



Laidley Community Centre Inc.

...empowering the community...



ANNUAL REPORT 2018-2019



President's Annual Report

Dear members, guest and visitors,

It seems not that long ago we were here for the 2018 AGM and welcomed a number of new board members and I accepted the position of President at the conclusion of our 30th anniversary celebrations. Much has happened since then.

A large focus for the end of 2018 was on the new social enterprise strategy at the café formerly known as “Three Sons”. The purpose of the project has been well promoted to the community and includes the opportunity for training and employment for local youth. The café also provides a new way for us to promote our services to those most in need, and more opportunities for the centre to be involved in community-led initiatives. The development of this project continued into 2019 with the roll out of a new brand and name for the cafe – “Community Grounds” – which was unveiled at our official launch in June. The Board has watched with interest the progress of this project, and continues to receive regular positive feedback from the community about the benefits of the café and the increased exposure that it provides to the centre. Certainly, the Board is in agreement that the social value it provides to the community is worth the investment made by the organisation to undertake the project.

A strategic planning session held at Branell Homestead was attended by the Board in January. Discussions highlighted the importance of ensuring that the charitable support we can provide is at the forefront of all our services. A three-year strategic plan was finalised and this led to the development and adoption of a newly-worded vision and mission in June (although our core purpose of supporting those most in need in the community remains unchanged over our 30 years).

Our Vision

That all residents in Laidley and the surrounding area have access to basic necessities in order to experience quality life opportunities in a thriving and supportive community.

Our Mission

To provide access to resources that enable achievement of our vision to residents in Laidley and the surrounding area by:

- Providing targeted service delivery in response to need,
- Engaging with the community,
- Building community capacity, and
- Maintaining high organisational standards.

In February, we welcomed the news that we had been successful in our grant application to undertake an Early Connections Project which has allowed us to employ an early-years worker over 3 years. Through this project we can drive local initiatives that support parents to provide the best start for their children in the hope of improving long-term outcomes and breaking the cycle of disadvantage. We acknowledge the generous commitment by the Tim Fairfax Family Foundation in the provision of this grant.

Several times throughout the year there was cause for concern due to the uncertainty about the future of the Community Connect Program trial. This trial had allowed us to employ a full-time support worker to engage with individuals experiencing need who attend the centre, and develop a strategy to



connect them with specialist services and support as required. The significant value of this program to the community and the centre, as well as the individuals it supports, cannot be understated and we were relieved in late June when we received advice that the result of the trial meant the program would now be implemented in Laidley for 5 years. This valuable program would be an asset to all neighbourhood centres and we will continue to advocate for its implementation more broadly.

The only real negative news for the year was the discontinuation of our federal-government Emergency Relief funding beyond December 2019 despite our best advocacy efforts. This represents a major funding shortfall to the centre for supporting our most vulnerable clients. We will work even more closely with other local support organisations to attempt to fill the gap that will be left in the community as a result of the loss of this funding.

Of course, none of what we do would be possible without the invaluable contributions of a dedicated board, and a fantastic team of staff and volunteers. Our volunteers, in particular, can't be thanked enough for their continuing selfless contributions, and without them the Centre would be unable to function in its current capacity. In closing, we look forward to another positive year as we strive to work together with our community to best serve those in need.

Adrian Shepley
President



Treasurer's Annual Report

The strategic plan directs Laidley Community Centre to target service delivery, engage with the community and build community capacity while maintaining high standards and I am pleased to report that this is being achieved while maintaining a strong financial position.

This position is confirmed by the attached financial reports which were endorsed without qualification by our auditors Bachman Robinson. The key specific financial details are total assets of \$346,249, total liabilities of \$163,789 and a deficit for the year of \$30,077 on a total revenue of \$652,922. The ongoing focus is on determinedly maximising services and so even with this deficit, we are again budgeting for a deficit in the year ahead. We can report, however, that the deficit for the past year has been reduced, from our initial budget of just over \$52,000 to an actual of under \$28,000, by stringent financial management.

These results confirm that we are operating from a solid asset base and have some ongoing commitments of Government and philanthropic funding. Positive growth in room hire is an 'easy' contributor and the café is producing very significant sales growth which provides a potential source of revenue if we are forced to reduce its social contribution. However, some key programmes have been stopped or reduced and all key programmes are constantly under threat. The search for funding is a constant activity and all members are reminded of the importance of their role in this aspect.

