



Annual Report

July 2024 – June 2025



Acknowledgment

Watsonia Neighbourhood House acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as traditional owners of this land and we welcome all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders to our centre.





Contents

About Watsonia Neighbourhood House	02
A year in pictures	05
President's report	08
Manager's report	09
Highlights	10
Community value	14
Treasurer's report	16
Financial statements	17
Our supporters	20
Our volunteers	21



About Watsonia Neighbourhood House

Watsonia Neighbourhood House has been bringing local people together since 1990. We are a grassroots, not-for-profit incorporated association and registered charity. We build capacity in our community by providing resources, services, safe spaces and opportunities that empower individuals and groups, enhance skills and knowledge, foster community engagement and participation, provide support and advocacy, and create a sense of belonging.

We deliver inclusive social, educational and support activities to families and people of all ages, as well as vulnerable and disadvantaged groups. We also provide food relief, free tax preparation service, free child car restraint fittings, a volunteer program, weekly community lunches, daily drop-in sessions, access to free Wi-Fi and laundry facilities, device/tablet loaning and referral pathways to other professional supports. We have a community garden that is open to the public all year round.

Watsonia Neighbourhood House is governed by a volunteer Committee of Governance and run by paid staff with assistance from volunteers.

The vision for Watsonia Neighbourhood House

Our Vision

An inclusive, connected community that works together to create a healthier, fairer and more sustainable future.

Our Mission

Watsonia Neighbourhood House is a safe, welcoming and inclusive community where strengths are cultivated, lifelong learning and sharing is fostered, and people are empowered to thrive.

Our Core values

The core values that inform our work are:



Strengths-based community development framework

We operate on a strengths-based community development model of practice. We bring people together, harness existing strengths and develop our community's capacity to identify and address common issues and priorities. We support our community to be resilient and connected through social, educational, recreational and support activities.

Community development is about enabling communities to identify and address their own needs. It starts from the assumption that communities have existing strengths and assets that make them part of the solution. Community development practice is about doing with, rather than doing for.

Our Key Strategic Directions and focus areas



Key direction 1: Building community resilience and connections

- Create opportunities for community participation and connection
 - Provide skills development and capacity building opportunities
 - Support health and well being
 - Encourage greater inclusion and social cohesion in our community
 - Empower community to address issues and priorities
 - Create a safe and welcoming place
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Key direction 2: Environmental stewardship

- Embed responsible use of resource and sustainable practices
 - Provide education relating to environmentally sustainable practices for the community
 - Respecting and promoting traditional custodianship
 - Provide opportunities for individuals to connect with nature
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Key direction 3: Organisational capacity and sustainability

- Be a responsible and equitable employer, providing a satisfying working environment
 - Formalise professional development and succession planning for the sustainability of the organisation
 - Encourage a positive and inclusive organisational culture
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Key direction 4: Partnerships

- Establish new strategic partnerships
 - Strengthen our existing partnerships
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Key direction 5: Innovation and continuous improvement

- Embed continuous improvement and best practice across the organisation
 - Capture, measure and evaluate the impact of our work
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Programs, Activities and Services

This year we have delivered and hosted over 1,200 activity sessions, worked on 8 major projects, and connected with around 400 people per week.

Social Connection

Friendship Group	Outing to Allwood House
Men's Meet Ups (afternoon and evening)	Christmas and Christmas in July events
Book Club (day time)	Op Shop tours
Book Club (evening)	Gardening Workshops
OMNI	Nesting Box making
Community Choir	Movie Matinees
Food Preserving	Bundoora Homestead outing
Passata making	Fun with Friends
Community BBQs	
Winter Solstice	

Supports

Community Lunches
Carers Support Group
Carers Art Therapy
Drop in sessions
Scam Awareness
Charity Knitting
Year 10 Work experience students
Students on placement (Melbourne Polytechnic and Melbourne Uni)
Volunteers with Centrelink obligations
Food donation, collection and distribution
Little Library and shared resources
Tax Help
Internet usage
Recharge station
Referrals to professional services
Device loaning



Health and Wellbeing

Walking Group
Yoga for Carers
Cruise Control Dance
Fitness
Meditation
Yoga
Qi Gong
Winter Wattle Walk outing

