



Annual Report

2020 - 2021

Creating jobs that care for people and planet

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of Australia and recognise the continuing connection to land, waters and culture. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and future. We walk together towards healing.



Contents

| | |
|----|--------------------------------|
| 02 | Our Vision, Mission and Values |
| 04 | Our Impact |
| 06 | Co-Chair and CEO Message |
| 08 | A Year in Review |
| 10 | Case Studies |
| 14 | Where We Work |
| 16 | Community Services |
| 22 | Green Connect |
| 28 | Resource Recovery Australia |
| 36 | Soft Landing |
| 44 | The MAD Team |
| 46 | Funders & Partners |
| 48 | Financial Report |
| 50 | Our History |
| 52 | Organisational Structure |

Our story began 34 years ago when a community development organisation was set up on Worimi land on the NSW Mid North Coast to provide training and employment opportunities for local people experiencing disadvantage.

Our impact and reach have grown since then. We now run some of the largest social enterprises in the country and deliver a range of community services, employing 650 people this year across NSW, Queensland, Victoria, Western Australia and the ACT.

We remain a community development organisation at heart; committed to all people having access to opportunity and justice. To this end we employ people experiencing barriers to employment – 79% of our staff – and do work that cares for people and planet.

Front cover photo: Emillie Wilde, MidCoast Assistant Manager, Resource Recovery Australia.
Back cover photo: Green Connect Farm.
Inside cover: *Connection to time, Connection to place*, illustration hand-painted for Community Resources by First Nations artist Lara Went on Worimi Country.

Thank you to Westpac Foundation and Flashpoint Labs for photography used in this report.
The icons featured in this report were created by Lara Went from Yukul Art.
This report has been printed on EcoStar 100% recycled stock, FSC Certified Pulp, Carbon Neutral, 100% Post Consumer Waste.

OUR VISION

Thriving communities that value people, planet and the traditional custodians of the land.

OUR MISSION

Create jobs that care for people and planet.

OUR VALUES

Authentic, fair, kind, brave and sustainable.

Strategic objectives

ORGANISATION

Be an organisation that can sustain and grow our impact

JOBS

Create jobs and employment opportunities for groups and places that need them most

COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT

Provide goods and services that care for people and planet

LEADERSHIP

Innovate, learn and share

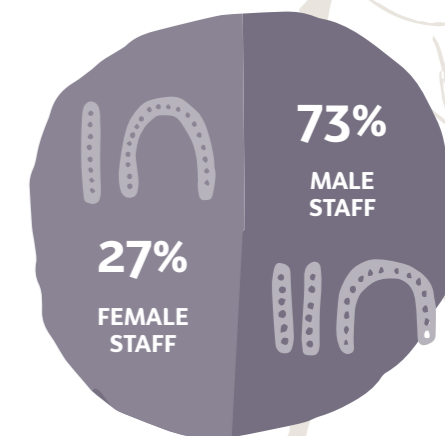
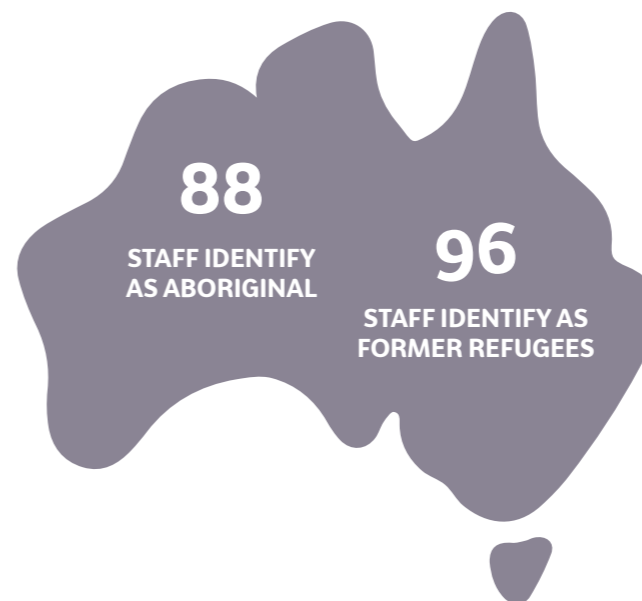


Photo Homebase Youth Services, Forster NSW

OUR IMPACT IN 2020/21



79% OF STAFF JOINED US WHEN EXPERIENCING BARRIERS TO WORK



122
STAFF ARE
YOUNG
PEOPLE*

1431
TRAINING AND
DEVELOPMENT
OUTCOMES



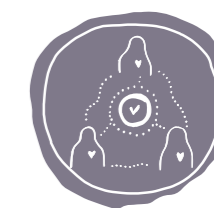
16,934

Tonnes of waste
diverted from
landfill through
reuse, repair
and recycling



35,118

Kilograms of
fair food grown
and distributed



39,724

Instances of
community
services
provided

* Young people defined as under the age of 25

Welcome

CO-CHAIR AND INTERIM CEO MESSAGE

As COVID-19 made its impact felt for a second year, we kept delivering on our mission to create jobs that care for people and planet, and we kept making a positive impact in our local communities.

We employed 650 people across Australia, 79% of whom joined us when experiencing barriers to employment. We employed 88 Aboriginal people, 96 former refugees and 122 young people.

Through their work and in partnership with local communities, our people kept 16,934 tonnes of waste out of landfill, grew and distributed 35,118 kilograms of fair food, and provided 39,724 instances of community services to individuals.

When parts of our business were stretched and challenged, we stepped up with energy, determination and new ways of working.

Soft Landing rode the peaks of record mattress volumes with flexible, adaptive leadership. RRA expanded its footprint further into NSW and Queensland, promoting the ideals of a circular economy in regional communities. Green Connect started a new gardening and landscaping business to keep staff employed while its large event work is on hold. Community Services continued to meet high demand for its services with passion and commitment.

