

SOUTHERN PENINSULA COMMUNITY SUPPORT

HELP WHERE IT'S NEEDED



AUTUMN 2025

Our Volunteers are the backbone of SPCS

Demand isn't easing – it's increasing every single day

The cost-of-living crisis continues to hurt many people on the Southern Peninsula. For many, just trying to feed themselves and their families is a constant challenge. Often, they manage their scarce incomes by skipping meals or juggling which utility bill to pay this week. Every day they try to stretch every single dollar so as not to fall behind with rent or mortgage.

As supporters we know you care that many in our community are doing it tough.

It is vital and we feel privileged that you back that care up with genuine support. We have seen wonderful increases of goods being donated, cash donations, volunteering and greater advocacy all leading to the delivery of more aid than we have ever done. When we're seeing people presenting with more complex and challenging situations and they find themselves on the brink of despair, homelessness and hopelessness, this care and support makes a real difference to everyone.

The first 8 months of the financial year have been so very busy. The Christmas period was hectic, and we have started the year with record numbers around aid provided, up 23% in our main centre with food vouchers increasing a massive 65% for the period. Our rough sleeper program, Homeless Connections, is being smashed and as we go to print, we have 70 on our books, which is unmanageable. We expect this trend to continue without any easing up.

And the only way we're going to be able to meet the increase for help is through the dedicated efforts of our staff, volunteers, and our amazing community of supporters working closely together.

Collectively, you are the backbone of Southern Peninsula Community Support. Without you, we would not be able to meet increasing demand or provide help where and when it's needed.

"I want to thank the volunteers for making me feel so welcome and ensuring I had a personal experience, rather than feeling like a number or ashamed of my situation.

I left feeling supported, heard and encouraged to reach out for any assistance if I needed. I was blown away by the amazing service and all the support that was offered.

I'm now in a better position because of the services available that helped me when times were tough. Also I know where to go if I ever need assistance in the future.

Keep up the amazing work team! You never know when you make just the slightest difference in someone's life by just being kind and being yourself.

Thanks again 😊 "

HOPE! WE NEED IT IN BUCKET LOADS

This time last year I talked about how tough we thought the year was going to be. Sadly, it's even more challenging this year than I thought it would be. It's confronting for all of our staff and volunteers, and I believe for everyone who supports and cares about the people we support.

I have been reflecting on how I provide the right answers and the right direction in the face of these challenges. I admit it is a struggle. As demand grows, the need for the right resources grows with it. It's a constant struggle to find or pay for enough aid and then to have enough staff to do our most complex work in the right way.

The economy means all levels of government have tightened what they are prepared to give. This means we need to look more and more to our community for help, that's people like you. Thankfully, we are fortunate your belief as locals that supporting other locals is important gives us all hope of finding our way forward.

Hope tells us that 'this is not how things will be but that things will be better, hope says you must shine brightly

and fiercely'. You all allow that to happen. Thank you.

In the table below you can get a feel for the increased aid needed and provided in the past 8 months in our main centre. You can see a big rise in total aid given (\$88,602) with about half that increase coming from things we paid for (\$39,284).

As our work continues, I hope you can add to what you have already done to support those doing it tough or living rough in our community.



Jeremy Maxwell, CEO



Main centre	Jul - Feb 2024	Jul - Feb 2025	Diff (no)	Diff (%)
Unique Clients for the period	1057	1158	101	10%
Visits for the period	3325	3898	573	17%
Visits per client for the period	3.15	3.37	0.22	7%
Main Centre all aid provided (\$) for the period	\$ 383,647	\$ 472,249	\$ 88,602	23%
Av. value of aid per client (\$) for the period	\$ 363	\$ 408	\$ 45	12%
Av. value of aid per client (\$) per month	\$ 45	\$ 51	\$ 6	12%
All aid paid for (\$)	\$ 166,117	\$ 205,401	\$ 39,284	24%
Food paid for (\$)	\$ 55,595	\$ 55,164	-\$ 431	-1%
Food Vouchers paid for (\$)	\$ 43,770	\$ 72,407	\$ 28,637	65%

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 to see the difference you and our amazing community of supporters make.

You'll meet passionate staff and volunteers, the people behind our programs, hearing first-hand of the impact they make because of your support. You'll hear about our programs and services, and why we're different to other emergency relief, food and material aid organisations, as you see our programs in action.

And if you're unable to come to us, we can come to your next service club, business or community group 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 ceo@spsic.org and let us show you the difference you make.