Projects

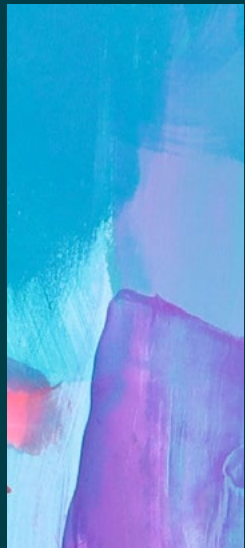
Pop Up Neighbourhood House project
Edible Garden project
Men's Social Connection project
Watsonia After Dark project
Story Gathering project
Emergency Response framework
Neighbourhood House Week
Sustainable Watsonia
Greening Watsonia

Creativity

Acrylic Art class	Easter gifts
Creative Art class	Shower Steamers
Craft in the Park	Terrarium making
Stitch, Knit and Crochet class	Air Plants
Sewing Group	Paper Bead Jewellery
Understanding Colour workshop	Flat Needle Felting
Meet and Make	Christmas Wreath and Decorations
Candle making	Boomerang Bag making

A year in pictures

At Watsonia Neighbourhood House, you're welcomed into a friendly, supportive community where people genuinely care. It's a place that values your ideas and contributions, inviting you to share your skills and be involved. With a wide range of activities and ways to connect, there's always something new to discover and enjoy. The photos you see reflect this spirit, people coming together, sharing, learning, and having fun.







President's report

It is with great pleasure that I present this Annual Report to the Members of Watsonia Neighbourhood House (WNH). If I were to choose a theme for the past year, it would be one of growth and change. From new faces to new strategic directions and exciting new projects, it has been a year of continued growth for our House.

Whilst I have been fortunate enough to be an ordinary member of the Committee of Governance for several years, I have only briefly had the privilege of holding the position of President. It is fitting that I should therefore begin this report by acknowledging the leadership of outgoing President, Sally O'Meara, who's words you will find below this report. Sally's guidance has been instrumental in placing the House in the strong position it is in today, and we thank her for her immense contribution.

Whilst securing additional funds is a win in its own right, it is the vision and dedication that goes into developing each related activity that is where the real magic happens. I would like to highlight just a small cross-section of the successful activities we have hosted this year, including:

- 'Fun with Friends' group
- Community lunches on a Tuesday and 'Christmas in July'

- The expansion of Cruise Control dance fitness with Kyle and ongoing Yoga with Sindhu
- Book Club, Walking Group and Boomerang Bags Group
- The vast array of creative activities including painting with Cheryl.

I would also like to give a special mention to Shannon and his 'Men's Social Connection Group,' which has provided a valuable space for men to meet, chat and support each other over a barby. The success of this program has inspired other groups across a number of neighbourhood houses and the forming of strong friendships for life.

Another key highlight for the year was securing a significant grant to transform our existing carpark into a vibrant community space (Greening Watsonia project). This project represents our commitment to not only improving our facilities but also to creating more opportunities for connection and community engagement.

The support provided by our House continues to be unparalleled, providing classes, events, and activities that form the lifeblood of our centre. As our local community continues to change and develop, WNH will be a constant, adapting and welcoming space that continues to

support every community member who walks through our doors.

None of this would be possible without the people who pour their hearts into this organisation. I extend a profound thank you to our entire House team and our wonderful volunteers for their ongoing support and tireless dedication to the House's mission. Developing strong partnerships continues to be a strength of the House and we are incredibly grateful for the support of our partners: Banyule City Council, the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, and the North East Neighbourhood House Network.

This year, we also celebrate a remarkable milestone. Our Manager, Lucie, marks her 10th year as Manager at WNH. Many of you will remember Lucie starting as a passionate volunteer before working her way to Manager. It is hard to adequately sum up her contributions in a few short words, but I am certain that everyone reading this will have their own memory of Lucie's warmth, expertise, and support to share. Under her stewardship, the House has returned from a financial deficit to the successful, thriving organisation it is today. She has been instrumental in securing funding for exciting initiatives like the Nook and our beautiful gardens, and has built a culture of high support and trust that is felt by staff, volunteers, and participants alike. Lucie's expertise was recently recognised when she was asked to assist SPAN Community House in Thornbury as their Interim Manager. The Board President at SPAN spoke incredibly highly of Lucie's support of their staff and her "steady hand" during their transition. We are so thankful for her ongoing role and her many contributions.