We continued to strengthen our financial position, delivering a positive end-of-year-result.

We engaged Directors Australia to conduct a complete review of our governance framework to further improve our governance and ensure we can deliver against our mission for many years to come.

Jess Moore left the organisation this year, we thank her for all her contributions and we look forward to welcoming a new CEO to lead Community Resources through its next phase. We also farewellled Board members Rebecca Lee, Michelle Martin and Sherryl Reddy, and we thank them for their contributions.

Thank you to the passionate, committed people of Community Resources; our staff, volunteers and members.

Thank you to our fellow Board members for their significant contribution of time and expertise to navigate CR through a challenging year.

Thank you to those who work with us, support us and believe in what we do; government and community agencies, philanthropic partners, business and community supporters and donors, and our customers.

Throughout this report we show how much that support matters, and the positive outcomes it creates for the people and communities we work with.



ANTHONY RODWELL-BALL
CO-CHAIR



KATRIINA HEIKKANEN
CO-CHAIR



DUANE FINDLEY
INTERIM CEO

“Thank you to those who work with us, support us and believe in what we do; government and community agencies, philanthropic partners, business and community supporters and donors, and our customers.”



Photo Etuate Saukuru, Will Mitchell and Steve Connell, Soft Landing Smithfield

A year in review

In 2020/21 we continued to grow our impact across Australia, making a positive difference in our communities in a year of change and uncertainty.

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>JULY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RRA community engagement activities in MidCoast and the Illawarra restart after COVID lockdown Soft Landing manages COVID-driven spike in mattress intake | <p>AUGUST</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Green Connect opens new office and op shop in Unanderra Soft Landing Hume welcomes a new steel press Soft Landing secures contracts in Newcastle (Cessnock) and WA (Kwinana) |
| <p>SEPTEMBER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Soft Landing secures major contracts in Sydney (Liverpool and Blacktown) and WA (Melville) Green Connect is a finalist in the Illawarra Business Awards for Excellence in Workplace Culture | <p>OCTOBER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Green Connect pilots new gardening and landscaping service RRA Toowoomba is joint winner of the Toowoomba Region Waste Facilities Garden Competition Soft Landing secures major contract extension in WA with Armadale Council |
| <p>NOVEMBER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Product Stewardship Scheme transfers to independent entity the Australian Bedding Stewardship Council Community Resources AGM in Tuncurry Settlement Services International (SSI) recognises Soft Landing's contribution to refugee employment with a Community Appreciation Award NSW Parliament recognises the work of Soft Landing Hunter in a Community Recognition Statement. | <p>DECEMBER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Green Connect wins Workplace Inclusion Award at the Illawarra Multicultural Awards and is a finalist at the Wollongong City Council Australia Day Awards for Diversity and Inclusion RRA begins operations at Kleinton, a second site in Toowoomba, and completes a successful mattress recycling pilot for Toowoomba Council Community Services is successful in re-tender for Driver Licensing Access Program for next five years |



| | |
|--|--|
| <p>JANUARY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Green Connect turns 10 Soft Landing introduces second shift at Smithfield and WA sites to manage large mattress volumes | <p>FEBRUARY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal Member for Shortland and Shadow Minister Assisting for Climate Change Pat Conroy visits Soft Landing Hunter Soft Landing extends contract with Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (SSROC) and in WA for the Eastern Metropolitan Regional Council Green Connect starts work on large-scale landscaping projects on roads and railway corridors in western Sydney |
| <p>MARCH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RRA starts MidCoast contract, the largest in Community Resources history Green Connect unveils its farm redevelopment to 400 visitors at a community open day | <p>APRIL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homebase secures \$128K funding from Resilience NSW for wellbeing programs with young people post bushfires Community Services secures another three years for GLAMYHS contract WasteAid employs community engagement officer for Cabarita for local clean-ups Green Connect officially launches new gardening and landscaping service Reviva Taree opens on the NSW Mid North Coast |
| <p>MAY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviva Kleinton opens in Toowoomba Reviva Ibis opens in Rockhampton | <p>JUNE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board and management participate in a Governance Review with Directors Australia Soft Landing secures a major contract in WA with Mindarie Regional Council Strategic review of Soft Landing to position it for the future |





Homebase Youth Services

Connection is at the heart of our approach to closing the gap for young Indigenous people on the NSW Mid North Coast.

Community Services General Manager Lisa Berry says: "Our youth workers are dedicated to keeping young people motivated and engaged in school, they work hard to improve the educational outcomes of local Indigenous children.

"Lots of our young people have lower school attendance rates than other kids, there are many reasons for this but often it can be because they're lacking motivation."

Homebase Youth Services runs a range of early intervention programs to support Indigenous children aged eight to 14.

At the Ngarramba Indigenous Homework Club, Homebase youth workers help young people with their homework and play sport with them after school.

"We really connect and get to know these kids, walk alongside them and create opportunities to learn and have fun.

"Keeping young people motivated and engaged is really important, they do better at school and keep out of trouble."

The team also works with parents to develop skills, social networking and connection to the community.

"Getting families involved in their children's education can have a big impact on learning and educational outcomes."

"We really connect and get to know these kids, walk alongside them and create opportunities to learn and have fun."

LISA BERRY | COMMUNITY SERVICES GM

Clíodhna Maguire

When Clíodhna Maguire (Clia) came to Green Connect in 2020, she didn't feel confident about her future job prospects.

She knew she loved being outdoors but had no idea how to turn that passion into a job. She also wanted to work in an industry that helped her connect to her Indigenous heritage.

A friend suggested she apply for Green Connect's Youth Employment Program.

"Green Connect really was a sliding doors moment for me, it was the catalyst for helping me realise where I wanted to go in my career," Clia said.

"The opportunity for me to work in the different parts of Green Connect allowed me to discover what I was good at, what I enjoyed and what gave me a sense of hope for the future."

