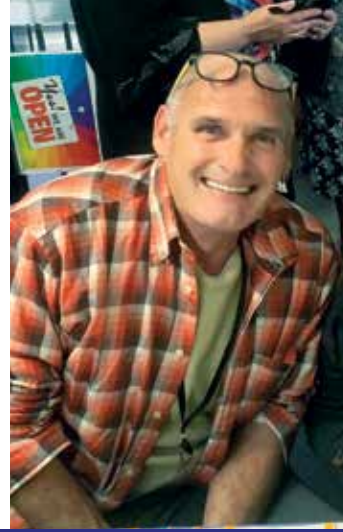


SOUTHERN PENINSULA COMMUNITY SUPPORT

HELP WHERE IT'S NEEDED



Winter 2024 Newsletter

Our Volunteers are the backbone of SPCS

It's a crisis, thanks to you we are providing help where it's needed.

Last year was big. Over \$820,000 of aid given out (up 47% on 2022) plus thousands of hours of support from case workers and volunteers. More than 1,563 people and their families received emergency relief and crisis support!

We were able to increase our support because the community got behind us. A record \$669,327 raised, an increase of over 50% on the previous year. Donated food and goods were \$334,921, up from \$255,787 on the previous year.

While the numbers are impressive, it's what we do for people that counts, and it is unique.

We have a dual focus - firstly, the immediate need for crisis support, 'what can we do for you right now to help you get through today and tomorrow'. A lot of effort goes into providing the best quality food and equity of access.

Secondly, an equally important focus on 'what is going on in your life and how can we help you change things going forward'. This isn't easy. People are often upset, anxious, embarrassed or not capable of easily telling their

story. Our volunteer interviewers and case workers work with great empathy, skill and experience working at the individual's pace to build trust and find solutions to some very complex problems.

We provide help where it's needed, in a safe, non-judgemental and supportive environment.

"I just wanted to say that my experience was very positive. Staff were very welcoming and warm towards me, extremely understanding, kind, helpful and willing to assist. I felt heard, valued as a struggling human, and not judged. I left the appointment feeling much lighter and more able to cope with my own situation. I feel very fortunate to have had interactions with the staff and volunteers at SPCS."

We know we can't do everything. We try to find the biggest gaps in the system and make a difference. We work closely with other organisations and with our community – made up of volunteers, staff and supporters – to make that difference for every person who comes to Southern Peninsula Community Support.

Introducing our new look

These four words – help where it's needed - underpin what Southern Peninsula Community Support is all about. Providing help, for those doing it tough or living rough on the Southern Peninsula.

With a contemporary style, our new look lets people reflect on the area we cover, reinforcing that local connection to our community and what we do.

Our sincere thanks to past SPCS Directors Elinor and Martin for spearheading and facilitating this important body of work to get to our new look.

We are especially grateful to the three separate creative resources who generously donated their time and expertise:

- Aron Clarke – Graphic Designer – early creative expressions/ directions of 3 possible positioning territories
- Susie Immurs – Consultant Creative Director – Words for our positioning statement and overall creative direction
- Deirdre Wilson – Designer and CEO – Hot House Design – Logo visuals

We have started the roll out of the logo in our different collateral, signage and online. It will be gradual rather than one big smash hit and the most cost-effective way to do it. While the look might be different, our care and commitment to helping others hasn't changed.

IT'S GOING TO BE A TOUGH YEAR AHEAD

It's tough. The cost of living hits us all, but the most vulnerable are being impacted even more. Their incomes, whether it be government benefits or low-income jobs, mean they have no room to move.


Typically, January is a quieter month. This year, January was our busiest ever for most of our programs. When comparing January 2024 to January 2023, we saw a 37% increase in people coming to the main centre and an 83% increase in the number of people attending SPLaSh. **When a January starts like that, we know it's going to be a tough year. The January – March quarter saw a massive increase in aid given, particularly in aid we needed to pay for! Your support is needed now more than ever.**

We were able to do this because of the support we receive from caring individuals, businesses, organisations and community groups, and this time a little extra from government. However, we know things will get worse during this year. We know we need to have ample food, material aid, and additional hours to provide the support people will need between now and end of June, if not end of the year. Without your support, we will need to make a tough decision and cut back the amount of aid we provide per person or family.

