300 blankets

KEEPING OUR COMMUNITY WARM

ANNUAL REPORT

2022-23

2023

Acknowledgement of Country

300 Blankets acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Bunurong Boon Wurrung peoples of the Kulin Nation and their connection to the lands and waterways in Victoria, upon which we volunteer. We pay our respects to Elders past and present. 300 Blankets acknowledges the need for social, economic and cultural equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.

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WHO WE ARE

"Together, we keep our community warm"

300 Blankets is a not for profit charity providing the caring warmth of friendship, material and food aid to people experiencing or at risk of homelessness in Victoria.

We provide wide ranging support services across our three core Programs - Outreach, Soul Kitchen & Care Package - where we are able to make a significant positive difference in the lives of the people who are most vulnerable in our community.

We are constantly exploring new ways to expand and enhance our impact not only in our service delivery, but also through sharing our experiences and knowledge of homelessness with schools, businesses, community groups and individuals in our community to provide insight into how we can all make a difference. We understand there is no us and them: we are one community.

MEET THE TEAM

Peter Royce
President

Susan Hendra
Vice President (outgoing)

Warren Tu
Co-Founder

Brad Sargent
Treasurer

Geoffrey Lim
Secretary

Nicca Grant
Mental Health

Tash Roberts
Partnerships

Trudy Booker
Marketing & Comms

Emma O'Connor
Committee
Vice President (incoming)

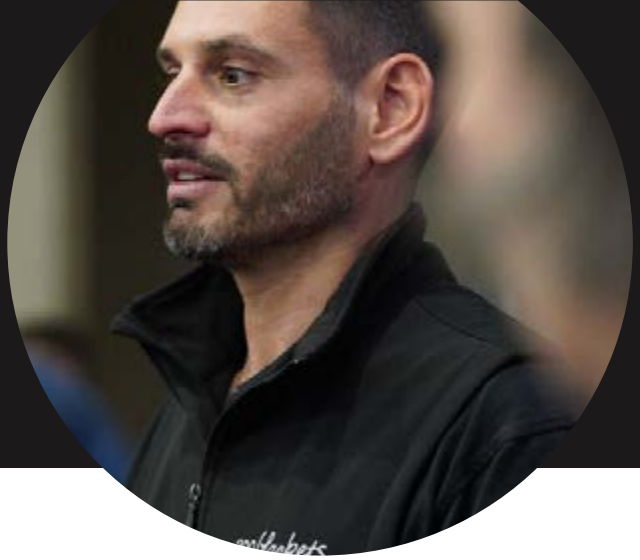
Veronica Lopez
Committee

Anna Mercer
Committee

Loretta Stapleton
Outreach Leader

Liam Holland
Soul Kitchen Lead (outgoing)

A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT



PETER ROYCE, PRESIDENT

It's a quiet Sunday evening in Braybrook, but not so quiet in the bustling Hub at Soul Kitchen. I am waiting tables with other volunteers, distributing soups and main courses, and over my shoulder one of our guests asks for another serving; no problem. When placing the plate on the table the young man - who seems quite anxious - tells me that he is really struggling and only has accommodation for another two nights, after which he has no available alternatives. With no income to speak of, he is short on a range of essentials including clothing and toiletries. On this night we didn't seem to have on offer (from our material aid station) the items he needed so I asked him if he could make a list so that we could gather the items he needed and get them to him. Despite his terrible circumstances he was able to manage a small smile.

This experience, like so many others, highlights to me how incredible and important it is that after more than 10 years, 300 Blankets is still aligned to its founding mission of Keeping Our Community Warm, through human connection, friendship and material support. Despite all the changes in our community, our Programs and even volunteers over that time, I and the 300 Blankets team are still committed to this purpose.

In another whirlwind of a year, I have been proud to have been able to share 300 Blankets' work with my professional colleagues at Gallagher Jeffs, who have been volunteering in our Soul Kitchen and Outreach Programs, with the company even sponsoring the Christmas Dinner. This level of support is amazing and it is not an isolated case, as we continue to have schools and companies actively volunteering, running material aid drives and providing financial donations to the charity, without which none of our Programs could operate.