At Green Connect she found a community of shared values, vision and meaning. The people she met, the support and encouragement she received, and the genuine care for her as a person helped her find her direction.

Green Connect Engagement and Support Manager Ann Burbrook saw Clia's passion for outdoor work and suggested she do a horticultural course for people from Indigenous backgrounds.

"All of my experiences at Green Connect gave me the strength to find and follow a dream," Clia said.

"I worked in so many different areas of Green Connect – veg box deliveries, painting, farm work, labour hire, zero waste and other jobs," Clia said.

"I was given responsibility for projects. I was trusted and respected. And it was this breadth of experience that was really important when I applied for my next job."

The next job was a role with the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service – which feels like a perfect fit for her.

"Green Connect helped me realise my potential. To find an organisation that supports young people to find their way in life, that doesn't rush people through their program, and values the environment and people equally is truly amazing."



"Green Connect really was a sliding doors moment for me, it was the catalyst for helping me realise where I wanted to go in my career"

CLÍODHNA MAGUIRE | GREEN CONNECT



James Holder

It took 21-year-old James Holder a long time to find a job.

"I spent three years non-stop looking, putting my resume in to every place I could," he told ABC News.

"But because I didn't have the skills, I couldn't get a job."

An employment agency suggested he apply for a job with Reviva Ibis which had recently opened in Rockhampton – and he got the job.

"Every day is a blessing. Just having work and having something to do with life and actually getting somewhere, it's a lovely thing, it's awesome."

James is one of 13 locals employed at RRA's new site in Rockhampton, opened this year. Social connections with workmates and customers have made a real difference in his life.

"I meet new people and learn new things every day through new customers."

James enjoys talking to his family about different ways of doing things.

"They learn, I learn, it's a big learning curve for everyone."

He's also planning for the future.

"The more skills the better. I don't have a forklift ticket, but that's what they're working on getting me to do.

"I'm looking at something like construction because it's hands-on, it's outside and it's just lovely working with people you know, and you get along with."

"Just having work and having something to do with life and actually getting somewhere, it's a lovely thing, it's awesome."

JAMES HOLDER | RRA ROCKHAMPTON

Photo credit Lucy Loram ABC Capricornia

Noor Kamal

Noor Kamal spent his early 20s in detention at Christmas Island.

He arrived in Australia when he was 19 after fleeing Myanmar, where his Rohingya background saw him face persecution as a member of an ethnic minority.

The 27-year-old said his first few years in Australia were hard because he couldn't leave Christmas Island and he missed his friends and family back home.

Noor, who is now on a bridging visa, started working at Soft Landing Smithfield in 2019. He said his job has helped him financially and socially.

"If I didn't have this job I wouldn't be able to support my family back home, and all of the friends I have made in Australia have been through my work," he said.

Noor says the freedom of Australia is something he will always appreciate.

"I love Australia and I have a lot of freedom here compared to what I used to have, I even get to play local football.

"I'm very grateful to be here – it's peaceful and I feel safe."

"If I didn't have this job I wouldn't be able to support my family back home, and all of the friends I have made in Australia have been through my work."

NOOR KAMAL | SOFT LANDING SMITHFIELD





Jobs that care for people and planet

We run three environmental repair social enterprises and a range of community services.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Based on the NSW Mid North Coast, Community Services provides services that meet local community needs. They include Homebase, Great Lakes and Manning Youth Homelessness Service (GLAMYHS), Helping Hands & WasteAid.

| | |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| HELPING HANDS | TUNCURRY |
| HOMEBASE | TUNCURRY, TAREE |
| GLAMYHS | TAREE, TUNCURRY |
| WASTE AID | REMOTE COMMUNITIES |

GREEN CONNECT

Based in Wollongong NSW, Green Connect creates jobs and employment pathways for young people and former refugees in work that helps the planet and the community.

LOCATION
ILLAWARRA

RESOURCE RECOVERY AUSTRALIA

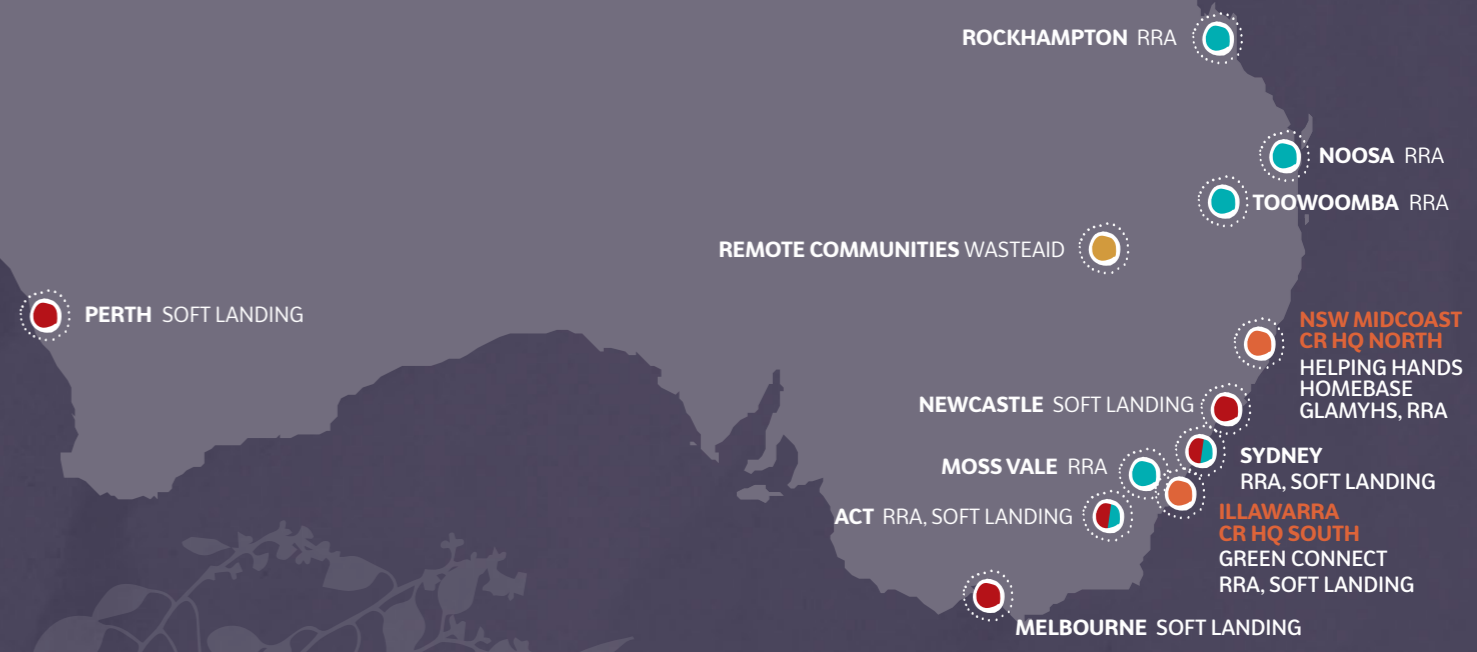
A national social enterprise that works in waste management to keep waste out of landfill, create jobs for people experiencing barriers to work, and to engage and connect people in our communities.