The strong commitment to services ensures that, while remaining sustainable, the Board under Adrian's strong leadership and with the support of a great team led by Alana, draws every bit of value out of the limited financial resources.

I have a high level of confidence that Laidley Community Centre will continue throughout the coming year to target service delivery, engage with the community and build community capacity while maintaining high standards.

Ian Daniels
Treasurer



Manager's Annual Report

Reflecting on operational achievements of the past year, it is apparent that the major focus of this year was project implementation. Mid-2018 saw the board envision and develop two new major projects (being Community Grounds and the Early Connections Project), and many of our priorities this year have centred around bringing these visions to reality, supported by a fantastic team as always. I couldn't be more proud of the success of both of these projects and the way in which they have been received by the community so far. As always, there is still more to do, and our desire to strive for continuous improvement means that both of these projects will grow to achieve even more positive outcomes for our community over time, however, it is nice to feel that they have both reached a point where we feel they are sustainable with less active intervention than during their establishment phase. These two projects represented a significant increase, not only to revenue (which grew by over a third), but also to the number of staff on our payroll and this grew from 8 to 17 (albeit part-time except for one). This is in addition to the effective supervision and support that we provide our many volunteers. Needless to say, the management team is now at fairly full capacity in terms of our ability to grow any larger without an equivalent increase in managerial and administrative resources.

When these two projects didn't demand our attention, we focused on delivering other objectives of our strategic and operational plans, including:

- striving for consistency and best practice in service delivery through staff training, and reviewing and updating policies and procedures where improvements were identified,
- continuing to identify and apply for relevant grants that address community need (including successful application for the following grants: Thriving Communities, Stronger Communities, ARTC, COTA, Be Connected, AGL, and Tim Fairfax Family Foundation, and the receipt of our second year of Dress for Success funding from the CBA),
- driving community networking and collaboration opportunities, and advocating for agencies to deliver their services in Laidley rather than have locals try and find transport to metropolitan centres, and
- making necessary improvements and upgrades to our spaces to ensure they are welcoming, child-friendly and safe community spaces where people can seek respite and are received with compassion (including providing free Wi-Fi and computer access at our three venues).

The other emphasis of the year has been ensuring compassion and charity are at the forefront of what we do. This can be difficult to balance at times due to budgetary and professional constraints, however at a minimum, we aim to be a place where a hot cuppa, light meal and a listening ear is available at all times for those in need. Finding new ways to fund and deliver our charitable services will remain at the forefront of our attention and be of even greater importance when we lose our Emergency Relief funding beyond December 2019 and navigate the impacts that this will have on the most vulnerable members of our community.

Throughout the past twelve months we have, once again, successfully delivered a very high standard of outcomes required by our Service Agreements to deliver some core programs to our community including Neighbourhood Centre Services, Community Connect, Emergency Relief, and Centrelink Access. I often comment that the staff work so effectively to achieve this that it requires very little intervention from me, and can be compared to a well-oiled machine. Of course, this is only true thanks to the dedicated crew of staff and volunteers who work tirelessly behind the scenes doing the everyday tasks that are often unseen by the public but without which the Centre would grind to a halt.



These include emptying bins, doing dishes, answering phones, archiving, reconciling bank statements, grocery shopping, completing rosters, invoicing for room hire, making coffee, setting up market stalls, printing forms, and cleaning out cupboards to name just a few! Not exactly glamorous, and at times, seemingly thankless, but of extreme importance to allow us to keep our doors open. I want to take the time to really emphasise how truly grateful I am to be surrounded by such a wonderful, committed team of people. Certainly, we talk about this organisation as being somewhat of a family and I am mindful of the special place we hold in the lives of many of the people who are involved in what we do.