Leading Outreach Nights always brings great reward with some boisterous conversations with our friends on the street - or just taking their coffee order - or even meeting new volunteers out on their first walk. It's always fantastic when we can share this experience with others including our regular nights with Ivanhoe Grammar students, who have been coming out with us for the past 8 years; since we started the Program in 2015.

I love our Programs, the people we serve, our Volunteers, our supporters and our management team. There's so much to be proud of and sources of inspiration for the year ahead.

Peter Royce

PRESIDENT

FROM THE VP

SUSAN HENDRA, VICE PRESIDENT

My journey with 300 Blankets started in 2016 as a volunteer in the Outreach Program, and I never looked back. The way Peter and Warren engaged with rough sleepers was a revelation. They were warm, engaging, friendly, and to a certain extent, funny.

I stepped into our current President's triathlete's shoes with trepidation, feeling unsure how I was ever going to fill them. I was met with support, kindness, and assurance that I would be able to make the role mine.

The world has changed so much and yet remained the same. Priorities realigned. Housing crisis even more pronounced. Cost of living skyrocketed – all of which are the ingredients of a perfect storm. On the flip side, people are still kind and generous.

300 Blankets prides itself on being steadfast and reliable to those who need them – on the streets, in the dining hall, on the phone and at home. Over the years, we have morphed from providing warmth of blankets and conversation to dishing out food and groceries, whilst maintaining our core values of acknowledging others and treating each other with kindness and respect. Through life, work, and volunteering, I learnt that one of the best gifts we can bestow upon other is to be PRESENT.

Being a mother of two sons, I'm determined to be a walking and talking example. I want them to grow up to be decent human beings who are empathetic, compassionate, kind and understand the difference between equity and equality. They have witnessed their mother being present to our friends on the street, to the guests at Soul Kitchen, to Care Package recipients. I am proud that they have also participated in the programs. As they head towards adulthood, I now need to be present for them – to be that walking and talking example of taking care of me before I take care of others, and for this reason, I have decided to step down from the role of Vice President.

I wanted to be a part of this team and I continue to, because I felt that the organisation's values align with mine. It was, and still is an honourable pleasure to be volunteering alongside people who are dynamic, non-judgmental, passionate about social justice and helping other human beings.

I'm thankful for all the learnings and opportunities I've been granted throughout my tenure and I wish my successor all the best.

2420
SOUL KITCHEN GUESTS

1645
CARE PACKAGES DELIVERED

72
OUTREACH NIGHTS

OUR MISSION

300 Blankets is dedicated to supporting people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. By reaching out to people who are disenfranchised and socially isolated, we strive to break down barriers and enrich a community where all people are accepted and respected through compassion and dignity.