It is a team effort.

Volunteers have always been and continue to be the backbone of Southern Peninsula Community Support. Their dedication, selflessness and tireless efforts have helped provide essential support to hundreds of people. Amongst that wonderful group we have managed to recruit some volunteers with specialist skills. Peter, Barbara and Leonie give us the capacity to extend our programs into more complex areas. I urge you to read their stories across pages 3, 4 and 5.

Along with our volunteers, I am grateful to the staff who also go that extra mile to help a person in need. Without judgment, this team goes about their work unassumingly, effectively applying their skills and experience to provide the very best support and outcomes they can. I believe this is what separates us from any other organisations in the Emergency Relief sector here on the Southern Peninsula. **Together, we can help those doing it tough or living rough. Thank you for being part of our community – a community dedicated to helping those in need.**



Jeremy Maxwell, CEO



Year to Date Aid provided – Main Centre

Main centre	Jul - Mar 2023	Jul - Mar 2024	Diff (no)	Diff (%)
Unique Clients	1043	1119	76	7%
Visits	2952	3767	815	28%
Vists per client	2.83	3.37	0.54	19%
Value of all aid provided (\$)	\$298,341	\$427,530	\$129,189	43%
Average value of aid per client (\$)	\$286	\$382	\$96	34%
All aid paid for \$	\$125,942	\$185,709	\$59,767	47%
Food Aid provided value (\$)	\$121,884	\$207,674	\$ 85,790	70%
Food Vouchers paid for \$	\$30,305	\$52,809	\$ 22,504	74%

Let us show YOU the difference you make

Every Tuesday, from 9.30am for one hour, join us for a tour of Southern Peninsula Community Support with CEO Jeremy Maxwell, and see the difference you make. You'll meet staff and volunteers, learn more about our programs and services, and why we're different to other food and material aid organisations.

If you're unable to come to us, we can come to your next service club, business or community organisation meeting to show you, your members and guests the impact you make for those who attend our main centre or programs.

Please call 03 5986 1285 or email admin@spsic.org and let us know how we can show you the difference you make. We look forward to catching up with you.

FROM MELBOURNE TO THE WORLD, TO SOUTHERN PENINSULA, TO HELP THOSE WITH LITTLE

If you have come to the main centre it's likely you've met one of our most tireless and committed volunteers – Peter. His drive to volunteer for an organization that was providing a “helping hand for those with little” begun when Peter was a young man with, literally, the world at his feet.

This is Peter's story of how he came to volunteer at Southern Peninsula Community Support.

“Growing up in a large family, life was tough and although we didn't have much, we worked together to get through. When I was young, I wanted to see this big, interesting world we live in. An eye opener that led me to meet some of the most amazing people - philosophers, poets, dreamers, hustlers, the homeless, outcasts, refugees and migrants seeking a better life in Europe.

*For more than 40 years, I had been a chef both in Australia and overseas. In 2018, I came to the Southern Peninsula for what was my last cooking job. **I knew it was time to make a career change and pursue something I had always been keen to do – help people who are in need and in crisis.***

I had done some previous volunteer work at a Community House in inner Melbourne for several years, operating a community kitchen and garden. It was most rewarding and enlightening to know I could help after understanding that there are so many individuals, couples and families who are in need of support and services. They may be experiencing economic hardship, social exclusion, trauma or mental illness, addiction issues that impact not only themselves, but family, friends, co-workers, their community.

This had given me a taste to move into health and community support. So, I enrolled at TAFE where I studied 'Alcohol and Other Drugs' (AOD), to learn skills to help people with addictions. I wanted to continue volunteering for a local organisation. I came across SPCS and spoke at length with Miranda about my plan and career change.

