 12th of December, 2021

At North Geelong



# Financial Report

## DIRECTORS DECLARATION

Co-operatives National Law (Victoria)  
section 273(4)


**Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative Limited**


We, Wendy Brabham and Judy Dalton-Walsh,  
being two of the directors of the abovementioned  
Cooperative limited, state that in our opinion:

1. the financial statements and notes of  
the Co-operative are in accordance with  
the Co-operatives National Law (Victoria),  
including:
  - a. giving a true and fair view of the Co-  
operative's financial position as 30 June 2021  
and of its performance for the year ended  
on that date; and
  - b. complying with Australian Accounting  
Standards (including the Australian  
Accounting Interpretations) and the  
Regulations.
2. there are reasonable grounds to believe that  
the Co-operative will be able to pay its debts  
as and when they become due and payable.
- 3.
4. Signed in accordance with a resolution of the  
directors made pursuant to section 273(5)(a)  
of Cooperatives National Law (Victoria).

Declared at North Geelong, on 12 December 2021

**On behalf of the board**

  
**Chairperson - Wendy Brabham**

  
**Director - Judy Dalton-Walsh**

# Financial Report


## AUDITOR'S INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION

AUDITOR'S INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION  
UNDER SECTION 283 OF THE CO-OPERATIIVES  
NATIONAL LAW (VICTORIA) AND SECTION  
307C OF THE CORPORATIONS ACT 2001 TO  
THE DIRECTORS OF WATHAURONG ABORIGINAL  
Co-operative LIMITED

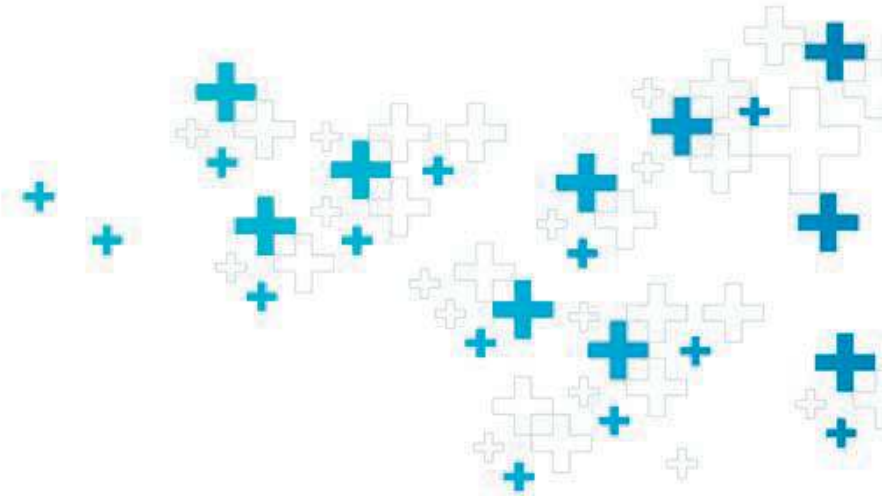
I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and  
belief, in relation to the audit of the financial  
year ended 30 June 2021, there have been no  
contraventions of:

1. the auditor independence requirements as set  
out in the *Co-operatives National Law (Victoria)*  
and in the *Corporations Act 2001* in relation to  
the audit; and
2. any applicable code of professional  
conduct in relation to the audit.