TACKLING SOCIAL ISOLATION

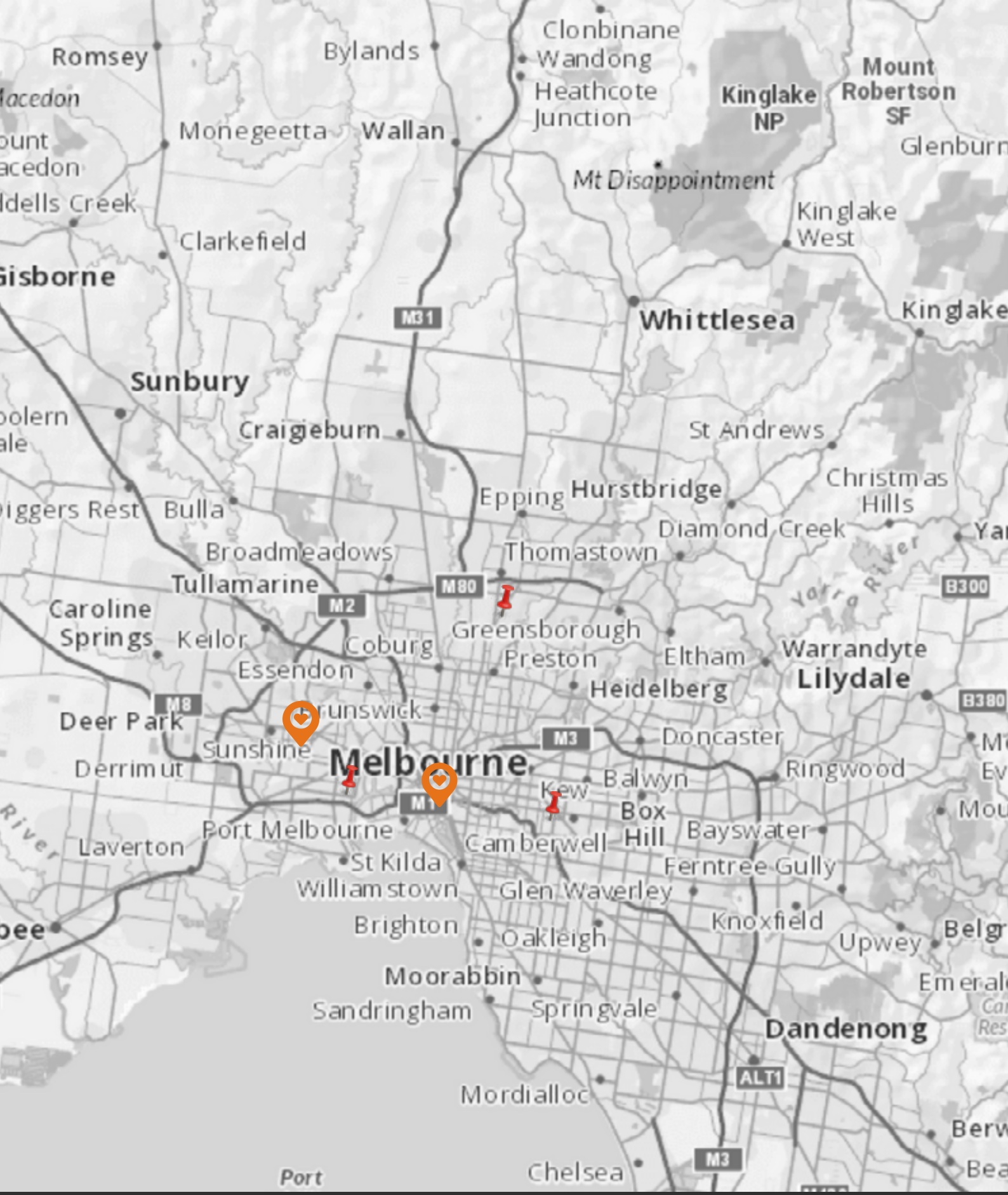
We raise awareness of loneliness as a significant issue in the community and address gaps in services to foster a greater sense of connection and wellbeing for individuals and communities

FOOD & MATERIAL AID

We recognise that consistency of our services and presence on the streets and in the local community are essential to developing relationships and trust, as well as ensuring reliable support is provided. Across our Programs we foster friendships and provide food and essential aid in circumstances when individuals, couples and families may find themselves in greatest need.

BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS & STIGMA

We maintain a focus on addressing stereotypes and stigmas associated with homelessness through volunteer engagement in our Programs, as well as visiting institutions and organisations sharing our experiences of the issues faced by people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.



Melbourne CBD (Outreach)
Flinders Street Station
Flinders St, Melbourne, Vic 3000

Soul Kitchen Braybrook
Braybrook Community Hub
107 Churchill Ave, Braybrook, Vic 3019

Care Package Program
Reservoir Supa IGA
26/30 Edwardes St, Reservoir, Vic 3073

Care Package Program
Yarraville IGA
12/14 Anderson St, Yarraville, Vic 3013

Care Package Program
Hawthorn Renaissance IGA
550 Glenferrie Rd, Hawthorn Vic 3122

OUTREACH PROGRAM

Our Outreach Program gives us the opportunity to connect with people who are experiencing homelessness. Those we stop to chat with often tell us, we're the only people to take the time to ask them about their day. We enjoy supporting people on Outreach and hearing their news.