Also critical to our role in the community are the local people and organisations who support our shared goals of serving the people of Laidley and surrounds. Although these would be too numerous to list, we wish to acknowledge all of our local partners and the individuals who have reached out to us to offer support, be that by way of blanket donations, tips at the café, running shared events, promoting activities, sharing posts on Facebook, providing feedback regarding our newsletter, providing resources for craft activities, making bags for hygiene packs, and so many other ways that people help us to achieve the work that we do. The capacity of this organisation truly does reflect the buy-in from local people and for this reason we encourage anyone who feels strongly about Laidley and the surrounding community to get in touch and become involved. By encouraging a diverse organisation base, we hope to take new ideas and shared values and use these to make our community a great place to live, including through lifting up those in our community who might be doing it tough at times. So, if you are considering it but haven't yet taken the final step, please become a member – everyone welcome!

We thank and acknowledge our professional partners including those staff from funding bodies and government agencies who work closely with us to ensure the successful delivery of our service agreements and grants. Many of these individuals have expressed an interest in our community and we appreciate the support and fondness that you feel for our community and it serves to increase our pride in what we are able to deliver.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge our board, who freely give of their time to ensure the compliance and direction of the organisation is maintained in order to achieve the best outcomes for our community. I thank them for the trust they give me to oversee the day-to-day operations and the guidance they provide at the times it is required. I look forward to delivering another strong year for the Centre building on the excellent reputation that the organisation has been afforded through its standing in the community.

Alana Wahl
Manager



Programs Annual Report

COMMUNITY CONNECT

This year initially saw the extension of the Community Connect trial until 30th June 2019. This program allows for increased responsiveness by LCC in relation to clients who attend the centre experiencing crisis or needing advice or referral to support services.

Tracye Backholer was in the role of Community Connect Worker from February 2018 – January 2019. With the uncertainty of the continuation of the funding Tracye decided to leave and secure employment elsewhere. Lynda and Tracye had previously been working closely together with clients with complex needs and Lynda stepped in the role of Community Connect worker in January 2019. Lynda and Nevela (who has taken on the Emergency Relief Worker role) now work closely together to support clients with more complex needs.

With the uncertainty surrounding the continuation of the program between January and June the board and Alana advocated strongly for the continuation of Community Connect particularly highlighting the important role it has played in our community.

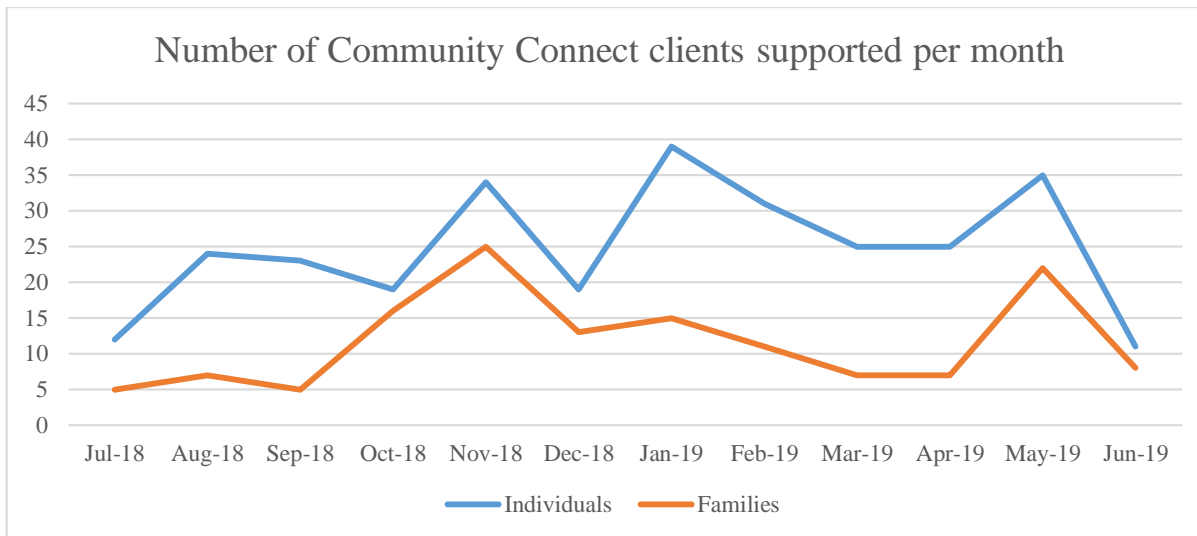
In June, we were delighted to be informed that program trial had been successful and the service had been funded for the next 5 years. This was very exciting news and has allowed us to now move forward and continue to make the best use of this program to work with other services in the region addressing need.