I must also thank my fellow members of the Committee. As volunteers, they dedicate significant personal time and expertise to governing the House. This year we have welcomed some new faces to the team, whose fresh perspectives complement the

deep knowledge and dedication of our long-serving members.

Finally, and most importantly, thank YOU. Thank you to our Members and our wider community for your ongoing support, especially through some of the rough patches we navigated this year. Your participation, feedback, and presence are why we are here. We do this for you.

Callum Shaw

President (*since February 2025*)

Over the past five years, I've been privileged to hold a position on the Watsonia Neighbourhood House Committee of Governance. During this time, the organisation has grown and flourished under the guidance of Manager Lucie Holden, with the support of a dedicated team of staff and volunteers.

I'm proud to have been part of this wonderful organisation, and to have played a small part in the vital work WNH does to support the Watsonia community.

Owing to family and work commitments, I'm now stepping down from the role of President. We have a fabulous committee, and I have no doubt that this change will enable a great leader to step forward and guide the organisation into 2025.

Sally O'Meara

President (*2021 – January 2025*)

Manager's report

2024 marked a really special milestone for me – 10 years as Manager at Watsonia Neighbourhood House! It's been a journey full of challenges, rewards, and incredible moments. Along the way, I've had the joy of building lasting friendships, growing my professional skills, and learning from the amazing people who make our community so vibrant. I've written over 50 funding submissions to support our programs, and celebrated countless special occasions and events with our community. These moments remind me why this work matters so much.

Watsonia Neighbourhood House isn't just a workplace for me. It's a supportive community that has stood by me through personal life changes, from navigating school years to the loss of close family members, and other challenges along the way. Connecting with people from all walks of life has helped me grow, broaden my perspective, and gain a deeper understanding of life experiences very different from my own. I've learned to embrace having a go, keep my sense of humour, and to value kindness above all else.

Over the past decade, social isolation has remained a key public health challenge in Watsonia, made worse by the disruptions of Covid and more recently the North East Link construction. Feedback from our participants tells us that our programs and initiatives are

successfully helping people feel included, make friends, and connect with others. This ultimately supports community wellbeing and sense of belonging.

The success of the organisation comes down to our passionate, hardworking staff and volunteers. Their dedication, creativity, and skills bring everything to life. I also want to acknowledge our Committee of Governance, their guidance and support are invaluable in keeping us responsive and connected to our community.

For me, the greatest compliment (and one of the things I'm most proud of) is when people say that coming to Watsonia Neighbourhood House feels like coming home. That sense of belonging, warmth, and connection is what we strive for every day.

Our work continues to evolve alongside the changing needs of Watsonia, and we remain committed to creating welcoming, safe spaces where people can connect, build resilience, and feel valued. We're making Watsonia a place where individuals and families can truly thrive.

Lucie Holden
Manager



Highlights

This year Watsonia Neighbourhood House has been alive with events that brought people together, celebrated diversity, and strengthened community connections.

We marked special occasions with vibrant celebrations, including **Halloween, Harmony Day, Reconciliation Week, Christmas and Christmas in July, Winter Solstice, Neighbourhood House Week, Seniors Festival,** and **Diwali.**

Throughout the year, our **movie matinees** gave people the chance to relax and enjoy an afternoon together, and our **Men's Meet Ups** provided a welcoming space for conversation, support, and building new friendships.



Highlights

Sustainable Watsonia

Sustainable Watsonia is a major initiative of Watsonia Neighbourhood House, designed to build a connected and resilient community where people are empowered, and the environment is protected. The project aligns with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals – No Poverty, Zero Hunger, Good Health and Wellbeing, Reduced Inequalities, and Climate Action – and reflects our strategic focus on Environmental Stewardship, particularly embedding responsible use of resources and providing education on sustainable practices.

This year, Sustainable Watsonia grew through a variety of initiatives. We delivered environmental education workshops and social inclusion activities that promoted health and wellbeing. A garden library of sustainability resources was established, while community meals and food sharing reduced waste and strengthened food security.