This year Steve* got a job and a partner. Alex* came out of a relationship and went for a job interview after only six weeks in Melbourne and was very positive! Sally* has accommodation but struggles with her anxiety so spends time on the streets providing advice to others and is always keen for a chat in her usual spot. Milton* has struggled but is always happy to see us - just to name a few.

Thank you to all our Outreach Leaders and volunteers! Special mentions to Candace & Michael who are our dynamic Leadership duo and stalwarts on a Tuesday night, and of course Loretta Stapleton, who is now taking a short break, but has led Outreach this and many previous years. Seeing you spread love and hope, even on cold and dark nights is such an honour. You are an angel and your friends on the street are going to miss you so come back soon.

**names have been changed to protect people's privacy*

72

OUTREACH NIGHTS

SOUL KITCHEN REPORT

2420
GUESTS SERVED

Throughout FY23, Soul Kitchen operated for 44 out of 52 weeks, observing a four-week end of year break as well as a temporary closure of four weeks in September. This brief hiatus was due to a relocation of the program from the Community Hall to other areas within the building. The relocation process involved meticulous planning and logistics but ultimately yielded positive outcomes. We not only successfully resumed operations but also expanded its footprint, now utilising Library Meeting Rooms 3 & 4, along with a portion of Braybrook Library as a dining area. We extend our heartfelt thanks to the Braybrook Community Hub staff members and the Braybrook Library for their unwavering support during this transition.

Soul Kitchen **served an average of 180 adults and 40 children monthly**, providing essential services such as **37 haircuts and 31 laundry sessions** across the year. These services are made possible by the remarkable dedication of **192 returning volunteers** who generously contribute their time and energy to the program.

The passion of our volunteers is shown in many ways - but noticeably with many travelling distances to be with us - some traveling as far as Dandenong (47.5km), Cranbourne (62.3km), and Mt. Waverley (35.1km) to participate in this meaningful endeavour. Corporate teams from organisations like **CBA Highpoint, Gallagher Jeffs, Mustard Creative**, and **Intrepid Travel** have actively engaged with Soul Kitchen, further enriching the program's impact.

Soul Kitchen has also fostered valuable partnerships, including **Rotary Yarraville**, whose team members join the program every fourth week of the month and generously donate the evening's expenses on their birthdays. Another significant partnership with **Orange Sky Australia** ensures access to washing and drying services, as well as engaging activities for all guests. Additionally, ongoing donations from **The Kind Posy**, who throughout the year contributed 10% of their profits to 300 Blankets, were essential contributors to Soul Kitchen's success.

Monthly events such as birthdays (including Soul Kitchen's own 5th Birthday!), raffles, and haircuts, along with special occasions like Father's Day, Christmas celebrations with feasts and gifts, Easter egg hunts, and Mother's Day, have added moments of joy and connection to the lives of Soul Kitchen's guests. Lastly, the introduction of karaoke sessions added a unique and uplifting element to the Program.

The Soul Kitchen team expresses its heartfelt gratitude to all volunteers and guests for their unwavering support - the program's success would not be possible without their dedication and contributions.

44
SUNDAY DINNERS

528
VOLUNTEER SHIFTS

SK SUNDAYS

CARE PACKAGE PROGRAM

1645
PACKAGES DELIVERED

In FY23, our Care Package Program has seen notable growth and continued dedication to serving our community. Comparing data year on year, during FY22 we distributed 1,498 packages to 124 households, while in FY23, we've distributed 1,645 packages to 133 households - an impressive 9.8% increase packages distributed and a 7% increase in households served - even taking into account recipients who voluntarily remove themselves from our assistance programs.

Our Program's core mission remains steadfast, addressing the urgent needs of our community members who are grappling with various challenges. Recipients continue to include those fleeing domestic violence, struggling with insecure and unaffordable housing, caretakers of extended family members, individuals facing financial hardship, and those affected by family breakdown or the increased cost of living.

These statistics underscore the continued relevance and importance of our Care Package initiative in supporting vulnerable individuals and families. Throughout the year, the value of each Care Package remained around $40, however we noticed a drop in volume. This decrease may be attributed to the rising cost of groceries and our commitment to including higher-value items like laundry detergent and dishwashing liquid in the packages.