Through the Community Connect program, we have been able to support and be present at local events and networks including:

- Lockyer Says No to Violence network
- NAIDOC day, Colours of Lockyer, Harmony Day, Under 8's Day
- Lockyer Valley Interagency
- School Holiday Activities
- Family Wellbeing Day
- Local services expo
- Mobile Hubs in Lockyer
- Crafts and Laughs
- Partnerships with support services to attend and provide outreach out of LCC

Other outcomes have included

- Increased advocacy and support for placed-based services
- New and strengthened partnerships to make best use of local funding without duplicating services.
- Increased capacity to support local organisations
- Promotion and delivery of the service through our café, Community Grounds
- Increased presence and involvement at various markets and local events



In summary, we are thrilled with the ongoing funding which will enable us to continue to support people to overcome barriers to accessing services. This program will prove increasingly valuable as we try to mitigate the impact of lost federally government emergency relief funding on this community.

Lynda Rendall
Community Connect Worker

EMERGENCY RELIEF

Our Emergency Relief (ER) program is an integral part of the Centre’s strategies to support individuals experiencing crisis. It can typically only provide small amounts of financial support, however, when used thoughtfully, can bridge the gap while a family or individuals engages with more specialist supports. LCC is very experienced at making this funding stretch even further for individuals through our strong networking and collaborations with other local organisations and also the in-depth knowledge of our existing staff as to what other supports are available to ease financial pressure for families. This year we started to capture these real dollar savings and calculated that, in addition to \$35000 of direct support, we saved clients another \$113000 combined. A fantastic testament to our staff and their excellent knowledge and networking to make the most of available resources. Some examples of these ways in which LCC staff go above and beyond to deliver ER include:

- Applying for Telstra vouchers and Telstra pre-paid phone cards this year. A total of \$8,600.00 was issued to clients with that money coming directly from Telstra.
- Purchasing discounted mobile phones in bulk – where previously we could pay up to \$80 per phone, the discounted phones are \$20 with \$10 credit upon activation. (Phone are necessary to allow the homeless or those who have fled with nothing to be contacted by services, for job applications, and safety for example.
- Remaining in the WESNET safe connections program so we can access smart phones with \$30 mobile phone credit for victims of domestic violence.
- Organising a blanket drive to help families cope in winter (thank you to the community for the overwhelming response).

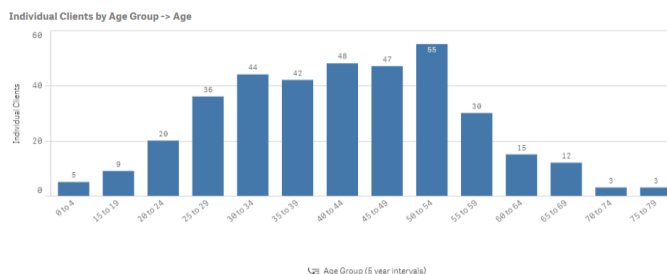
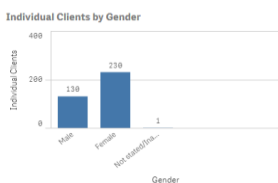
- Advocating for clients with lower education or literacy skills who may have been signed up for unaffordable contracts such as with power bills.
- Organising a partnership with the Uniting Church Op shop whereby they kindly support our clients experiencing crisis to access clothing.
- Continue to work with key players regarding the barriers that transport plays in clients being able to access support services and seek employment.
- Promote local organisations delivering food rescue and hampers.
- Work with our partners in housing, mental health and other services to compliment the support they are able to give by filling any gaps.
- Continue with our policy of removing set days/times for people to attend to seek support and attempt to provide support as close to the time of the crisis as it practicable.

A total of **508 clients** who were in financial crisis/hardship were assisted through the provision of various support including food vouchers/Woolworths cards, transport assistance, part payment of rent/household bills, pharmaceutical vouchers, phones and phone credit. Overall, approximately **44% of clients were brand new to the service.**

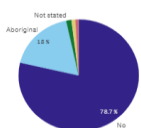
Although we have continued to represent an excellent value for service to the funder, we were unsuccessful securing a long-term contract with funding initially set to finish in December 2018, however an extra year of funding gave some reprieve while we advocated for a decision reversal. Unfortunately, this means we will have greatly reduced capacity to make positive impacts through ER and for the end of 2019 and beyond we will be working with the community to where people will now turn to when they reach rock bottom.