LOCATIONS
CANBERRA, DUNMORE, MIDCOAST, MOSS VALE, NOOSA, ROCKHAMPTON, SYDNEY, TOOWOOMBA

SOFT LANDING

A national social enterprise that collects and recycles mattresses to keep waste out of landfill and create jobs for people experiencing barriers to work.

LOCATIONS
CANBERRA, ILLAWARRA, MELBOURNE, NEWCASTLE, PERTH, SYDNEY



Where we work

A WORD FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER



COMMUNITY SERVICES



There are days when I ask myself why I do this job. Then I look around me and see how extremely blessed I am to work with a team of extraordinary, caring individuals who shine even more and give even more every single day. I couldn't ask for a better team of people to work alongside.

Sadly, we've seen the direct impacts of COVID-19 this year with significant increased demand for homelessness services, drug and alcohol services, and domestic and family violence services. New government funding is not yet forthcoming, adding extra pressure on already stretched staff and resources. This has been hard on our staff who give more than 100% to assist the community and our clients.

In the period from July 2020 to June 2021 we experienced an increase of about 24% for homelessness services (GLAMYHS) and 32% for youth services (Homebase Youth Services) with no increase in government funding. We have waiting lists in place for both (which means we can't help people when they need it) and we're having to triage the most at-risk clients.

We've secured the continuation and expansion of some of our funded contracts this year, including the Driver Licensing Access Program, Targeted Early Intervention, Youth Specialist Homelessness Service and the Worimi Advocacy and Referral Service. We've also seen an increase in Transition to Work contract numbers, with an additional 79 people to be helped under the program in 2021.

Helping Hands has increased client numbers over the year due to the fantastic reputation of our staff. Our staff are dedicated to providing a warm friendly service to assist older people to stay independent in their homes and communities for longer.

WasteAid continued to work in discrete Aboriginal communities as they came out of hibernation. Staff assisted with bulky waste clean-ups and bin audits in Walgett and Enngonia.

The sudden passing of Margie Donnelly was devastating for all. Margie was the heart and soul of Homebase for 18 years sharing her knowledge, culture, wisdom and supporting all those who had the privilege of meeting or crossing paths with her in one way or another. Margie touched so many people across our community in so many ways and we need to embrace the great work she achieved and continue with her legacy.

In honour of Margie, we will continue to stand united for love, unity, harmony and justice – and to end racism.

LISA BERRY
COMMUNITY SERVICES GENERAL MANAGER

OUR IMPACT



78
Employment opportunities provided



51
Permanent jobs



195
Training and development outcomes



39,724
Instances of community service provided

Based on the NSW Mid North Coast, **Community Services** provides a range of services including Homebase, Great Lakes and Manning Youth Homelessness Service (GLAMYHS), Helping Hands and WasteAid.



HOMEBASE YOUTH SERVICES

“We feel privileged to be able to have a positive impact on peoples’ lives, no matter how big or small it may be.”

The Homebase Youth Services team has been working hard in 2020/21 to provide meaningful programs to help young Aboriginal people build skills and access opportunities that make life better.

The year was challenging due to COVID-19, but we still managed to deliver programs across a range of areas including mental health first aid, resilience, managing grief and loss, healthy relationships, sexual health, Indigenous dance, surfing and beach awareness.

Homebase provides early intervention programs, case management and advice, and referrals to at-risk young people, and helps them access activities that positively contribute to the community. We do this through relationships local services, government departments and schools.

Our nutrition program in local primary schools helps young people develop knowledge and skills around healthy eating and food preparation.

Community Services General Manager Lisa Berry says schools have reported changed behaviour in students who participate, whether it be through making healthier choices about food in their lunchbox or being more physically active at school.

Other successful school programs in 2020/21 include art therapy; Season for Growth – a program designed to provide students with tools to cope with change; and Girls With a Purpose – a program that empowers and helps young women in Years 9 and 10 develop skills around personal worth, healthy relationships, self-esteem, cyber safety and more.

“The Girls With a Purpose program really brings out the best in young women and we’ve found some participants are coming back and do the program for a second time because they’ve enjoyed it so much,” Lisa said.

“Some of our mums also took part in Shark Cage, a program that addresses vulnerability and re-victimisation in women who are victims of sexual and domestic violence.

“We continued to run our popular surfing and beach days in 2020/21, our young people are always keen to come along, have a surf, swim, chat and cook a BBQ lunch.”