**LBW CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS**

  
**SRIPATHY SARMA**  
**Principal**

RCA Registration Number: 325 444  
Dated this 12th day of December 2021





# STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

For the year ended 30 June 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
Revenues from ordinary activities	2	18,030,072	13,542,755
Employee benefits expense		(12,646,125)	(8,691,976)
Client support expense		(1,963,186)	(1,707,198)
Depreciation expense	3	(555,475)	(593,033)
Occupancy expense		(137,334)	(231,804)
Motor vehicle expense		(156,968)	(240,096)
Telephone & internet expense		(172,441)	(120,199)
Rental properties expense		(105,244)	(90,935)
Staff training and development expense		(251,349)	(261,947)
Legal Fees		(92,111)	(80,257)
Doubtful/bad debt expense		-	(12,986)
Other expenses from ordinary activities		(1,925,024)	(983,862)
<b>Surplus from ordinary activities</b>	3	<b>24,814</b>	<b>528,462</b>
Income tax expense	1a	-	-
<b>Other Comprehensive Income</b>			
<b>Items that will not be reclassified to profit or loss:</b>			
Movement in asset revaluation reserve	14	1,310,770	586,769
<b>Total Other Comprehensive Income for the year</b>		<b>1,310,770</b>	<b>586,769</b>
<b>Total Comprehensive Income for the year</b>		<b>1,335,584</b>	<b>1,115,231</b>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

# STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

As at 30 June 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
<b>ASSETS</b>			
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Cash and Cash Equivalents	4	7,194,594	6,810,602
Trade and Other Receivables	5	1,358,426	903,539
Other Assets	6	82,083	17,696
Financial Assets		1,093,876	1,088,305
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>9,728,979</b>	<b>8,820,142</b>
<b>NON CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Property, Plant & Equipment	7	18,405,180	17,098,850
Right of Use Assets	9	1,427,806	515,524
Investments	8	262,500	262,500
<b>TOTAL NON CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>20,095,486</b>	<b>17,876,874</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b>29,824,465</b>	<b>26,697,016</b>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Trade and Other Payables	10	1,130,955	531,171
Employee Provisions	11	1,292,554	899,883
Grants in Advance	12	5,437,539	5,655,847
Lease Liabilities	13	425,106	116,042
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<b>8,286,154</b>	<b>7,202,943</b>
<b>NON CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Lease Liabilities	13	1,119,424	410,770
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<b>1,119,424</b>	<b>410,770</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<b>9,405,578</b>	<b>7,613,713</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<b>20,418,887</b>	<b>19,083,303</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>			
Issued Capital		72	72
Asset Revaluation Reserve	14	10,066,801	8,756,031
Accumulated Surplus	15	10,352,014	10,327,200
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>		<b>20,418,887</b>	<b>19,083,303</b>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.



# STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY

For the year ended 30 June 2021

	Note \$	Issued Capital \$	Asset Revaluation Reserve \$	Retained Earnings	Total \$
<b>Balance at 1 July 2019</b>		<b>72</b>	<b>8,169,262</b>	<b>9,798,738</b>	<b>17,968,072</b>
Surplus from ordinary activities	15	-	-	528,462	528,462
Movements in asset revaluation reserve	14	-	586,769	-	586,769
<b>Balance at 30 June 2020</b>		<b>72</b>	<b>8,756,031</b>	<b>10,327,200</b>	<b>19,083,303</b>
Surplus from ordinary activities	15	-	-	24,814	24,814
Movements in asset revaluation reserve	14	-	1,310,770	-	1,310,770
<b>Balance at 30 June 2021</b>		<b>72</b>	<b>10,066,801</b>	<b>10,352,014</b>	<b>20,418,887</b>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

# STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

For the year ended 30 June 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>			
Receipts from Grants & Other		17,337,458	12,856,148
Payments to Suppliers, Employees and Others		(16,429,072)	(12,476,664)
Interest Received		19,417	59,594
Interest Paid		(47,065)	(20,482)
<b>Net Cash flows from Operating Activities</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>880,738</b>	<b>418,596</b>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>			
Net movement for Property, Plant and Equipment		(311,851)	(1,008,103)
<b>Net Cash flows used in Investing Activities</b>		<b>(311,851)</b>	<b>(1,008,103)</b>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>			
Repayment of Lease Liabilities		(184,896)	(112,157)
<b>Net Cash flows used in Financing Activities</b>		<b>(184,896)</b>	<b>(112,157)</b>
<b>Net Increase / (decrease) in Cash Held</b>		<b>383,992</b>	<b>(701,664)</b>
Cash and Cash Equivalents at the Beginning of the Year		6,810,602	7,512,266
<b>Cash and Cash Equivalents at the End of the Year</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7,194,594</b>	<b>6,810,602</b>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.



# NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 30 June 2021

## 1. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

This financial report is a special purpose financial report. The directors have determined that the co- operative is not a reporting entity. The Co- operative is a not-for-profit entity for financial reporting purposes under Australian Accounting Standards.

### Basis of Presentation

The report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Co-operatives National Law 2013 and Australian Accounting Standards and the significant accounting policies disclosed below, which the directors have determined are appropriate to meet the needs of members. Such accounting policies are consistent with those of previous periods unless stated otherwise.

Material accounting policies adopted in the preparation of these financial statements are presented below and have been consistently applied unless otherwise stated.

### Reporting Basis and Conventions

The financial report has been prepared on an accruals basis and is based on historical costs modified by the revaluation of selected non-current assets, and financial assets and financial liabilities for which the fair value basis of accounting has been applied.

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

### Accounting Policies

#### a) Income Tax

The Co-operative is a non-profit organisation established for community service purposes and is exempt from income tax pursuant to the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997

#### b) Depreciation

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

The depreciable amount of all fixed assets, other than freehold land and buildings, are depreciated on a straight line or diminishing value basis so as to write off the net cost of fixed assets over the periods of their expected useful lives.

The depreciation rates used for each class for each class of depreciation assets are:

Class of Fixed Asset	Depreciation Rate
Buildings	2.5%
Plant & Equipment	10-50 %
Motor Vehicles	20-25%

#### c) Property

Freehold land and buildings are shown at their fair value (being the amount for which an assets could be exchanged between knowledgeable willing parities in an arm's length transaction), based on periodic valuations by external independent valuers.

#### d) Plant and Equipment

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

In the event the carrying amount of plant and equipment is greater than the recoverable amount, the carrying amount is written down immediately to the estimated recoverable amount.

Plant and equipment that have been contributed at no cost, or for nominal cost, are recognised at the fair value of the asset at the date it is acquired.

#### e) Land and Buildings - revaluation

Increases in carrying amount arising on revaluation of land and buildings are credited to a revaluation

reserve in equity. Decreases that offset previous increases of the same asset are charged against fair value reserves directly in equity, all other decreases are charged to the income statement. Each year the difference between depreciation based on the revalued carrying amount of the assets charged to the income statement and depreciation based on the asset's original cost is transferred from the revaluation reserve to retained earnings.

#### f) 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 short-term borrowings on the balance sheet.

#### g) Revenue

##### Revenue recognition

The Entity has applied AASB 15: Revenue from Contracts with Customers (AASB 15) and AASB 1058: Income of Not-for-Profit Entities (AASB 1058).

##### Contributed Assets

The entity receives assets from the government and other parties for nil or nominal consideration in order to further its objectives. These assets are recognised in accordance with the recognition requirements of other applicable accounting

standards (for example AASB 9, AASB 16, AASB 116 and AASB 138.)

On initial recognition of an asset, the Entity recognises related amounts (being contributions by owners, lease liability, financial instruments, provisions, revenue or contract liability arising from a contract with a customer).

The Entity recognises income immediately in profit or loss as the difference between the initial carrying amount of the asset and the related amount.

##### Operating Grants, Donations and Bequests

When the entity received operating grant revenue, donations or bequests, it assesses whether the contract is enforceable and has sufficiently specific performance obligations in accordance with AASB 15. When both these conditions are satisfied, the Entity: – identifies each performance obligation relating to the grant – recognises a contract liability for its obligations under the agreement – recognises revenue as it satisfies its performance obligations.

Where the contract is not enforceable or does not have sufficiently specific performance obligations, the Entity:

- recognises the asset received in accordance with the recognition requirements of other applicable accounting standards (e.g. AASB 9. AASB 16, AASB 116 and AASB 138);

- recognises related amounts (being contributions by owners, lease liability, financial instruments, provisions, revenue or contract liability arising from a contract with a customer); and
- recognises income immediately in profit or loss as the difference between the initial carrying amount of the asset and the related amount.