Number of Individual Clients

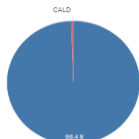
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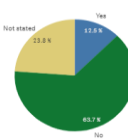
Individual Clients by Indigenous Status *



Individual Clients by CALD Status



Individual Clients by Disability Status -> Descrip... *



Nevela Dauth
Emergency Relief Worker



CENTRELINK

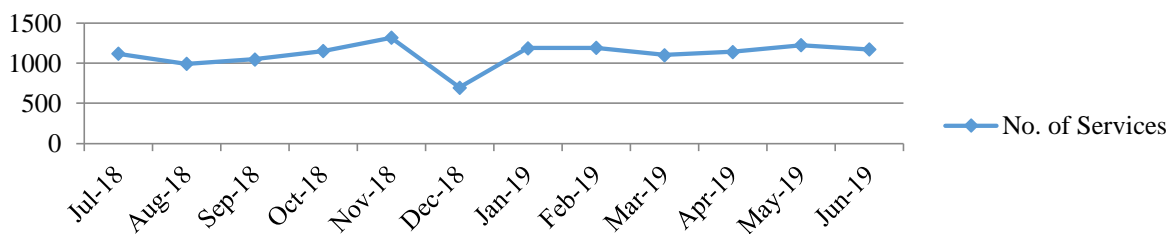
We have had a great year in the Centrelink agency, with some new updates and many volunteers now trained to assist customers.

The Department of Human Services (DHS) have continued to promote their online digital services as the way forward. Most claims can only be made online. We encourage our clients to access DHS by phone, fax, on-line computer and also smart phone apps connecting to the DHS Wi-Fi as their first point of call to Centrelink. We received some new hardware this year including new computers and printers and we also now have a tablet for the agent to show customers how to access Centrelink online. For those who are computer illiterate or do not have access to a computer, we can assist by helping them one-on-one. We have also a form filling service at the centre that we can refer people to so that one of our team can sit down with a customer and help them complete and application online or on paper. On average we are registering 15 new customers onto MyGov per month. Feedback from our Centrelink Coordinator is Laidley has the highest new registration for MyGov registration in his region. Big pat on the back to the team!

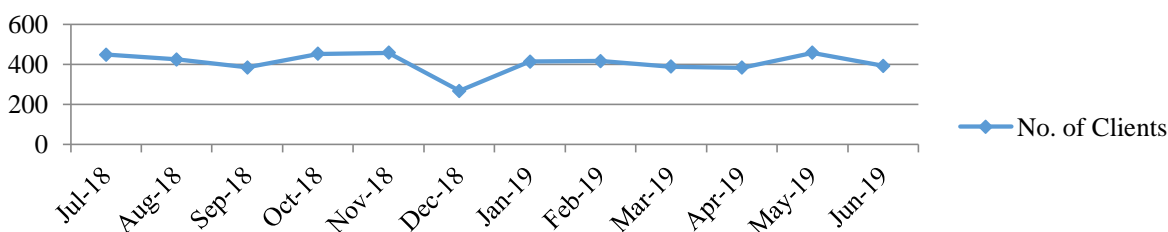
The Department of Human Services decided to extend the Department of Veteran Affairs (DVA) trial this year. People who are with DVA can access information and self-service equipment for their enquiries. There hasn't been a high demand for this service in our area (most eligible locals are already registered) however it is a good service to be able to offer when needed.

The team would like to say a huge thank you to all the volunteers, staff and Board of Management for making the past year so rewarding and striving to ensure that every person who came into our organisation was assisted with compassion, empathy and respect.

No. of Centrelink Services



No. of Centrelink Clients



Dianne Hodgson
Community Worker (Centrelink Support)



EARLY CONNECTIONS PROJECT

In March of this year the community centre received the exciting news that we were successful in attaining three-year funding to develop the Early Connections Project (ECP) in Laidley due to the generosity of the Tim Fairfax Family Foundation. Broadly, the program aims to build on the community's capacity to meet early intervention and developmental needs of children under five and support family wellbeing.