Our workshops built practical skills in food preserving, gardening, and sustainable living, while also offering opportunities to connect with nature. We continue to embed sustainability into daily community life, strengthening our role as a hive for resilience and inclusion.

A highlight remains the Boomerang Bag group, who repurpose donated fabric and second-hand bed linen into reusable shopping bags. This creative initiative reduces single-use plastics while building community connections.

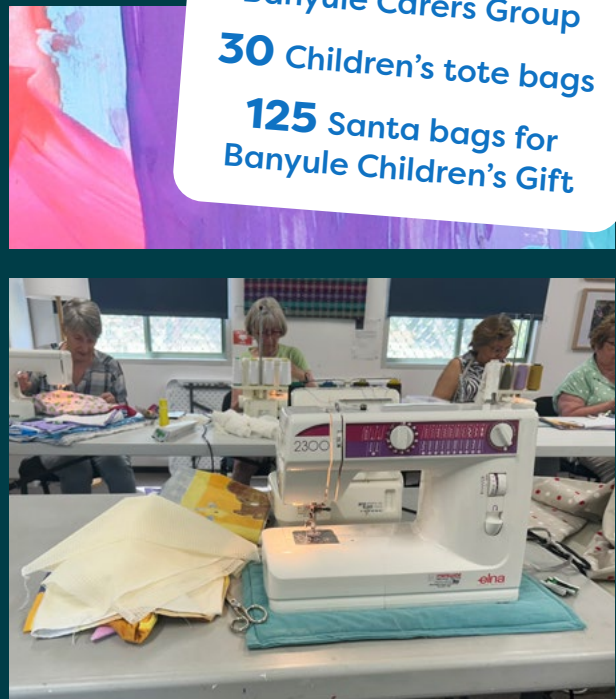
We have also commenced our Greening Watsonia initiative, transforming the car park thoroughfare directly in front of our centre into a vibrant green gathering and urban food garden. This project will be completed by December 2025.

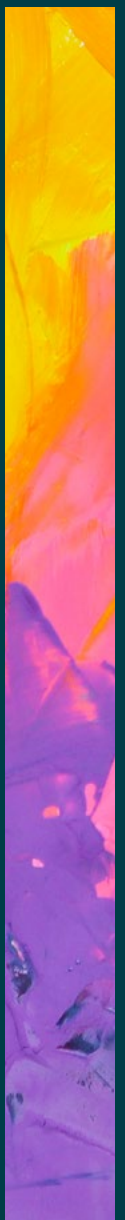
422 produce bags and
37 shopping bags for
Greenhills Neighbourhood
House food relief