If a contract liability is recognised as a related amount above, the Entity recognises income in profit or loss when or as it satisfies its obligations under the contract.

##### Capital Grant

When the Entity receives a capital grant, it recognises a liability for the excess of the initial carrying amount of the financial asset received over any related amounts (being contributions by owners, lease liability, financial instruments, provisions, revenue or contract liability arising from a contract with a customer) recognised under other Australian Accounting Standards.

The Entity recognises income in profit or loss when or as the Entity satisfies its obligations under the terms of the grant.

##### Interest Income

Interest income is recognised using the effective interest method.



# NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 30 June 2021

## 1. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (Continued)

### Dividend Income

The Entity recognises dividends in profit or loss only when the Entity's right to receive payment of the dividend is established.

### Rent Revenue

Rent revenue is recognised when the right to receive the revenue has been established. Revenue from the rendering of a service is recognised upon the delivery of the service to the customers. Other revenue is recognised when the right to receive the revenue has been established

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

### h) Leases

#### The Entity as lessee

At inception of a contract, the Entity assesses if the contract contains or is a lease. If there is a lease present, a right-of-use asset and a corresponding lease liability is recognised by the Entity where the Entity is a lessee. However all contracts that are classified as short-term leases (lease with remaining lease term of 12 months or less) and leases of low value assets are recognised as an operating expense on a straight-line basis over the term of the lease.

Initially the lease liability is measured at the present value of the lease payments still to be paid at commencement date. The lease payments are discounted at the interest rate implicit in the lease. If this rate cannot be readily determined, the Entity uses the incremental borrowing rate.

Lease payments included in the measurement of the lease liability are as follows:

- fixed lease payments less any lease incentives;
- variable lease payments that depend on an index or rate, initially measured using the index or rate at the commencement date;
- the amount expected to be payable by the lessee under residual value guarantees;
- the exercise price of purchase options, if the lessee is reasonably certain to exercise the options;
- lease payments under extension options if lessee is reasonably certain to exercise the options; and
- payments of penalties for terminating the lease, if the lease term reflects the exercise of an option to terminate the lease

The right-of-use assets comprise the initial measurement of the corresponding lease liability as mentioned above, any lease payments made at or before the commencement date as well as any initial direct costs. The subsequent measurement

of the right-of-use assets is at cost less accumulated depreciation and impairment losses.

Right-of-use assets are depreciated over the lease term or useful life of the underlying asset whichever is the shortest. Where a lease transfers ownership of the underlying asset or the cost of the right-of-use asset reflects that the Entity anticipates to exercise a purchase option, the specific asset is depreciated over the useful life of the underlying asset.

### i) Employee Provisions

Provision is made for the Entity's obligation for short-term employee benefits. Short-term employee benefits are benefits (other than termination benefits) that are expected to be settled wholly before 12 months after the end of the annual reporting period in which the employees render the related service, including wages, salaries and sick leave. Short-term employee benefits are measured at the (undiscounted) amounts expected to be paid when the obligation is settled.

The Entity's obligations for short-term employee benefits such as wages, salaries and sick leave are recognised as part of accounts payable and other payables in the statement of financial position.

Contributions are made by the Entity to an employee superannuation fund and are charged as expenses when incurred.

### j) 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 (ATO).

Receivables and payables are stated inclusive of the amount of GST receivable or payable. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO is included with other receivables or payables in the statement of financial position.

Cash flows are presented on a gross basis. The GST components of cash flows arising from investing or financing activities which are recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO are presented as operating cash flows included in receipts from customers or payments to suppliers.

### k) Comparative Figures

Where required by Accounting Standards, comparative figures have been adjusted to conform with changes in presentation for the current financial year.

### l) Critical Accounting Estimates & Judgements

The directors evaluate estimates and judgements incorporated into the financial statements based on historical knowledge and best available current information. Estimates assume a reasonable expectation of future events and are based on current trends and economic data, obtained both externally and within the Entity.