With my experience, I began volunteering at SPLaSh. I was truly excited to be a SPLaSh volunteer but also a little hesitant, not understanding what I was really getting myself into - would the clients trust me, was I a fit for the role.

I needn't have worried as I received great encouragement and support from experienced, insightful, inspiring and passionate mentors and other volunteers. I realised it's important to just be yourself.

Almost 2.5 years later and I'm still at SPCS, volunteering 4 days a week - 2 days with SPLaSh and 2 days at the main centre interviewing clients for emergency relief, advocacy and referral. I've also been entrusted with the role of

SPLaSh coordinator, when required, which has given me confidence and belief that what I'm doing is valued and respected.

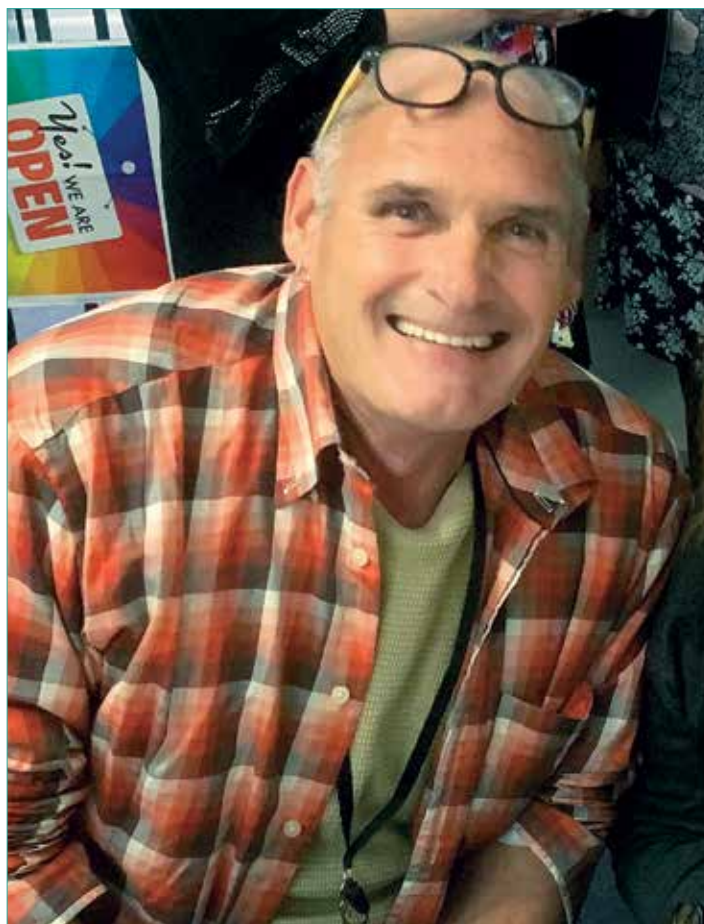
It's important to actively listen with empathy and passion, to be nonjudgmental, and to realise that everyone has a story and the right to be heard and respected. This helps us build trust and rapport.

When someone says thank you or that they greatly appreciate what you or the team have done for them, no matter how small, that's all I need - to know we have done an amazing thing for a fellow human being and a seed of change has been planted. I do feel good about that.

To see someone smile, pick themselves up, stand tall when all seemed dark, uncertain or overwhelming is extremely satisfying.

The team at SPCS go way beyond, because they are genuine, empathetic, caring, supportive and passionate. I feel very lucky to be part of the SPCS team and have learnt so much and developed skills I would not have had the chance to gain elsewhere.”

We are so grateful to Peter and every one of our volunteers. You are the backbone of Southern Peninsula Community Support and the reason we can continue to help those in need. Thank you for all that you do.



DEDICATING THEIR TIME, SKILLS AND LIFE EXPERIENCES – RECOGNISING OUR VOLUNTEERS

While some have lived all their lives and others only a short time on the Southern Peninsula, every one of our volunteers brings their own set of skills, lived experiences and compassion so as to make a real change in people's lives. Meet two of our very amazing and wonderful volunteers.