50 shopping bags for
Carers Week gifts to
Banyule Carers Group

30 Children's tote bags

125 Santa bags for
Banyule Children's Gift



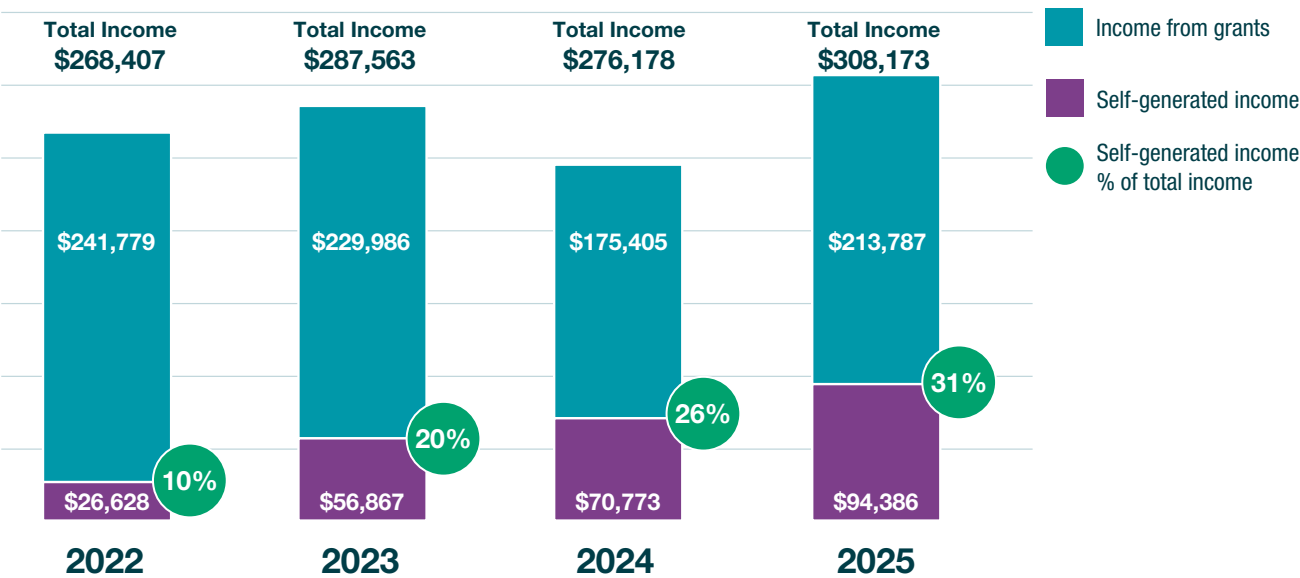


Our impact

Over the past four years, Watsonia Neighbourhood House has grown stronger and more sustainable.

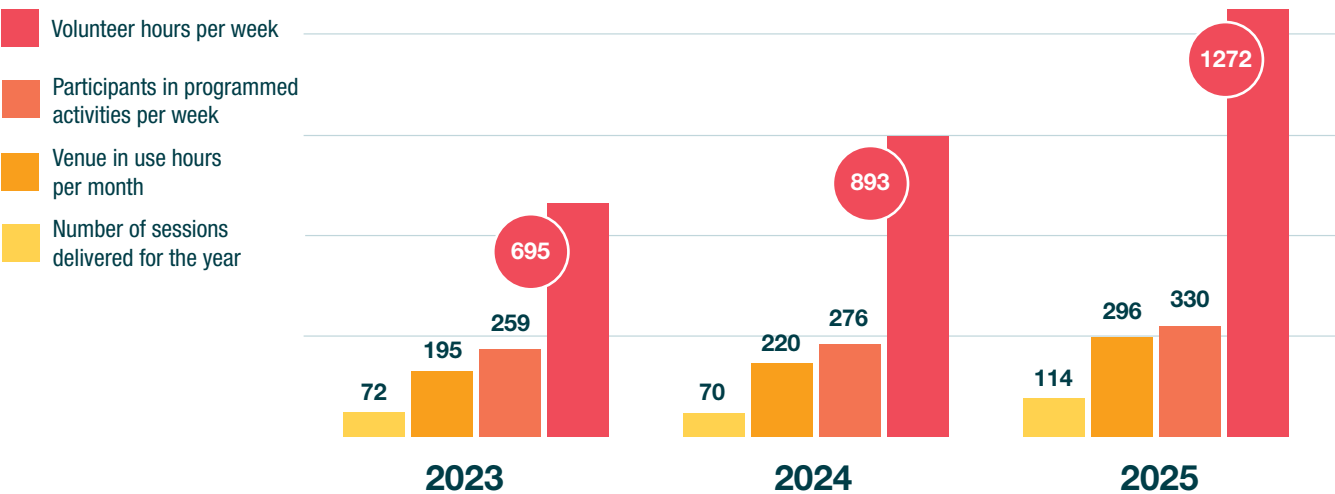
A considerable strength is in our self generated income, which has jumped from just 10% of our income in 2022 to 31% in 2025. This shift means we’re less reliant on external grants and more able to stand on our own, giving us the freedom to be flexible and creative.

Our ability to maximise resources, leverage partnerships, and achieve high-impact outcomes on limited budgets has kept us moving forward.



Participation and Engagement

Our community is more connected than ever. Over the past three years, volunteer hours and participation in our activities have grown by more than 50%. Our spaces are buzzing too, with venue use on the rise and the number of sessions delivered increasing by over 80%. This shows that the House is far more than just a building, it’s a vibrant, well used hub and key to community life in Watsonia.



Community Value

This year Watsonia Neighbourhood House delivered over **\$1.3 million** in value to our community.