### Key estimates

#### (i) Impairment

The Entity assesses impairment at the end of each reporting period by evaluating conditions and events specific to the Entity that may be indicative of impairment triggers.

### Key judgments

#### (i) Performance obligations under AASB 15

To identify a performance obligation under AASB 15, the promise must be sufficiently specific to be able to determine when the obligation is satisfied. Management exercises judgement to determine whether the promise is sufficiently specific by taking into account any conditions specified in the arrangement, explicit or implicit, regarding the promised goods or services. In making this assessment, management includes the nature/ type, cost/ value, quantity and the period of transfer related to the goods or services promised.

#### (ii) Lease term and Option to Extend under AASB 16

The lease term is defined as the non-cancellable period of a lease together with both periods covered by an option to extend the lease if the lessee is reasonably certain to exercise that option; and also periods covered by an option to terminate the lease if the lessee is reasonably certain not to exercise that option. The options that are reasonably going to be exercised is a key management judgement that the entity will make.

The entity determines the likeliness to exercise the options on a lease-by-lease basis looking at various factors such as which assets are strategic and which are key to future strategy of the entity.



# NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

As at 30 June 2021

	2021 \$	2020 \$
<b>2. Revenues</b>		
<u>Operating activities</u>		
- Grants & Government Funding	14,201,701	11,220,527
- Fundraising and Trading Activities	2,363,420	795,523
- Rental income	154,887	155,845
- Other Funding and Sundry income	120,761	620,290
	<b>16,840,769</b>	<b>12,792,185</b>
<u>Non-Operating Revenue</u>		
COVID-19 Funding	1,169,886	690,976
Interest received	19,417	59,594
	<b>18,030,072</b>	<b>13,542,755</b>
<b>3. Surplus from Ordinary Activities includes the following:</b>		
Depreciation of property, plant & equipment & right of use assets	555,475	593,033
Computer & IT expenses	564,801	271,409
Gain/(loss) on sale & disposal of assets	(4,085)	13,462
<b>4. Cash and Cash Equivalents</b>		
Cash at Bank		
- Restricted	997,535	982,464
- Unrestricted	6,195,359	5,826,438
- Petty Cash	1,700	1,700
	<b>7,194,594</b>	<b>6,810,602</b>
<b>5. Trade and Other Receivables</b>		
Trade Debtors	1,325,582	892,467
Less Provision for Doubtful Debts	(20,000)	(20,000)
	<b>1,305,582</b>	<b>872,467</b>
Rental Properties Debtors	17,327	(2,301)
	17,327	(2,301)
Loan Receivable – Kirrae Whurrong	35,517	33,373
	<b>1,358,426</b>	<b>903,539</b>
<b>6. Other Assets</b>		
Accrued Income	-	10,614
Rental Bond	82,083	7,083
	<b>82,083</b>	<b>17,696</b>

# NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

As at 30 June 2021

	2021 \$	2020 \$
<b>7. Property, Plant and Equipment</b>		
<u>Freehold Buildings</u>		
- Admin Building (2020 valuation)	430,000	430,000
- Children's Services (2020 valuation)	418,000	418,000
- Health Services (2020 valuation)	1,102,000	1,102,000
- Forster St (2021 valuation)	140,500	140,500
- Rodney Road at cost	130,000	130,000
- Building Improvements	10,830	10,830
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	(78,975)	(51,084)
	<b>2,152,355</b>	<b>2,180,246</b>
<u>Car Park (at cost)</u>		
- Health Services car park (leased)	327,485	327,485
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	(99,228)	(91,040)
	<b>228,257</b>	<b>236,445</b>
<u>Land</u>		
- Forster Street (2020 valuation)	359,500	359,500
- Surrey Street (2019 valuation)	390,000	390,000
- 62 Morgan Street (2019 valuation)	860,000	860,000
- Wurdi Youang (2021 valuation)	4,050,000	3,680,000
- Rodney Road at cost	320,000	320,000
- Rental Properties at Valuation	<b>5,545,000</b>	<b>4,840,000</b>
	<b>11,524,500</b>	<b>10,449,500</b>