Our Early Connection Worker role is shared by Janella Cox and Fiona Prentis and they have been working together to meet these goals by connecting with families in the area through various events and activities to provide greater access to free play-based learning activities; and educating parents of the importance of learning through play and the role of parents as their child's first teacher. These out-of-centre events have allowed us to connect with a wider array of families and help spread the word about the Early Connections Project. Families we have engaged with in this way have subsequently remained connected by attending other events and activities such as our weekly playgroup.

Events provided or assisted by the Early Connections Program from March – June 2019 included:

- National Families Week stall at the Friday Markets
- Play opportunities and Stalls at the Saturday Ferrari Markets
- Pop-up Park Games
- Getting Messy in the Garden Day
- NAIDOC stall
- Old Fashioned Games at the Lockyer Valley Regional Council skate workshop

Along with providing support to the existing parent-led Little Legs Playgroup, ECP has begun a collaboration with Loretta at the Kambu Family Wellbeing Service in the form of a new Baby Play and Learn Playgroup. The Playgroup was born from discussions with professionals within the community who identified a need for a playgroup specifically for babies and a gap in activities available for families on a Monday. The first few sessions have been successful and we are looking forward to developing this further and providing more individual support to attending families.

The Early Connections team has also been working closely with the Together4Lockyer network to provide training to Early Childhood Educators in region with two successful workshops provided so far this year. Feedback from Educators has been positive, with future training plans already under way.

Our Goals for the remainder of 2019 are to continue to build on existing and create new relationships with external services with an aim to increase collaboration and create better outcomes for families in the area. One of these being a collaboration with Together4Lockyer and West Morton Health on a pilot program in the region aiming to improve access to and decrease wait times for early intervention services for young children and their families. We will also aim to increase our support of families attending our Playgroups through the provision of parenting workshops and access to early interventions services.

Fiona Prentis
Early Connections Worker

COMMUNITY GROUNDS

It's hard to believe the Social Enterprise Café has only been up and running for a little over a year. And what an amazing ride it's been for all involved, including the community. The overwhelmingly positive feedback we have received has been a reflection of the hard work put in by everyone. The project implementation has intentionally occurred in phases which has helped us to manage the expectations of the community while we made changes and improvements when time and budget allowed, and as we gained an increased understanding of what could be realistically be sustainably achieved in the space.

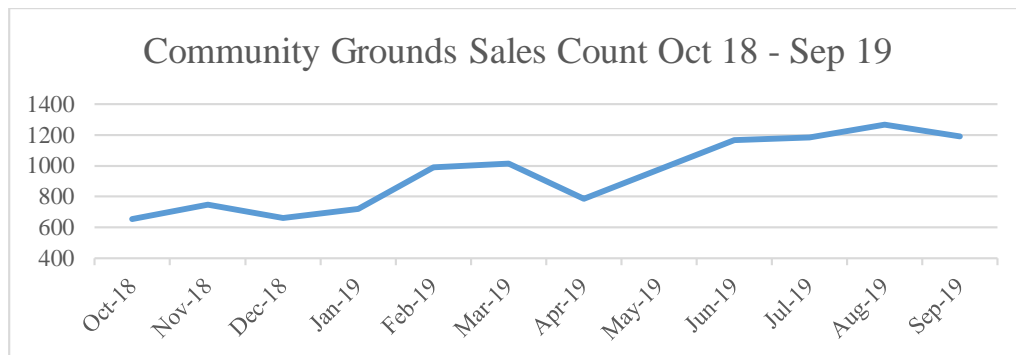
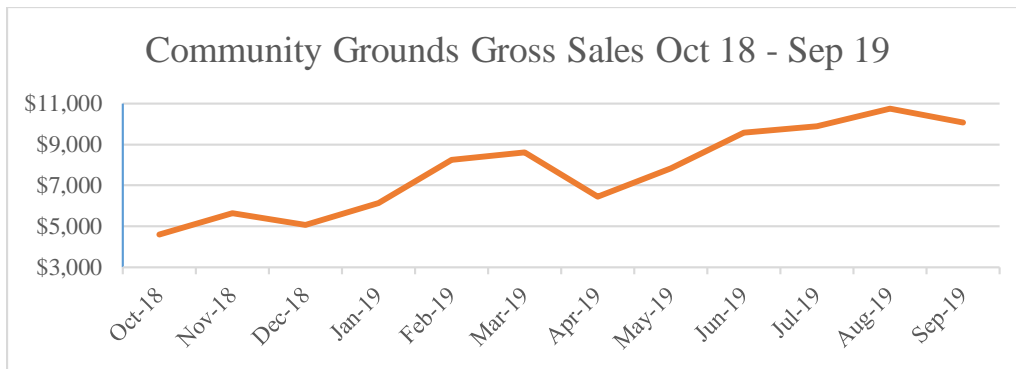
In October 2018 the first moves were made to handle the increasing popularity of the café with Dan requiring an offsider for the peak periods and the hunt for an additional staff member to allow us to open on Mondays. The first steps were also taken towards the hiring of the school based trainees who have continued to excel and grow in confidence to this day.