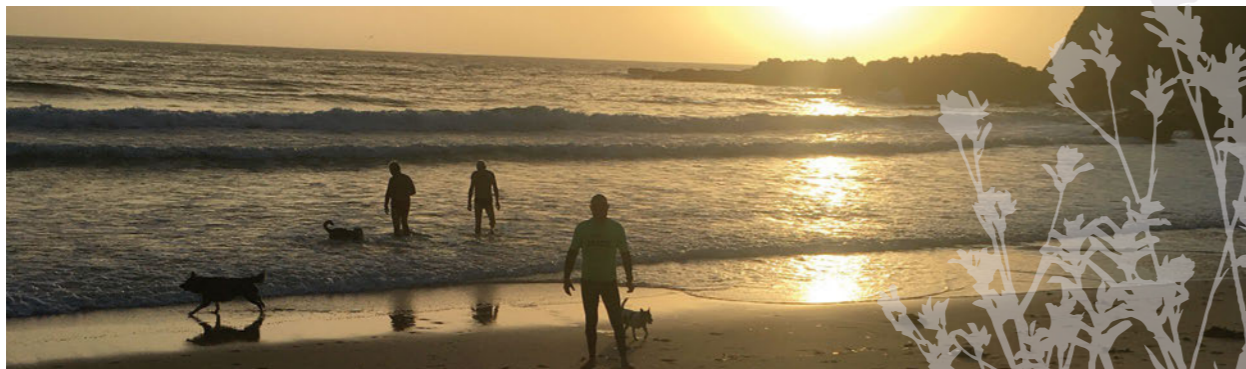


Photo at top Sarah Little and Liahna French with Homebase Girls with Purpose youth group



WORIMI DANCE GROUPS

Homebase staff members Jake Bolt, Liahna French and Kyla Simon are emerging young community leaders who are passionate about helping other young people reconnect with culture.

One way they are doing this is through Worimi Dance groups. About 40 young people have joined the groups this year and they work with Tobwabba Aboriginal Medical Service on performances for community events.

“The amount of dancers who are now involved is a true reflection of the impact Aunty Margie has had on our local Aboriginal community and the way she was able to bring everyone together to share stories, learn about and celebrate culture.”

LISA BERRY
COMMUNITY SERVICES GENERAL MANAGER

GLAMYHS | PHIL PILGRIM

“In my 19 years working in homelessness it really is the toughest time now in terms of housing shortages. But it’s not all gloom and doom, we’re still getting people into houses and we’re still getting good outcomes.”

Phil Pilgrim is the manager of the Great Lakes and Manning Youth Homelessness Service (GLAMYHS). His team provides specialist homelessness services to young people in the MidCoast Council LGA, with the aim of breaking the cycle of disadvantage and getting young people into safe and secure, long-term housing.

Phil says there are always challenges in his line of work, but over the last 12 months the challenges have been on a much greater scale.

“The ongoing impact of COVID-19 means there are not as many houses for rent because people are moving to regional areas, so we’ve got low vacancy rates and young people with no rental history and limited financial support trying to find somewhere to live. It’s tough,” Phil said.

This year GLAMYHS provided specialist crisis homelessness support to 352 young people (funded to service 174), 1199 bed nights in crisis accommodation and 4230 bed nights in transitional housing. Of the young people supported by GLAMYHS in 2020/21, 47 percent were Indigenous.

The pandemic has also resulted in higher rates of family violence, mental health, and alcohol and drug issues affecting young people. But Phil says despite the challenges of the last year the team is still seeing positive outcomes, with 74 percent of young people exiting the program into housing.

“Ultimately we want to get young people into long-term housing, but even if we can place someone into a short-term arrangement and get them a solid rental history, it all helps,” he said.

“The flow-on effects of finding somewhere to live can be huge. It’s hard to find a job or focus on other things when you’re homeless or couch surfing.”





HELPING HANDS

Helping Hands has been building relationships with clients on the NSW Mid North Coast for 30 years.

The social enterprise provides building and care services to help people live in their own homes for as long as possible. Every year Helping Hands assists around 300 local people.

In 2020/21 Helping Hands Building Services completed more than 1450 jobs. Building Services include garden and building maintenance, basic modifications such as the installation of grab-rails and handrails, and more complex modifications such as the installation of ramps and bathroom and kitchen modifications.

Helping Hands Building Services Manager Natalie Bolt said basic modifications can help people move more safely around their homes.

“Installing things like handrails or grabrails often means people can live more independently at home for as long as they can,” she said.

Helping Hands Care Services provided more than 8419 hours of care services to clients, including 150 regular clients and 101 new clients that are either short term or continuing services. Care Services include cleaning, personal care, respite, welfare checks, medication prompts, meal preparation, transport and shopping assistance.

Our clients range from the elderly to veterans, pensioners, and people with physical and mental challenges.

Photo at top Lyn McMurray, Rene Darwin and Amanda Kirkman

Helping Hands Care Services Manager Rene Darwin said: “We pride ourselves on making life easier for those clients who need our help, particularly those with daily struggles and those who are in crisis.

“We are not the largest organisation by any means but we do have 15 of the most caring home care workers who are well-trained and are great communicators.”



“We trust our home care staff will do the best job possible with whatever job is allocated to them. We are like one big family.”

RENE DARWIN
HELPING HANDS CARE SERVICES MANAGER

NATALIE BOLT

Natalie Bolt’s connection to Community Resources dates back to when she left school in 1992.

“They helped me get my first job then a little bit later they helped me again when I got a traineeship with the Forster Local Aboriginal Land Council.”

Community Resources was set up in 1987 to create training and employment for people experiencing disadvantage in the Forster-Tuncurry area (Worimi Country).

“It’s really important that people know the history of Community Resources and our values,” Natalie said.

“My story is a really good example of what the organisation stands for and its beginnings.”

Natalie started working with Community Resources 12 years ago.