We have gratefully received generous material donations from individuals and school drives, which have often contributed essential items such as toothpaste, toothbrushes, full-sized shampoo, soap, and sanitary products to families and individuals in need.

With deliveries occurring 46 weeks out of 52 in FY23, the Care Package Program was run with some 320 volunteer shifts. With multiple routes, the Western deliveries continue to require the highest number of volunteer drivers, primarily serving residents in the Western suburbs, who constitute the majority of our recipients. This underscores the crucial role of volunteers in the success of our program and highlights the demand for our services in this region.

133
HOUSE HOLDS

320
VOLUNTEER SHIFTS

EDUCATION

We have had another year of great opportunities to visit schools and organisations, to talk about issues surrounding homelessness, our experiences from volunteering, 300 Blankets' Program offerings and crucially providing the opportunity to field any and every question about homelessness. The level of engagement on this crucial social issue is incredible and this is reflected by the diversity of organisations we visited in FY23.

These visits provide the opportunity for a broad range of people in our community to ask, discuss and challenge the issues surrounding homelessness. We love asking people to ask the questions they've always wanted to ask or felt uncomfortable asking; this is one way of continuing to challenge stereotypes of the homelessness experience as well as inspiring others to get involved and be a part of positive change and helping others in the community who are doing it tough.

TERTIARY EDUCATION & COMPANIES

Monash University, *Leadership Dialogue Series*

Hunter Amenities

SCHOOLS

Kilvington Grammar
Gleneagles Secondary
Sophia Mundi (Abbotsford)
St Scholastica Primary
Essendon North Primary
St Martin De Porres Primary
Youth Industry College

NOT-FOR PROFIT

Daughters of Penelope, *luncheon*

DIVRS (Preston)

Volunteers are at the heart of what we do, and without their passion and dedication we would not be able to deliver our amazing programs.

576

SOUL KITCHEN VOLUNTEER SHIFTS

260

OUTREACH VOLUNTEER SHIFTS

320

CARE PACKAGE VOLUNTEER SHIFTS

8

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

1164 TOTAL VOLUNTEER SHIFTS

VOLUNTEER TESTIMONIAL

"I mainly volunteer with Soul Kitchen and Rotary as it is very satisfying that I am making a difference in our local community and it doesn't cost me anything except a bit of my time; the satisfaction for me is increased as I am volunteering with family and friends, as well as making new friends."

Wayne, Rotary Yarraville & Soul Kitchen

VOLUNTEER TESTIMONIAL

“I read about 300 Blankets and it resonated with mine and Michael’s values. I signed us up to volunteer at Soul Kitchen and Loretta grabbed Michael to help with Outreach. He went along and loved it and got me into it, and now we've been Night Leaders for a year! My favourite thing about volunteering is making connections with people, seeing them smile when they see us coming, knowing that we have done a small thing to make someone's day a bit better.”

Candace and Michael, Outreach & Soul Kitchen

VOLUNTEER TESTIMONIAL

"300 Blankets are making a real impact on the Melbourne streets, a testament that is only truly felt once you see the recognition and reactions from familiar faces towards their Night Leaders. Coming into the winter months, it was the compassion and desire to truly connect and help the homeless and disadvantaged which was inspirational and contagious to the other volunteers. I cannot recommend volunteering your time enough to this organisation. My employees and myself will forever be embedded in the cause."

Demi, Outreach & Soul Kitchen

VOLUNTEER TESTIMONIAL

“Joining the Outreach Program with 300 Blankets really opened up my eyes and my heart to something I might so easily overlook. It provided a lot of perspective into the lives of our friends who are sleeping rough and showed me that all of us have a story that's worthy of being heard. I was anxious about safety and what I could or should say but the team at 300 Blankets had everything thought out and all you need to do is show up, be present, let them lead and be open to the friends you'll be meeting.”

LYNETTE, OUTREACH

MENTAL HEALTH

We don’t just talk about Volunteer well-being, evidenced by the reestablishment of our Volunteer Mental Health Awareness training sessions in 2023. Nicca has been able to run the first session with follow on sessions planned.