After an initial strong period of growth in sales the trend plateaued through February and March 2019 but the increased community engagement and ability to promote our services and referrals within the township was clear. The challenge of finalising new equipment purchases and engaging tradespeople to fix up niggling issues was a challenge but the staff, volunteers and trainees pulled together admirably to ensure the best level of service was provided.

As sales grew into March, the requirement for 3 staff on Fridays became apparent. Also during this time, the board approved the rebranding initiative and preparation began in earnest to ensure the continued success and community exposure of the café. New signage, names, logos and associated design work was in full swing working towards a June grand re-opening.

The highlight of the year was the Grand Opening/Re-Launch event in June which was attended by many VIPs, including the Mayor of LVRC who cut the ribbon for us and presented the trainees with their aprons to officially acknowledge their invaluable contribution to the café. Not only did we use this opportunity to put a true community stamp on the café and acknowledge the hard work and dedication of all involved – including our school based trainees – but we had a record sales month, reinforcing how well the local area had gotten behind the initiative. Community feedback continued to be very positive and the popularity of the rotating artwork on display was also noted. Also this month, a new stats recording system was introduced to measure a number of social objectives and help contribute to our organisational goals.

As we move through into our second year of running Community Grounds it will be hard to top our first 12 months given how much has been achieved. But given the success so far and the enthusiasm of our staff, trainees and, most importantly, the community support and engagement, it looks set to continue to deliver fantastic social enterprise outcomes into the future.



Liam Taylor
Program Support

BE CONNECTED

Be Connected has continued to deliver an excellent standard of individualised computer mentor support this year. Our volunteer, Amanda's, commitment to this program is the key driver of it's success. In addition to having the patience and communication skills to deliver tailored mentoring, she ran several activities and events for us this year aimed at promoting computer literacy to the ageing population.

TAX HELP

Our Tax Help volunteer Leanne once again did a great job helping those in need complete their tax return. For many people completing their tax return without support is not achievable so we are grateful when she joins us for several months each year to conduct this program.

CRAFTS AND LAUGHS

Crafts and Laughs had another successful year and the group was very active at seeing what ways they could put their crafts to good use. This included knitting and donating many goods such as beanies and trauma teddies to hospitals and ambulance services. This group, overseen by our dedicated volunteer Jenny H, is an important social outlet to those who attend and we look forward to supporting the growth of the group in the future.



YOUTH ACTIVITIES

This year we again looked at what exists in the region for youth and how we might get involved where there was a need. This year that included partnering to deliver a disengaged youth project that included creating some artwork on our playground fence, and developing a community garden. We also worked closely with the High School, and through Community Grounds, to deliver the training and employment outcomes intended through the Dress For Success program. We also became increasingly active in the collaborative school holiday programs that are now put in place in our region and will continue to be part of these in the future.

PARTNERED ACTIVITIES

Where another local group or organisation can benefit from our support in order to deliver a service or activity to the community, we are proud to work together to do so. Some examples of this are:

- Braking the Cycle, delivered by PCYC and ICYS out of the Youth Centre (lease from LVRC),
- administrative support of the Laidley Women's Group,
- meeting space and event support to Spirit of the Valley Events,
- grant auspicing for the Together4Lockyer group to deliver a Child Protection event
- and many others...