“I started as a project coordinator for Homebase back in 2009, helping link Aboriginal people to culturally appropriate services. Since then I’ve been a team leader, done youth work, client management and everything in-between.”

She’s now Building Services Manager for Helping Hands. “I’ve been in this role for about 18 months now and I like helping people to live more independently at home for as long as they can.”

Natalie is a proud Worimi woman who has lived and worked in the Forster-Tuncurry area all her life.

“I have a really strong connection to the community here. If Aboriginal staff have any issues or need help they know they can always talk to me, but I’m also happy to help anyone whenever I can.

“I’d love to see more Aboriginal people take on leadership and management roles within the organisation.”

Community Services General Manager Lisa Berry says: “Nat is so passionate about her work and her community, she has a beautiful rapport with people in the community and staff.



“Nat is an asset to Helping Hands and we’re really lucky to have her.”



WASTE AID AUSTRALIA | CLARA HART

Clara Hart is a remote Aboriginal community about 100km north of Bourke in NSW. Our WasteAid Australia team has been working with Clara Hart to help set up a safe and reliable bin service.

In 2020 WasteAid secured funding from the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) to employ two people and buy a tipper trailer with a bin lift to provide a reliable waste service at Clara Hart for two years.

WasteAid Senior Project Officer Elaine Toogood said: “There have been other programs run in Clara Hart to manage waste but they’ve been unsafe and unreliable. Rubbish would build up and become an environmental health hazard.

“This bin service has been both safe and reliable, reducing rubbish build-up in the community.”

Given the success of the project, WasteAid is negotiating with other agencies to secure funding for the next five years so the essential bin service can continue to run in the Clara Hart community.

WasteAid advocates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island communities across Australia to have access to essential bin services and properly managed tips.

In 2021 WasteAid partnered with Tomra Cleanaway to establish a container deposit collection point (Return and Earn) at Clara Hart.

“Programs like this are so important to reduce the adverse environmental health impacts of poor waste management on Aboriginal people and communities,”

ELAINE TOOGOOD | WASTE AID

OUR IMPACT



137
Employment opportunities provided



221
Training and development outcomes



157
Tonnes of waste diverted from landfill



35,118
Kgs of fair food grown and distributed



1925
Community visits to Green Connect Farm

Green Connect is a social enterprise based in Wollongong, NSW. We create jobs and employment pathways for young people and former refugees in work that helps the planet and the community. We run a farm and an op shop, provide gardening and landscaping services, zero waste services and staffing solutions to businesses and councils.



Photo Su Meh, Senior Farm Hand

A WORD FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER



**GREEN
CONNECT**

In January 2011 a group of people got together to solve two of the biggest problems in our region: unemployment and waste. Just down the road, another group of people got together to solve the unsustainable food system. The groups merged to become Green Connect and in the 10 years since, many smart, capable, motivated people have each added their skills, knowledge and effort to create jobs that care for people and planet.

Green Connect does five things:

- **We employ** young people and former refugees, who are disproportionately affected by high unemployment and who thrive in safe, welcoming, supportive workplaces
- **We grow** fair food that's good for the people who eat it, the people who grow it and the planet
- **We reduce** waste through our Zero Waste services for businesses and events and our Op Shop
- **We connect** the community, knowing that social isolation is one of the biggest drivers of mental ill-health, and that when people come together, we can solve anything
- **We run a sustainable business**, with more than 80% of our expenses covered by income from trade.

In the last year, there have been more than a few curve balls thanks to a certain global pandemic, but through it all we have continued to do what is right for the community and the environment, and our social and environmental outcomes have continued to grow.

We **opened a new op shop** in Unanderra, started a fifth business unit in **Gardening and Landscaping**, commenced planting and mulching work on our **first government projects** (Paramatta Light Rail and the Northern Road) and built a **new farm hub and education space** at the Green Connect Farm.

We **employed 137 people**, 111 (81%) of whom were supported staff (young people or former refugees with multiple and complex barriers to employment) and fondly **farewelled 39 of our supported staff** into mainstream employment.

We kept **157 tonnes of waste out of landfill** through composting, recycling and reuse at our farm, op shop and through our (tiny bit of) Zero Waste work, and grew and distributed **35,118kg of fair food**.

We were recognised for our work in many ways, including winning the **Illawarra Multicultural Award** for Workplace Inclusion and being finalists in **Wollongong City Council's Awards for Diversity and Inclusion**.

As the financial year drew to a close, Wollongong entered a hard lockdown as part of Greater Sydney. All of our business units were affected, with three closing temporarily, which meant a lot less work for our staff. As always, we reached out to our staff to make sure they were OK and quite frankly, they weren't. We rallied the troops, helped our staff navigate government payments, called on our community for support, and had care packages and food parcels to them and to others in the local community within days. That initiative has grown exponentially, with more than 2000 packages delivered in the first 10 weeks.

I continue to be amazed and humbled at the generosity of our community, the ability of our team to make great things happen, and the strength of spirit of our staff in the face of adversity. At every phase of Green Connect's decade of creating jobs that care for people and the planet, people have stepped up and done what is right, not what is easy. And we will continue to do that. Together we can create a cleaner, greener, kinder, fairer world.

KYLIE FLAMENT
GREEN CONNECT GENERAL MANAGER



“Reducing waste excites me and problem-solving excites me. Our next steps are to share our learnings with the community and inspire more people to do the same.”

ANNIE BURBROOK | GREEN CONNECT OP SHOP MANAGER



THE GREEN CONNECT OP SHOP

In an industry that's overwhelmed by unusable donations, sending items to landfill is an unfortunate reality for many op shops.

In early 2021 Green Connect Op Shop Manager Annie Burbrook set an ambitious goal for herself and the team.

“I told everyone I wanted to dramatically reduce the amount of waste we were sending to landfill to no more than 10 percent,” she said.