Providing a financial lifeline through No Income Loan Scheme (NILS)

For more than 45 years Barbara worked in the financial sector, gaining skills that now see her help some of the most vulnerable people who come to Southern Peninsula Community Support.

"Although I lived in the local area, I was not aware of SPCS until I was retrenched during Covid and was looking for some volunteer work to keep me active. A search on the Mornington Peninsula Shire website uncovered a need for volunteers at SPCS. I had often driven past the building and imagined it was more of an information centre, rather than providing the vital support it does.

*I also had no idea there was a program that could assist low-income recipients to get a loan and repay it without any interest or charges. Little did I realise that the skills I built over a lifetime were needed here, especially with the NILS program. **Not only does NILS offer people a financial lifeline, it gives them a sense of achievement once they have repaid the loan.** Many of our clients return with more confidence in purchasing new items. Without NILS they would need to buy second-hand or use 'buy now pay later' schemes that cost far more than the product is worth, with any missed payments incurring hefty fees and compounding their financial stress.*



Barbara

"I was with a single mother who needed about \$1,000 for car repairs. As I was helping prepare her budget, I noticed she was not receiving any rental assistance from Centrelink. She was unaware it had ceased. I also questioned why she was paying a 'rent to buy' company \$78 per week when her contract was for fortnightly payments. A visit to Centrelink by the client and a phone call to the company and she no longer needed the loan as she was back-paid 9 months' rent assistance and had 9 months of 'rent to buy' payments put on hold.

The NILS program not only offers financial assistance to our clients, it also gives them a feeling of self-worth and confidence knowing someone trusts them and believes they will honour their commitment to repay the loan."

Helping people find safe, secure and affordable housing

Volunteering in our Homeless Connections program, Leonie has a long history working in housing and homeless programs. Over time she has noticed the number of people in need of housing has increased.

"I was aware of the number of public rooming houses in Rosebud and Frankston, but I was not aware of the number of people forced to live rough - in their cars or on the foreshore. This surprised me as did the lack of community, crisis and transitional housing available on the Peninsula."

Having previously worked for other welfare organisations, Leonie became a volunteer for SPCS in September 2023, volunteering one day a week, using her knowledge and skills of the housing system. **"I wanted to continue to support people to find safe, secure, affordable housing."**



Leonie

"I assist the Homeless Connections program by completing government housing applications, which can be very time consuming. This can include liaising with numerous stakeholders including DFFH Housing, mental health supports, agencies and clinicians, other housing agencies and family members.

On some occasions, I will attend outreach visits with Kara, SPCS Homeless Connections Coordinator, for safety reasons or delivery of material aid."

Leonie notes that people feel relieved when they speak to someone who understands their situation and how complex it is to complete a housing application. She meets with clients to discuss, collect documentation and help them complete a housing application. Leonie also provides housing advice.

"I assisted Kara to place a young, vulnerable woman, a victim of family violence, who was sleeping rough, into crisis housing where she was linked in with mental health support. If SPCS did not exist, the least fortunate, homeless and low-income population would increase, leaving them with no hope for the future.

At SPCS they can speak and be heard. Sometimes just a friendly person to listen can make all the difference to their life.

A housing application can be completed with further information explaining other housing options. They can put a plan in place which will give them hope for the future. They can have access to food, shelter via a tent or crisis housing if available, until further housing option can be achieved.

If I can assist one person or family to achieve a positive housing outcome, I feel I have done a good job."

You may be surprised at the breadth of skills needed to run an organisation like ours. Volunteers are instrumental to the success of every single program. If you have never thought of volunteering, you may have the very skills we need. Visit spsic.org/volunteering to find out more.

A BRAND NEW BT-50 MAZDA UTE!

Fabulous news! We have a brand new BT-50 Ute and it has quite a back story.

A year ago, the Lions Clubs of the Peninsula, led by Flinders District Lions and supported by the Australian Lions Foundation (ALF), raised the funds and bought SPCS a specially built Shower Van for our SPLaSh program. Michael Tidball and Tony Groves from Mornington Mazda came on board and lent us a BT-50 to tow it, covering the registration and insurance. We ended up having it for a whole year.