GENEROUS OF THEIR TIME, SELFLESS TO THE CORE. THANK YOU, PAT AND BERNIE.

For nearly seven years, Pat and Bernie have selflessly volunteered for Southern Peninsula Community Support. Quietly, they have helped make a real difference for the staff, other volunteers and especially the people who come to the main centre. Bernie who has undertaken and overseen any and every maintenance project in our main centre. And Pat, who started as a Board Member, and in recent years has been our main packer of SPLaSh bags, Easy Food Packs and Brekkie Bowls for those living rough along the foreshore. This is their story.

Pat and Bernie have lived on the Southern Peninsula since 1981. Over the decades they couldn't help but notice their community was split in two. *"The Peninsula has always been, in my opinion, a bit of an anomaly, in that it has always been split between those who have and those who haven't. Volunteering at SPCS has shown me the 'have-nots' are increasing in numbers at an alarming rate"*, said Pat.

Both Pat and Bernie saw that the cost-of-living crisis was having a huge impact on many in their community, making it harder for people to manage on a daily basis. They decided they could make a difference in their own way, by volunteering for Southern Peninsula Community Support (SPCS).

"I knew about SPCS from my time volunteering at the Rye Community Centre, and my time with the old Shire of Flinders, so it has always been on my radar as a possible area for volunteering as I got older. When I first started, I was in a 'floating' capacity. I was a Board member and while on the Board, I took on the role of Treasurer. The Pantry needed help, so I have been there ever since, preparing SPLaSh bags, Easy Food Pack kits and Breakfast Bowls" shared Pat.

Bernie followed a couple of months later, taking on the responsibilities of maintenance around the main centre. *"I asked if SPCS could use a handyman. Miranda soon contacted me. My first job was to tidy up the car park and garden, which involved hiring a skip and several trips to the tip. I also helped with the distribution of fresh food, tables, bollards, and unloading fresh food pallets. Also recycling, squashing MANY cardboard boxes, and putting the bins out for collection."*

After nearly 7 years, including both of them receiving a Certificate acknowledging their generosity as Volunteers at the end of 2024, Pat and Bernie decided that Bernie's 80th birthday was a good time to retire to focus on other areas of interest.

For Pat, *"The personal highlight was receiving the Certificate at the 2024 Christmas party. I feel from my time at SPCS I have learnt how fortunate I am... being able to*

contribute to the community, being in a financially stable position, and being healthy enough to do so, when so many people my age aren't."

While for Bernie, a cream cake was the icing on the cake (excuse the pun!) of his time as a volunteer.

"I enjoy the company and the friendships of the people who I work with, and the cream cake from Karen! Getting together with a group of friends who willingly give their time and expertise, the satisfaction of seeing a job completed and the building looking better for it."

While their volunteer experience has been different, both agree that it has been an honour to volunteer for SPCS. *"This organisation stands out from the others because it is the last safety net for those who are at the bottom of the pile. I think our Easy Food Packs say it all, that no-one should go away with nothing. It is open to all. Nobody gets turned away. It has been a pleasure and a great learning experience working with such dedicated volunteers and professional crisis support staff."*

Pat and Bernie, we thank you. You have been truly amazing and wonderful volunteers, selflessly giving of your time, your expertise and compassion for those who come to SPCS. We wish you the very best for the next exciting chapter of your lives. Thank you.



WHY FRESH FOOD IS THE START.

For those who are struggling, who are homeless or sleeping rough along the foreshore, food is often something they are unable to afford. Many make a choice – ‘feed my family and skip meals myself, eat cheap rubbish or simply go without.’

The Southern Peninsula Fresh Food Program has a focus on access and equity, our aim is for clients to get the best possible access to the same quality and amounts.

We have a dedicated team of volunteers who sort the bulk donations from food recovery agencies, removing poor quality stock and then placing the remaining produce into bags of equal size and quality. Quality is important as this is where the best nutrition comes from. Food recovery is never enough, so we supplement with other top quality fresh food donations, locals from their own gardens, the Food for Change farm at The Briars, the Community Corrections Gardens, The Village Glen gardens.

Our Fresh Food program is split into two streams:

Stream 1 – held every Monday, 11.30am at our main centre, this is a walk-up program where people do not need to register or identify themselves. Fresh food is sorted and prepacked into bags often with some additional odds and ends. This is a collaboration between SPCS and SecondBite, food is recovered from Coles supermarkets or other large commercial operators, this delivery is usually used up in this program.