For every **\$1** we received, we generated **\$6 of impact** – a steady increase from previous years.

Our programs are making a difference:

Social connections

Helping people feel included, supported, and connected, with value rising to **\$744,539** in 2024.

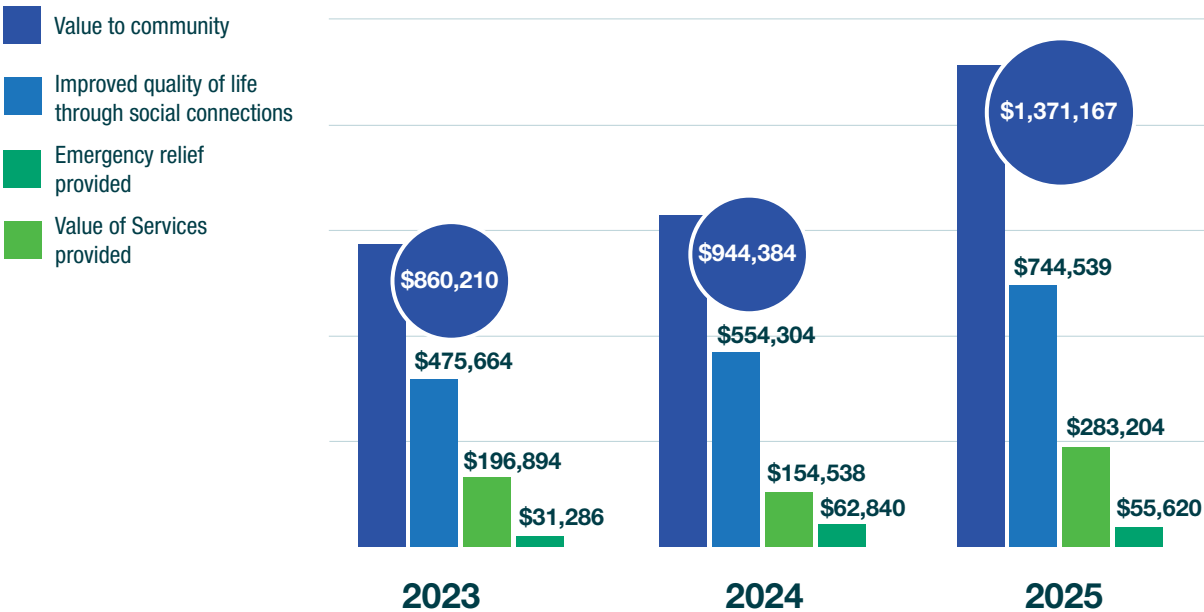
Emergency relief

Providing **\$55,620** of vital support demonstrating our responsiveness to vulnerable community members.

Services and programs

From workshops to community events, our offerings reached a value of **\$283,204**.

These numbers show that we’re not just running programs and delivering services, we’re strengthening community wellbeing, building resilience, and making every dollar count.



These values are produced by Neighbourhood Houses Victoria based on data provided by Watsonia Neighbourhood House in the 2024 Neighbourhood Houses Survey

Treasurer's report

Watsonia Neighbourhood House has recorded a net operating profit for seventh year out of the last ten years. This year we made an operating profit of \$3,226 which was mainly due the increase in Program Specific Grants that were received in this financial year..

We are once again very grateful to Victoria State Government Neighbourhood House Coordination Funding (\$100,334) and Banyule City Council (\$37,819). These two entities provide a stable and reliable source of income each year, however, the additional Grants from the Banyule Council and the North East Community Fund grants have really lifted the overall House Income.

The House continues to generate income of its own, mainly through room hire charges, fee income, activities income, donations and membership fees. Room hire has had quite a significant increase rising by \$13,500 for the financial year.

This year our expenditure was much higher than last year. The house routine expenses figures came in very much in line what we had anticipated. This year again our budget has been affected with higher utility and insurance charges.

Thanks to Lucie Holden for her valued leadership and I appreciate the strong guidance in budget preparation and funding submissions. I would like to thank Evan Butterworth for providing regular financial updates and putting together the end of year financial figures.