“Everyone looked a bit shocked but we're a passionate bunch and I believed we could do it.”

The team made changes that had immediate impact; removing charity bins that were often filled with rubbish or unusable donations, introducing a personal greeting system to check the condition of donated items and undertaking a waste audit.

“The audit was a huge job and we worked out we had around 40 different streams of waste, everything from soft plastics and metals to crockery, wood, bras and hard plastic.”

Felicity Lochhead from Green Connect's Zero Waste team did the audit, identifying the different waste streams. She and the op shop team then came up with creative ways to recycle.

Damaged crockery went to local Illawarra business SmashLAB; bras to Support The Girls, a charity that provides bras and fittings for vulnerable women; e-waste to disability enterprise Greenacres for recycling; paper and cardboard to recycling centre Flagstaff; non-stretch fabrics to a group that makes Boomerang bags; towels and blankets to local vet surgeries.

Photo Annie Burbrook, Op Shop Manager

“Felicity made big signs to identify the different waste streams and she provided training to our volunteers about how to use the new system.”

“We look at every single item to see what we can do. Unfortunately some things still go to landfill, but it's been dramatically reduced in the short time we've been doing it,” Annie said.

By the end of FY21, Green Connect had 42 recycling streams in place.

The team is looking for solutions for the last remaining non-recyclable items – including talking to University of Wollongong researchers to come up with a solution for hard plastic, one of the most challenging waste streams.

“Reducing waste excites me and problem-solving excites me. Our next steps are to share our learnings with the community and inspire more people to do the same,” Annie said.

KERBSIDE UPCYCLING

Green Connect partnered with Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation (ISJO) on a pilot project to repurpose items left on the kerb for garbage collection – including lounges, surfboards, dinner sets, bikes and patio furniture.

Green Connect staff and volunteers restored items that had been salvaged from the kerb by ISJO. Green Connect Op Shop Manager Annie Burbrook said: “It was a big job and some items needed a lot of work, but often things simply needed a single screw to be fixed.”

The upcycled items were sold at a “Second Time Around” special auction and raised more than \$6,000 for Green Connect.

STAFFING SOLUTIONS

We expanded our Staffing Solutions work into Western Sydney this year, providing workers for vegetation projects across 150,000km² of new road and rail corridors.

Our team has been landscaping, planting and mulching for major infrastructure projects with HL Landscapes, with the support of Parramatta Light Rail and CPB Contractors.

“It was a wonderful example of how big companies and government can support social enterprises, provide life-changing paid work for people, and change the make-up of their workforce to be more diverse and inclusive,” Green Connect General Manager Kylie Flament said.

The Staffing Solutions team places young people and former refugees into work on either a casual or long-term basis, once they've gained key employment skills through Green Connect's supportive employment program.

“Our model works because it gives our staff variety, flexibility, and opportunities to show employers their skills and abilities,” Kylie said.

“It also benefits companies who want to have a more diverse and inclusive workplace but don't know where to start.

“When you stand shoulder to shoulder with someone who does a great job and who shares a bit of their story, and you recognise both their abilities and your shared humanity, you can't help but open your mind to the possibility that someone who comes from a different background to you has just as much value.”

GARDENING AND LANDSCAPING

We had to think outside the box when COVID hit in early 2020. Our Zero Waste work for festivals and large events fell away, leaving a hole in Green Connect's model.

Zero Waste work is well-suited to people with limited English skills and/or no previous job experience, a category many of our young people and former refugees fall into.

We needed to find other ways to provide these employment opportunities – about 600 shifts per year.

After a few months of piloting, testing and finding ways to fund start-up costs, we launched our Gardening and Landscaping Service in April 2021.

General Manager Kylie Flament said: “Our new offering is focused on delivering environmentally sound and socially responsible gardening and landscaping projects for residential, commercial, and government clients.

“Early signs are very promising. It is creating much-needed sustainable jobs for young people and former refugees after a difficult year.”

In early May we welcomed Liam Champagne as our Gardening and Landscaping Coordinator and he was soon busy organising garden blitzes, commercial garden maintenance and large-scale tree planting and mulching.

A highlight has been our work with NewDay Church in Figtree NSW to maintain and beautify their seven-acre property. We started with land rehabilitation and targeted clearing of invasive species, then designed and built a children's garden, and we now coordinate a gardening and landscaping team to maintain the property every week.

Photos Liam Champagne and GC gardening & landscaping staff

“It has been a great project for providing ongoing work and employment opportunities for our team,” Kylie said.

Other highlights include major planting and mulching projects for HL Landscapes in Western Sydney including along the Parramatta Light Rail corridor and The Northern Road, converting a much-loved backyard garden into raised garden beds so that its ageing residents can still enjoy it, and co-building a gunya (traditional Aboriginal hut) at Barangaroo in Sydney with Indigenous landscape design company Jiwah.



“I really love connecting with people, engaging them to think more about their food and inspiring them to make choices that will have positive outcomes for themselves, the community and the planet.”

LINDSAY BURLTON | GREEN CONNECT FAIR FOOD AND ACTIVITY COORDINATOR



Photo: The Green Connect Farm



GREEN CONNECT FARM

In March this year we opened the Green Connect farm to the community for an open day. More than 400 people came to celebrate our new farm and education hub, children's garden and entrance.

General Manager Kylie Flament said: “So many people in our community are invested in the farm because they are part of it. Their contributions are visible, from the bamboo fencing built by Karenni farmers, to the murals painted by young Aboriginal staff.

“The farm redevelopment builds on almost a decade of tireless work in licensing the land, attracting millions of dollars in funding, and creating a space for local food, community, jobs and inclusion.

“It means we can increase food production, jobs, community engagement and financial sustainability at the farm.”

It all came together thanks to support from the NSW Department of Education which owns the land, as well as state government and philanthropic funders including The Ian Potter Foundation, Westpac Foundation, NSW Government and Bohmer's Tree Care.