NOTES TO AND FORMING  
PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

As at 30 June 2021

	2021 \$	2020 \$
<b>7. Property, Plant and Equipment (continued)</b>		
Rental Properties		
- Buildings – Rental Properties at Valuation	2,920,000	2,755,000
- Rental Improvements	5,036	5,036
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	(33,883)	(66,326)
	<b>2,891,153</b>	<b>2,693,710</b>
Furniture and Fittings	56,792	56,213
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(35,638)	(32,441)
	<b>21,154</b>	<b>23,772</b>
Office Furniture and Equipment	558,101	470,401
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(247,754)	(189,125)
	<b>310,347</b>	<b>281,276</b>
Motor Vehicles	1,294,885	1,174,423
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(531,970)	(461,762)
	<b>762,915</b>	<b>712,661</b>
Children's Service Equipment	35,678	35,678
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	(27,857)	(25,930)
	<b>7,821</b>	<b>9,748</b>
Wurdi Youang Equipment	93,943	93,943
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	(47,598)	(42,390)
	<b>46,345</b>	<b>51,553</b>
Health Service Equipment at cost	210,970	210,970
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	(156,575)	(143,649)
	<b>54,395</b>	<b>67,321</b>
Factory Fitout	112,416	112,416
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	(69,984)	(66,712)
	<b>42,432</b>	<b>45,704</b>
Mackey St fitout	546,747	501,447
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	(183,241)	(154,533)
	<b>363,506</b>	<b>346,914</b>
<b>Total Property, Plant and Equipment</b>	<b>18,405,180</b>	<b>17,098,850</b>

A number of rental properties, and the Wurdi Youang land, have caveats held over them. None of these caveats are dollar value specific.

NOTES TO AND FORMING  
PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

As at 30 June 2021

	Freehold Land	Land - Rental Properties	Freehold Buildings	Rental Properties & Improvements	Car Parks	Motor Vehicles	Health Services Equipment	Office Furniture & Equipment	Furniture & Fittings	Children's Services Equipment	Wurdi Youang	Factory Fitout	Mackey Street Fitout	Total
2021	\$		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
<b>Carrying amount 2020</b>	5,609,500	4,840,000	2,231,330	2,760,036	327,485	1,174,423	210,970	470,401	56,213	35,678	93,943	112,416	501,447	18,423,841
Valuation adjustments	370,000	705,000	-	165,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,240,000
Additions	-	-	-	-	-	234,601	-	87,700	579	-	-	-	45,300	368,180
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-	(114,139)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(114,139)
	<b>5,979,500</b>	<b>5,545,000</b>	<b>2,231,330</b>	<b>2,925,036</b>	<b>327,485</b>	<b>1,294,885</b>	<b>210,970</b>	<b>558,101</b>	<b>56,792</b>	<b>35,678</b>	<b>93,943</b>	<b>112,416</b>	<b>546,747</b>	<b>19,917,883</b>
	Freehold Land	Land - Rental Properties	Freehold Buildings	Rental Properties & Improvements	Car Parks	Motor Vehicles	Health Services Equipment	Office Furniture & Equipment	Furniture & Fittings	Children's Services Equipment	Wurdi Youang	Factory Fitout	Mackey Street Fitout	Total
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
<b>Accumulated dep'n at 1 July 2020</b>	-	-	(51,084)	(66,326)	(91,040)	(461,762)	(143,649)	(189,125)	(32,441)	(25,930)	(42,390)	(66,712)	(154,532)	(1,324,991)
Valuation adjustments	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Write back of accumulated depreciation	-	-	-	70,770	-	54,317	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	125,087
Depreciation expense	-	-	(27,891)	(38,327)	(8,188)	(124,525)	(12,926)	(58,629)	(3,197)	(1,927)	(5,208)	(3,272)	(28,709)	(312,799)
<b>Accumulated dep'n at 30 June 2021</b>	-	-	(78,975)	(33,883)	(99,228)	(531,970)	(156,575)	(247,754)	(35,638)	(27,857)	(47,598)	(69,984)	(183,241)	(1,512,703)
<b>Carrying amount at 30 June 2021</b>	<b>5,979,500</b>	<b>5,545,000</b>	<b>2,152,355</b>	<b>2,891,153</b>	<b>228,257</b>	<b>762,915</b>	<b>54,395</b>	<b>310,347</b>	<b>21,154</b>	<b>7,821</b>	<b>46,345</b>	<b>42,432</b>	<b>363,506</b>	<b>18,405,180</b>



# NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

As at 30 June 2021

	2021 \$	2020 \$
<b>8. Investments</b>		
Investment in 87-91 Gellibrand St Colac		
- Investment in Land and Building (Director's Valuation)	525,000	525,000
- Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative's share	50%	50%
	<b>262,500</b>	<b>262,500</b>
The investment in Wathaurong Glass Pty. Ltd. has not been brought to account in the financial statements of Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative Limited.		
<b>9. Right of Use Assets</b>		
Equipment	203,294	203,294
Property	1,570,832	415,283
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	(346,320)	(103,053)
	<b>1,427,806</b>	<b>515,524</b>
<b>10. Trade and Other Payables</b>		
Trade Creditors	951,804	459,747
Other Creditors	179,151	71,424
	<b>1,130,955</b>	<b>531,171</b>
<b>11. Employee Provisions</b>		
<b>Current</b>		
Annual Leave Provisions	899,190	566,329
Long Service Leave Provision	392,033	330,892
Purchased Leave	1,331	2,662
	<b>1,292,554</b>	<b>899,883</b>
<b>12. Grants in Advance</b>		
Unspent Grant Funds	5,437,539	5,655,847
	<b>5,437,539</b>	<b>5,655,847</b>
<b>13. Lease Liabilities</b>		
<b>Current</b>		
Equipment	39,734	38,083
Property	385,372	77,959
	<b>425,106</b>	<b>116,042</b>
<b>Non-Current</b>		
Equipment	107,032	146,766
Property	1,012,392	264,004
	<b>1,119,424</b>	<b>410,770</b>
	<b>1,544,530</b>	<b>526,812</b>

# NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

As at 30 June 2021

	2021 \$	2020 \$
<b>14. Reserves</b>		
Asset Revaluation Reserve	8,756,031	8,169,262
Movement in Asset Revaluation Reserve during the year	1,310,770	586,769
	<b>10,066,801</b>	<b>8,756,031</b>
<b>15. Accumulated Surplus</b>		
Accumulated Surplus at the Beginning of the Financial Year	10,327,200	9,798,738
Net Surplus Attributable to the Co-operative	24,814	528,462
Accumulated Surplus at the End of the Financial Year	<b>10,352,014</b>	<b>10,327,200</b>
<b>16. Reconciliation of net cash provided by operating activities to operating surplus</b>		
<b>Operating Profit</b>	24,814	528,462
<b>Non Cashflows in Operating Profit</b>		
Depreciation	555,475	593,033
Profit on Sale & Disposal of Assets	4,085	(13,462)
Bad and Doubtful Debts	-	12,986
Lease Liability - Finance Cost	47,063	54,618
<b>Changes in Assets and Liabilities</b>		
(Increase)/Decrease in Trade and Other Receivables	(454,887)	(413,724)
(Increase)/Decrease in Other Assets	(64,387)	(10,613)
(Increase)/Decrease in Financial Assets	(5,571)	(15,498)
Increase/(Decrease) in Trade and Other Payables	559,784	21,107
Increase/(Decrease) in Employee Provisions	392,671	275,238
Increase/(Decrease) in Grants in advance	(218,308)	(613,551)
<b>Cashflows from Operating Activities</b>	<b>880,738</b>	<b>418,596</b>

## 17. Events after the reporting period

Since 30 June 2021, there are no matters or circumstances that have arisen which require adjustments to the financial statements.



# INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE DIRECTORS OF WATHAURONG ABORIGINAL CO-OPERATIVE LIMITED

## Report on the Audit of the Financial Report

### Opinion

We have audited the financial report of Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative Limited (the Co-operative), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2021, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and the directors' declaration.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report of Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative Limited has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the Co-operatives National Law Application Act 2013 (Victoria), including:

- (i) giving a true and fair view of the Co-operative's financial position as at 30 June 2021 and of its financial performance for the year then ended; and
- (ii) that the financial records kept by the Co-operative are such as to enable financial statements to be prepared in accordance with accounting policies described in Note 1.

### Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report section of our report. We are independent of the Co-operative 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 our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

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

### Emphasis of Matter – Basis of Accounting

We draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared for the purpose of fulfilling the Co-operative's financial reporting responsibilities under the Co-operatives National Law Application Act 2013 (Victoria). As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

### Responsibilities of the Directors for the Financial Report

The directors of the Co-operative are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and have determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 1 to the financial report is appropriate to meet the requirements of the Co-operatives National Law Application Act 2013 (Victoria) and is appropriate to meet the needs of the members. The directors' responsibility also includes such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of a financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the directors are responsible for assessing the Co-operative'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 the directors either intend to liquidate the Co-operative or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

The directors are responsible for overseeing the Co-operative's financial reporting process.

### Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our 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 the 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 this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We 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 our 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 Co-operative's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the directors.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the directors' 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 Co-operative's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence

obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Co-operative 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.

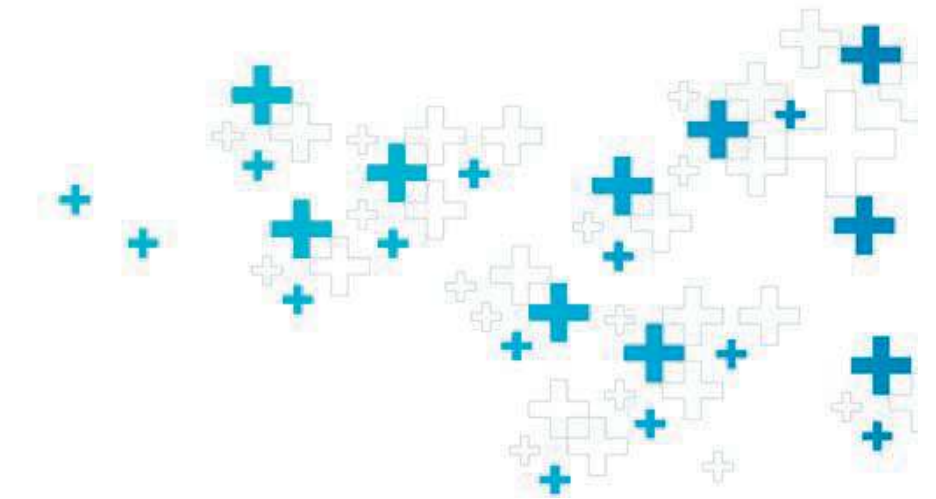
We communicate with the directors regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

### LBW CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

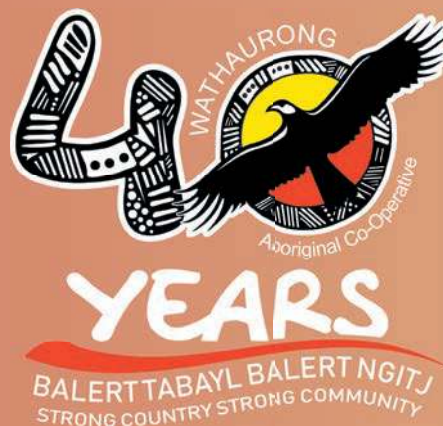
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sripathy Sarma', written over a horizontal line.

**SRIPATHY SARMA**  
Principal

RCA Registration Number: 325 444  
Dated this 12th day of December 2021







## Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative Ltd

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