Stream 2 – Fresh Food in the Centre, sorted and packed like Stream 1, it’s provided alongside a wider range of options, such as our Pantry Bags with non-perishable staples from SP Food for All and specially prepared frozen meals from RACV Cape Schanck. It is available Monday to Friday, using food recovered by Oz Harvest from Woolworths, food we purchase (most weeks) and supplemented with fresh food donations from the public, local growers or charity food grower Food for Change. To access Stream 2 people need to go through a simple registration and an interview in our main centre.

For many who come to our main centre for food, there are underlying complex and challenging issues. These can include family violence, financial crisis, or housing insecurity. They’re people who try to make every dollar stretch as far as possible and often find themselves falling behind. Many are at risk of homelessness – just a default on their rent or mortgage away. Much of our work is about keeping a roof over people’s heads. For others, they are already affected by homelessness, often living rough along the foreshore or in their cars.

You have heard from us on our philosophy of a dual focus - if you need food then there is a lot more you need help with. Fresh Food is a great entry point for many to our services. Providing the best we can with food helps to build trust and with trust we can work our way to talking with them about their issues, concerns or problems.

Without our food recovery agency partners, such as Oz Harvest, Second Bite and Food for Change, who provide fresh food; organisations, like RACV Cape Schanck, who provide frozen meals; along with our amazing Pantry Legends, who answer our call outs and drop off pantry staples, we would not be able to provide food parcels.

Over recent months Mario, like many of you, has been answering our call for top ups to our pantry. Recently, Mario reached out to his networks to raise awareness and involve others in raising funds to help him buy even more pantry items.

"Food insecurity remains a significant problem on the Southern Mornington Peninsula and in response our food programs have evolved over the past few years from providing a short-term crisis response into an important food safety net, attempting to meet the chronic, ongoing needs of individuals and families struggling to put food on the table." Karen, SPCS Volunteer Support and Emergency Food Relief Coordinator



"This program has made such a difference to struggling families on the Peninsula. I have had the honour of being involved from the planning stage 11 years ago. To see the impact of this service and how it has evolved is amazing. Nothing is wasted and tummies are filled with good food and caring friendship from others partaking in the service. What more could I work or wish for." Judy

"I love working at the fresh food program due to the people who are wonderful to work with and to help the homeless. I have been here since 2017." Steve

"I wanted to volunteer for SPCS to give back to my community and it makes me feel valued and I appreciate that I have a good life and can help others." Sarah

"This is my 10th year volunteering for SPCS. I started volunteering to meet new people in the area and to help the most disadvantaged on the Peninsula, which then turned into something so much more. Friendship, fulfilment and connection." Fay



"Six months ago, I decided I needed to do something to give back to the community and I am loving the people I am working with, all while doing something worthwhile." Germaine



BREAKING: We urgently need your help – shortage of food and pantry items

During March, alarmingly, we had a week with no food recoveries, we were faced with either providing no fresh food or spending a lot of money. Wonderfully, local businesses, organisations and individuals jumped on board after seeing our Facebook post, including McCrae Makers Market and Jointly Harvest, who provided thousands of dollars of fresh vegetables.

Help like this is awesome. Every week we are short, so we really need YOU too. Your financial donation will enable us to purchase fresh food, when our partners do not have enough to deliver to us, cannot deliver, or to top up gaps in supply when there's not enough, so that people do not miss out.

Visit pantry-call-out.raisely.com to donate and to sign up to our Pantry Call Out emails. You can also email ceo@spsic.org or call 03 5986 1285 to discuss options to help.

THANK YOU FOR BEING PART OF OUR COMMUNITY!

Every day, our wonderful community of supporters demonstrate how much they care for those who are doing it tough or living rough on the Southern Peninsula with bags of food, toiletries and other essential items, financial donations, monthly gifts, philanthropic gifts and grants, and volunteering.

They've done it again!

Thank you, **Community Bank Southern Peninsula** for your incredible support. Each year, Bendigo Bank provide \$500 to each staff member to donate to a charity of their choice. We are grateful to Ness, Spencer, Alanna and Vin for choosing us, resulting in a generous \$2000 donation.

Real life heroes igniting hope!

A huge thank you to the amazing team at **Rosebud Fire Station** for their generosity and community spirit, donating money earned from overtime from their own pockets. Together, these legends raised over \$580 to support people on the Southern Peninsula.

Learning to grow!

Boneo Primary School Grade 6 students do a very cool Inquiry Learning project where they conceptualise, design and create a product or service to sell at a market at their school. The money raised then goes to a charity selected by the students. We were honoured to have been that charity. Huge thanks to you all!