Meanwhile, Mark Holland from Flinders District Lions decided we needed a long-term solution to the Ute so working with his fellow members, ALF, other donors and Lions Clubs they raised the funds to buy one. Michael and Tony from Mornington Mazda made that even better by sourcing a new Ute, adding accessories and creating a great deal worth over \$60,000 for \$53,000.

This is a wonderful example of our community working together, combined they produced a set up that underpins our work with rough sleepers for years to come. Thank you to everyone who made it possible.



THANK YOU FOR BEING PART OF OUR COMMUNITY

Every day, our wonderful community of supporters demonstrate how much they care for those who are struggling on the Southern Peninsula with bags of food, toiletries and other essential items, financial donations, monthly gifts, philanthropic gifts and grants or volunteering. We wish we could list you all. **We're so very grateful for you.**

How amazing are these kids?

Studying a unit in economics, Grade 6 students from Boneo Primary School paired up and created products to sell at a 'market', making a bundle in the process! Their aim was to donate the funds to a local charity. After research, consideration and a blind vote, we were selected. Have a look at that cheque. It's a work of art. Thank you Grade 6 Boneo PS. You are wonderful.



A stack of festive goodies

These cute Christmas elves, also known as Beau, Autumn, Jude, Jasper, Sage and Woody, dropped off a lovely donation of goodies for people who are doing it tough at Christmastime. You put a lot of smiles on a lot of faces. Thank you!



Delicious meals by a terrific group

Their generosity is boundless. Sikh Volunteers Australia (SVA) partnered with us over the summer holidays, running a food van service from the Rosebud Memorial Hall parking lot to ensure those struggling could have a free delicious warm meal.

Compassion and care at its best

Residents and staff of Peninsula Grange and Racecourse Grange Aged Care got together and raised a very generous amount to help support our community over the festive period. Their support helped greatly as we were coping with extremely high demand.



Understanding the need

Huge thank you to the guests and members of the Portsea Golf Club's Women's Committee who raised funds in support of our work at their Guest Day event. We are grateful to Glenda and the PGC Women's Committee for organising this event, their efforts to raise awareness and their understanding of the level of crisis and need in our community.

Decorating a tree for a good cause

In the lead up to Christmas, customers and staff of the Rye, Rosebud and Dromana branches of Community Bank Southern Peninsula along with guests and members at Rosebud Country Club donated in droves in support of our work. As thanks, each person was given a bauble to hang on one of the bank's Christmas trees.

Strength in Partnerships

Melbourne Basket Brigade in partnership with Payton Foundation set their sights on raising funds to expand the number of food hampers to be distributed by us. Each hamper included essential pantry items such as vegetables and even some Christmas treats. In fact, it was a treat to be able to distribute these hampers to those in need, giving some much needed Christmas cheer. **Thank you partners!**



YOU CAN DO MORE FOR THE MOST VULNERABLE IN OUR COMMUNITY.

BECOME A MONTHLY DONOR TODAY.

For as little as \$9 a month (that's just 30 cents a day) you can make a real difference for those who are doing it tough or living rough. Whatever amount you choose to donate, your monthly donations can help provide:

- Fresh food or a pantry basics pack so vulnerable people can eat nutritious food
- Material aid such as personal hygiene kits, linen, tents, pet food, baby bundles
- Complex case management that provides intensive support to stabilise people's circumstances.
- Our SPLaSh program with the financial resources to run all year
- Our Homeless Connections program with brokerage to cover start-over costs when housing people who are homeless.

Rachel has seen the growing crisis the cost of living has been creating for many on the Southern Peninsula. She sees individuals, couples and families struggling and at risk of homelessness.

Having lived on the Southern Peninsula most of her life, she knew she wanted to help. She became a Monthly Donor. *"Rents have increased, housing affordability is next to zero. I was seeing people lose everything. That's why I wanted to support an organisation that was on the ground, understands the needs of the community and is providing practical support for those who are hurting. It's why I became a Monthly Donor. I feel that I can help someone who's lost or is close to losing everything they once had."*

Join Rachel and change the life of a person or family who's doing it tough in our community.