The training sessions are designed to help our volunteers gain knowledge and understanding of mental health problems whilst also addressing volunteer self care; to make sure our volunteers are also looking after themselves in all the amazing work they do for the community.

EVENTS, COMMUNITIES & CAMPAIGNS

To build community beyond face-to-face, we've used our online platforms to share stories of our volunteers and the community our programs connect with.

Over the last 12 months we've aimed to engage with new audiences, as well as develop an ongoing conversation with existing, to encourage new and recurring volunteering, as well as financial support.

- We trialled a Christmas fundraising campaign to link with an audience beyond our engaged community. This included a social media campaign, as well as in-kind media placements. The campaign page **raised $444 in direct donations, and a total $6,016 across the GiveNow** profile during the period.
- To celebrate our community we ran an organic campaign during Volunteer Week, sharing stories of some of our Change Makers.
- Working to establish a larger database of engaged supporters, we have started to build a marketing database, and have sent out three newsletters to our current database of **41 subscribers.**
- With the help from a Maribyrnong Council grant as well as a collaboration with production company, We Are West, we've had some great content produced for Soul Kitchen, which has allowed us to show the anticipated experience to volunteers and reach our local community.

We're looking forward to more campaigns to engage with newer audiences, and spotlight our wonderful volunteers and program participants in FY24!

MAJOR PARTNERS & DONORS

MAJOR PARTNERS

YARRAVILLE IGA

GCG

RESERVOIR SUPA IGA

HAWTHORN RENAISSANCE IGA

MAJOR MATERIAL DONORS

BRANDBANK GROUP

Woolworths

THE SHEET SOCIETY

Access GROUP SOLUTIONS strength in service

home innovations

HUNTER AMENITIES

MOR EVENTS & PROJECTS

CRESWICK Woollen Mills Est 1947

MAJOR FINANCIAL DONORS

THE JACK BROCKHOFF FOUNDATION

Maribyrnong CITY COUNCIL

imb bank

Freemasons Foundation Victoria

Greater Western Water

emu

yarra trams

Preston Connected Community

central west

Beer DeLuxe

CMV GROUP STAFF FOUNDATION

PARTNERS & MATERIAL DONORS

Access Group Solutions

African Sisterhood Incorporated

Australia Post

Best & Less (Northland)

Braybrook Community Hub

Brimbank Leisure Centres

Central West Bakery

Commonwealth Bank - Highpoint

Daughters of Penelope

Fine-Day Brandbank Group

Food Service Machinery

Gallagher Jeffs

Harrow & Harvest Cafe

Hawthorn Renaissance IGA

Heal Thy Soul

Home Innovation

Intrepid Travel

Junk

Kilvington Grammar

The Kind Posy

The Knox School

Kogo

Korowa Girls

L&M Home

Melbourne City Baths

Mor Events Aus

Mustard Creative

Nourish Me project (Central West)

Orange Sky Australia

Public Transport Victoria

Reservoir Supa IGA

Rotary Club of Yarraville

Sharc

Sophia Mundi

St Martin De Porres

Twist Transport

Vantage Church

Woolworths stores

Workwear Group

Yarraville IGA

Yarra Trams

HOW YOU CAN HELP

JOIN US

Make a contribution to our community today by joining the 300 Blankets family and volunteering in our Programs.

FUNDRAISE

Get your school, organisation, colleagues, friends or family together to raise money to support our Programs.

MATERIAL DONATIONS

Run a material aid drive or just donate any items ranging from toiletries through to blankets for distribution in our Programs.

LOOKING AHEAD

We are committed to improving and tailoring our Programs to meet the needs of the community. As evidenced by our Annual Report data, there has been a marked increase in the demand for food services in the last year, with this only to increase into FY24. We know that we have to be geared towards meeting these community needs and 300 Blankets has always been excellent at adapting, however, new and ongoing challenges can threaten this flexibility, ranging from funding through to volunteer availability.

To meet these challenges in the next Financial Year we will be recruiting new Leaders across the charity including Program Leaders and shoring up our management team.

We will be looking to streamline our Volunteer experience from Program bookings through to how we communicate and provide updates.