Staff/Volunteers Annual Report

2018/2019 saw a number of staff changes. We said goodbye to:

- Tracye Backholer (Community Connect Worker)
- Dave Dawson (Gardener/handyman volunteer)
- Petrona, Sarah, Rosemary, Ashlie, Donna, Jessie, Louise, Carolyn and Samantha (Reception volunteers)

We welcomed:

- Dan Adams (Café Supervisor)
- Bec Edwards (Café Supervisor)
- Kylie Cork, Renee Hawes, Shanti Wolf, Jade Smith and Anastasia Nancarrow-Stewart (Café Trainees)
- Fiona Prentis (Early Connections Worker)
- Janella Cox (Early Connections Worker)

We also welcomed a number of new volunteers:

- Prem, Margaret, Clare and Janella (Reception volunteers)
- Jenny (Reception, Café & Be Connected)
- Jenny H (Crafts and Laughs)
- Kelly B (Playgroup)



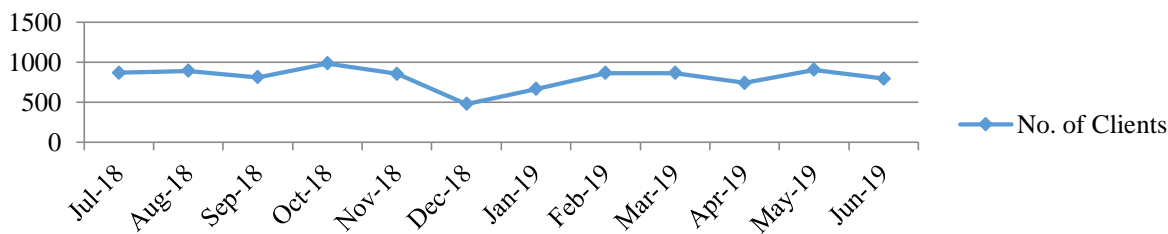
Thank you to all of the people mentioned above and to the rest of the team: Sam, Lynda, Liam, Aynur, Amanda, Denise, Helen, Nevela, Dianne, Leanne and Alana.

Staff and the Board of Management were able to enjoy two days at Branell homestead for planning and training this year which included WH&S as well as future planning for LCC. Some other training opportunities for staff included:

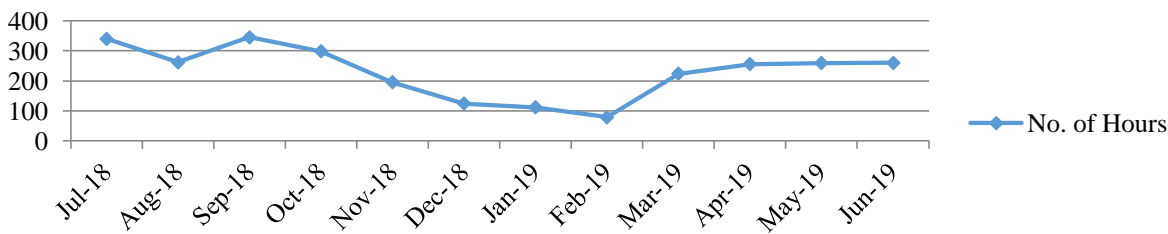
- Fire training
- Centrelink agent training
- Food safety
- and in-house procedural training

In total, this year has seen LCC Inc. able to support over 2759 volunteer hours that, if paid, (using the current ABS figure for volunteer hour value of \$41.72) would represent a calculated value to the organisation of over \$115,105. This doesn't include the many hours of voluntary support offered by members of the board and paid staff. This voluntary support has allowed us to open our doors each day and support us to deliver over 9697 client interactions (up from 9224 in the previous year and with café statistics not included at this time).

Total No. of Client Interactions



No. of Volunteer Hours



Sam Byenhof
Staff Coordinator

Photo Gallery

30th CELEBRATIONS



SOCIAL ENTERPRISE CAFÉ



YOUTH ACTIVITIES



EARLY CONNECTIONS PROJECT



OTHER EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES



LCC TEAM ACTIVITIES