Become a Monthly Donor today.

MAIL YOUR COMPLETED DONATION FORM TO:
Southern Peninsula Community Support, PO Box 91
ROSEBUD VIC 3939

EMAIL OR CALL:

admin@spscic.org or call us on 03 5986 1285

VISIT:

southern-peninsula-community-support.raisely.com
and select **Monthly** to begin your monthly giving now

Yes, I'm here to help those in my community who are struggling and doing it tough! I want them to know I care.

Name _____

Address _____
Title First Name Surname

Suburb _____

State _____ Postcode _____

Mobile _____

Email _____

Please accept my tax-deductible donation of:

\$15 \$31 \$46 \$77 My choice _____

I would like to donate \$ _____ monthly.

I authorise Southern Peninsula Community Support to make automatic monthly deductions from my credit card (details as below) until further notice.

Payment details

My cheque / money order is enclosed (payable to Southern Peninsula Community Support)

OR please debit my: VISA MasterCard AMEX

Card number _____

Name on card _____

Expiry date _____ / _____

Donations \$2 and over are tax deductible.



You can post your donation to:

PO Box 91, Rosebud 3939

Donate online at:

southern-peninsula-community-support.raisely.com/

I would like to find out more about:

Leaving a gift in my Will to the Southern Peninsula Community Support **OR**

I have already included the Southern Peninsula Community Support in my Will



HELP WHERE IT'S NEEDED

Southern Peninsula Community Support
878 Point Nepean Road Rosebud VIC 3939
P: 03 5986 1285 | E: admin@spscic.org

Southern Peninsula Community Support is committed to protecting your privacy. We collect your personal information so that we can contact you regarding your donations to us and the programs that you may be interested in. To review our Privacy Policy please visit www.spscic.org. If you prefer not to receive mail from us, please let us know by writing on this coupon and returning it in the reply-paid envelope provided.

SEE WHAT MAKES US DIFFERENT

Southern Peninsula Community Support assists vulnerable individuals and families who are experiencing disadvantage on the Southern Peninsula. Whether it's a need for food or material aid, dealing with homelessness or housing distress, low-income support, or family support, we gently and patiently build trust with those who contact us – to better understand their situation, the difficulties and challenges they are facing.

Typically, food or material aid is just the tip. By gently talking with them we can identify the deeper problems that are causing them distress and work with them to address their situation.



To see why and how we're different from other organisations check out our Emergency Relief and SPLaSh videos on our YouTube channel. Simply scan the QR code with your smartphone and press on the button that pops up! Or visit www.youtube.com/@spsc878



CHECK OUT THAT CHEQUE!

Huge thanks to **Rotary Club of Sorrento** for their amazing support of our SPLaSh program. Miranda, our Program Coordinator, and Graeme, our Treasurer, (pictured with the Club's president Peter Fahl on the left) were honoured to meet this great group and speak about the important work SPCS does in the community.

The \$18,000 was raised through the Club's Point Nepean Heritage Motor Show, which will be held again this year on the Sunday before Melbourne Cup. So save the date!!

We are extremely grateful for the ongoing support of Rotary Club of Sorrento for the vital work SPLaSh does supporting those who are rough sleeping in our community.



JOIN OUR PANTRY CALL OUT EMAIL LIST

Usually, we ask for food and material aid on our Facebook page. This doesn't work for everyone. So one of our amazing supporters, Kim, made a suggestion. Having lived on the Southern Peninsula most of her life, Kim knew of our work, however, as she was not on social media, Kim was unable to see what we may need. She wanted to make a difference and asked if we could email her to let her know what items our clients need.

We thought this was such a terrific idea that we have created our 'Pantry Call Out' email. And we're inviting you to join our growing list. Each email we send contains a list of essential items needed – ranging from food, toiletries and other items.

To join our list, simply let us know by emailing ceo@spscic.org.