From a financial perspective we will look to diversify and expand our revenue streams to ensure we have the capabilities to fund increased Program expenditure, particularly for Care Package and Soul Kitchen.

We are committed to fostering existing and forging new relationships to support the charity as well as providing opportunities to students, employees and organisations to support the community, whether this be through material aid support, volunteering, or a visit from one of the 300 Blankets Team.

300 Blankets will continue to mature as a charity and in doing so will be able to provide the best support possible to the community across our Programs.

Peter, Susan and the Management Team

SPREAD THE WORD

FACEBOOK
@300BLANKETS

3,398 followers
37,300 users reached

INSTAGRAM
@300BLANKETS

1,433 followers
2,563 users reached

ANNUAL FINANCE REPORT 2022-23

APPENDIX

FROM THE TREASURER

BRAD SARGENT

Despite persistent challenges posed by the rising cost of living, 300 Blankets achieved another financially successful year, owing to the unwavering support of the wider Melbourne community, and generosity of individual donors and corporate partners alike.

Our total revenue for FY23 exceeded $190,000, providing a strong financial platform to deliver our three core programs. This substantial figure included over $77,000 in tax-deductible donations directly contributed to 300 Blankets, $49,000 of successful grants, and an amazing $62,000 worth of goods donated, including blankets kindly donated by local businesses and like-minded charitable organisations across Victoria.

Importantly, this financial strength allowed 300 Blankets to expand its support for the community during this difficult time through record-level spending on our Programs, allowing us to spread our reach to more of those in need than ever before. A breakdown of our total FY23 costs of $204,000 is provided below:

Program	FY23 Cost ($)	Cost driver
Care Package Program	76,000	Food & other goods sourced from IGA supermarkets
Outreach Program	51,000	Clothes & personal hygiene goods
Soul Kitchen Braybrook	32,000	Produce & equipment required to prepare meals
Blankets	18,000	Cost of blankets shared across all programs
Storage	13,000	Storage for the receipt of physical good donations prior to their use in our programs
Administration expenses	9,000	Technology, audit and insurance fees
Volunteer expenses	5,000	First aid & mental health training for program leaders

As of 30 September 2023, 300 Blankets remains on a solid financial foundation, with cash reserves exceeding $132,000 ($121,000 at 30 June 2023).

The Management Team remains keenly focused on improving the sustainability and diversity of our funding to allow 300 Blankets to continue making a meaningful impact in the areas where assistance is most needed.

Thank you again to our dedicated volunteers, donors and partners who were instrumental in our charity's success in FY23. With your support we are certain that 300 Blankets will continue to provide warmth and compassion through the delivery of our programs to the lives of those in need.

STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

	30 June 2023	30 June 2022
Revenue		
Grant income	48,900	76,200
Donations and bequests	139,587	141,519
Other revenue	1,721	1,027
Total revenue	**190,208**	**218,746**
Expenses		
Administration expenses	9,058	10,077
Blankets costs	17,570	44,395
Care package program costs	76,438	64,753
Outreach program costs	50,570	10,878
Soul Kitchen Braybrook costs	32,238	26,913
Storage costs	12,971	13,071
Volunteer expenses	4,996	2,914
Total expenses	**203,841**	**173,001**
Net surplus/(deficit) for the year	(13,633)	45,745

For further information please refer to 300 Blankets' full FY2023 Financial Report

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

AS AT 30 JUNE 2023

	30 June 2023	30 June 2022
Assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	101,723	136,473
Trade and other receivables	2,114	2,040
Term deposits	20,000	-
Total current assets	*123,837*	*138,513*
Property, plant and equipment	2,276	1,995
Total non-current assets	*2,276*	*1,995*
Total assets	**126,113**	**140,508**
Liabilities		
Trade and other payables	3,065	3,827
Total current liabilities	*3,065*	*3,827*
Total liabilities	**3,065**	**3,827**
Net Assets/(Liabilities)	**123,048**	**136,681**
Equity		
Accumulated funds	123,048	136,681
Total Equity	**123,048**	**136,681**

For further information please refer to 300 Blankets' full FY2023 Financial Report

300 blankets

KEEPING OUR COMMUNITY WARM