The Gift that Gives!

This is Sarah. She had a significant birthday and asked her friends to make a donation towards our work. Sarah arrived with \$2000! Thank you for your generosity and kindness, **Sarah and friends**.

Lost for words in a good way!

Our CEO was lost for words, which doesn't happen often, by the incredible generosity of **Southern Mornington Peninsula Uniting Church Op Shop** who dropped in with a donation of \$10,000!! This was totally unexpected and will help with providing food vouchers through our Emergency Relief program. You are all wonderful!

A wonderful act of care and kindness!

Thank you, **Rosebud RSL Sub-Branch Women's Auxiliary**, for your generosity of donating essential toiletries. Their donation included vital items for families, as well as clothing for those experiencing homelessness. You are all champions of generosity.



Thank you, mystery elves!

This past Christmas we received a most generous donation of \$5,000 directly into our bank account. Sadly, we are unable to identify who they are so we can properly thank them. Thank you so very much.

FROM LITTLE THINGS BIG THINGS GROW

We are constantly amazed and deeply grateful for our wonderful community of supporters who respond to our calls for help. Just like Village Glen Capel Sound, whose amazing residents have been hard at work growing fresh veggies from their 300 garden plots, conducting pantry collections, giving cash donations and running information sessions.

Village Glen's partnership with SPCS began when their resident, Alan Hawkins, who is also involved with one of our pantry partners, Southern Peninsula Food for All, invited our CEO Jeremy Maxwell to speak about the issues facing so many in our community. Residents learnt of our programs, and since then there have been further talks and visits to our main centre.

Their decision to support SPCS emerged from seeing and understanding the impact we are making for people who are struggling on their Southern Peninsula.

First to get growing were John and Joyce who grew, and then donated, a heap of cabbages to SPCS. Their action has inspired other residents to get involved. Growing fresh food is not only ensuring locals are getting healthy and nutritious food to eat and it is also providing a way for them to give back to the community.

Along with the residents, staff have also gotten involved in supporting our work. Led by Donna, the team ran a pantry call out, gathering more than \$1,000 worth of toiletries.

We thank Alan, John, Joyce, Sandra and Marianne, who have been key drivers in encouraging their fellow residents to grow fresh food or to make a financial donation in support of our work. Thank you also to Donna and her team for their generous support of SPCS. Each one of you is making a real difference for those who are struggling to make ends meet.

Thank you for enabling us to provide help where it's needed with fresh food and donations.



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.



SCAN TO DONATE

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 Southern Peninsula Community Support **OR**

I have already included Southern Peninsula Community Support in my Will



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

YOU CAN PROVIDE HELP WHERE IT'S NEEDED IN A WAY THAT SUITS YOU!

Helping others is something we all want to do. Sometimes it's difficult to know how to best to do that, we believe giving back to the community where you live is important, 'locals supporting locals'. Below are a few of the ways you can consider supporting people who are doing it tough or living rough on the Southern Peninsula.

Leave a Gift of a Lifetime

When you choose to leave a Gift in your Will to Southern Peninsula Community Support, you're choosing to help the local community in the future. These gifts help us to meet the increasing demands for help while planning programs and services that will meet people's future needs. It's an extraordinary gift that leaves a lasting legacy for many years to come. Talk to us about the different ways to do that, ring Kera on 5986-1285 or email CEO@spsic.org for more information.

Become a Monthly Giver

Join our monthly givers today to help us provide continuous support. It's a great way for you to make a sustained and significant difference. For example \$12 a month is the cost of an Easy Food Pack; \$37 a month is the cost of a rough sleeper cooking bundle; \$51 a month covers the average cost of aid provided per family each month; \$90 a month is the cost of a rough sleeper camping bundle. Over 60% of our program costs are covered by donations - all donations large or small means we can continue to provide the best possible care.

Make a one-off donation

Whether you give \$20, \$200 or \$2000, every donation we receive, when added together, makes a real difference. Donations help us ensure continuity of our food and material aid supplies by filling gaps in fresh food, pantry items, material aid or paying people's bills. Many of our programs rely on donations to keep operating, programs such as SPLaSh, the Family Support Service and our Homeless Connections outreach are all 100% funded by donations.

"I want to support an organisation that's on the ground, understands the needs of the community and is providing practical support for those who are hurting. I feel I can help someone who's lost, or is close to losing, everything they once had."

Rachel

Please show your support. If you'd like to learn more about the different ways you can support people in need on the Southern Peninsula please call us on 03 5986 1285 or email ceo@spsic.org