I would like to thank Tassia, Kylie and Shannon for the assistance they provide to Lucie and the House. They have made a valuable contribution to this year's operations. I would especially like to thank them for stepping up and leading the House when Lucie was helping at another House.

I am once again pleased to report that the Watsonia Neighbourhood House remains in a stable financial position and an even stronger position than last.



Bob Regan

Watsonia Neighbourhood Treasurer
2024–2025

Balance sheet

as at 30 June 2025

	2025 \$	2024 \$
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Cash at Bank	110,087	110,620
Cash on Hand	200	200
Accounts Receivable	6,373	11,225
Prepayments	964	1,620
Total current assets	117,624	123,665
Non-current assets		
Property, Plant & Equipment at Cost	26,772	26,772
Less Provision for Depreciation	-26,722	-26,772
Total Non-Current Assets	0	0
Total Assets	117,624	123,665
LIABILITIES		
Current liabilities		
Trade & Other Creditors	3,045	3,748
ATO - GST & PAYGW Payable	6,801	4,510
Grants received in advance	16,665	16,763
Provision for annual leave	12,217	11,155
Provision for long service leave	3,134	14,953
Total Liabilities	41,862	51,129
NET ASSETS	75,762	72,536
Equity		
Accumulated Funds	75,762	72,536
	75,762	72,536

Income & expenditure statement

as at 30 June 2025

INCOME	2025 \$	2024 \$
Grant Income		
DFFH NHCP Funding	100,334	96,889
Banyule Community Partnerships	37,819	36,470
Program Specific Grants	75,634	42,046
Fees Income	21,206	19,595
Group Income	1,955	2,027
Room Hire	60,617	47,094
Donations	2,689	968
Membership Fees	170	120
Wages oncharge income	6,895	0
Interest Income	854	969
Total Income	308,173	246,178
EXPENDITURE		
Advertising & Marketing	879	1,100
Auditing Fees	0	1,800
Annual Leave & LSL Accrual	5,723	-1,708
Bank Fees	316	323
Bookkeeping Fees	5,775	6,300
Computer Expenses	1,452	3,754
Course & Group Resources	1,961	1,701
Electricity, Gas & Water	3,869	3,149
Food Relief Provided	7,467	4,583
House Maintenance	3,206	706
House Supplies	1,047	1,402
Insurance	1,708	1,701
Office Supplies	2,327	496
Project Specific Expenses	36,481	7,284
Rent Expense	1,900	1,797
Staff & Volunteer Expenses	2,500	906
Staff Training	370	268
Subscriptions	816	1,211
Superannuation	23,137	19,163
Telephone & Internet	2,134	1,385
Wages & Salaries	198,981	190,100
Workers Compensation	2,899	3,157
Total Expenditure	304,947	250,576
Net Surplus/(Deficit) For the Period	3,226	-4,399

Statement by Committee

In the opinion of the Members of the Committee of the Association,

1. The accompanying revenue statement is drawn up so as to give a true and fair view of the Association's income for the financial year ended 30 June 2025.
2. The accompanying balance sheet gives a true and fair view of the state of affairs for the Association for the financial year ended 30 June 2025.
3. At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Association can meet its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with the resolution of the Committee and is signed for and on behalf of the Committee by:



Bob Regan
Treasurer



Callum Shaw
President

Our supporters

We would like to thank our supporters;



Banyule City Council for lease of our premises, annual funding, access to grants and working in partnership on projects and service delivery.



Victoria State Government for our recurrent Neighbourhood House Coordination Funding.



Australian Government

Federal Government and Kate Thwaites MP for access to grants and her ongoing support.



North East Neighbourhood House Network and Julie Johnston for support, training and opportunities to collaborate with other Member houses.

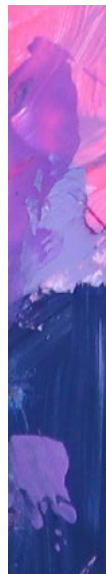


North East Community Fund for access to grants to fund Sustainable Watsonia and Greening Watsonia projects.

Our team

Watsonia Neighbourhood House warmly acknowledges the dedication, passion, and generosity of our staff, Committee of Governance, and volunteers. They create a space where people feel at home, can make friends, try new things, and be part of a vibrant, inclusive community.





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