The transformation of 11 acres of wasteland into a thriving urban farm has been shaped by community need, right from the start when we asked 150 former refugees who were looking for work in the Wollongong area what they were skilled at and wanted to do, and they told us farming. We took on the farm to provide employment opportunities for former refugees and young people.

Later, the demonstration garden was a response to people saying, 'I don't know how to do this at home' and the children's garden a response to people wanting somewhere for their kids to explore and experiment with nature before and after a farm tour.

Farm Manager Cal Champagne says the changes have made the space fit for purpose.

“We outgrew the facilities at the farm a few years ago and to now have a bigger washing and packing space has made it much easier for the team to pack veg boxes each week.

“The demonstration garden has provided a space for people to stay back and chat after farm tours.

“The new education space has allowed us to do other things such as start our sustainable work skills program with Kiama Community College, which engages young people and former refugees in hands-on training that leads to work across Green Connect.”

In 2020/21 Green Connect grew more than 35,000kg of fair food and welcomed almost 2000 visitors to the farm.

We also welcomed Lindsay Burlton in the Fair Food and Activity Coordinator roles.

Lindsay supports the sale of all food produced at the farm and organises visits and education.

“In both these roles, I really love connecting with people, engaging them to think more about their food and inspiring them to make choices that will have positive outcomes for themselves, the community and the planet,” she said.

Photo at top Paul Scully MP, Kylie Flament and Bohmer's Tree Care staff with Green Connect staff at the launch of the Farm and Education Hub

OUR IMPACT



143
Employment opportunities provided



226
Training and development outcomes



7653
Tonnes of waste diverted from landfill for reuse and recycling



108
Community Engagement Events

Resource Recovery Australia is a national social enterprise that works in waste management to keep waste out of landfill, create jobs and training opportunities for people experiencing barriers to employment, and to engage and connect people in our communities.



Photo: Richard Thrippleton, Team Leader RRA MidCoast

A WORD FROM THE GM AND DEPUTY GM



It's been another big year for the Resource Recovery Australia (RRA) team. Each individual has made us proud through a period of uncertainty with COVID-19, coupled with the most significant growth RRA has seen in 30 years. The new MidCoast contract is the largest in Community Resources history.

In March 2021, the RRA team embarked on a busy three-month period that meant three new Reviva reuse shops opened in just nine weeks. The expansion created 28 local, green jobs. We inducted and trained 25 new staff and three new site managers in reuse retail, Community Recycling Centres (CRCs) and transfer station operations. With this growth came the opportunity to promote Jeff Prater to Queensland Manager, overseeing and supporting our continued growth in Queensland.

The new shops are at Taree on Biripi land, Kleinton on Barunggam land and Rockhampton on Darumbal land.

These opportunities have created new relationships and strengthened existing ones with Councils and partners. Steve Glendenning's reuse counters are a great feature at the new shops. Steve also excelled in taking the lead in RRA's rollout of Retail Express across Reviva reuse shops.

For us, the highlights of this year have been the growth and development of the RRA team and the positive impact of our services within the communities we operate.

Our team has grown, providing employment opportunities for 143 people. The team has thrived, with some stepping up as leaders for the first time, and many have grown their skills in formal training.

Most importantly, none of the above could have been achieved without the commitment and dedication of every RRA employee as well as the support of Councils and our partners, particularly JR Richards & Sons.

The passion of our site managers when it comes to waste speaks for itself and the work that Amanda Chapman (safety and compliance), Amanda Henderson (customer engagement) and Amanda Jackson (administration) do in the background provides amazing support to the RRA team.

Our employees make RRA what it is, so thanks to all of you for making RRA great.

M J Curtis

MATT CURTIS
RRA GENERAL MANAGER

Ally Glendenning

ALLY GLENDENNING
RRA DEPUTY GENERAL MANAGER



RRA ROCKHAMPTON

The Rockhampton team is forging a new path, learning new skills, educating the community on waste reduction and reuse, and promoting the ideals of a circular economy.

The team is led by Manager David Hay.

“David’s commitment to this site is immeasurable,” RRA Queensland Manager Jeff Prater said.

“His understanding of the importance of reuse and repurpose will continue to be a key to cultural change in the community around these ideals.”

RRA is running three parts of the site for Rockhampton Regional City Council; the Reviva Ibis reuse shop, the Community Recycling Centre and the waste transfer station, along with mattress processing.

“Our business model is #Waste2Wages. We’re all about creating local jobs for people in the community,” Jeff said.

“We’ve provided training opportunities for our staff and that includes forklift, test and tag, health and safety representative training, retail training and first aid.”

Photo at top David Hay RRA Rockhampton Manager donating boxing equipment to Des and the Rockhampton PCYC.

Photo right Jeff Prater, RRA Queensland Manager

RRA Rockhampton operates under contract with Rockhampton Regional Council. In just five weeks of opening, the Rockhampton community helped the team divert about 62 tonnes of waste from landfill for reuse and recycling. The waste management and diversion activities provided 13 employment opportunities, 11 formal training opportunities and 100+ hours of in-house training and mentoring.



RRA NOOSA

It was a year of change for the Noosa team as Manager Russell Ping handed over the reins to Mitch McIntyre. The shop and operation continued to strengthen.

RRA Queensland Manager Jeff Prater said: “We cannot thank Russ enough for laying the platform for success in Noosa. Mitch’s promotion has enabled Stevie Ping to step up into the team leader role.

“The team has done an excellent job with additional work covering the weighbridge on top of normal operations.”

In Sept 2020, RRA partnered with Noosa Council and The Nature Conservancy on a \$2.4 million river oyster restoration project.

The team collected oyster shells that were destined for landfill. They transported the shells from the local fishing co-op to the waste management facility where they cured in the sun for four-to-six months.

The shells were then mixed with local rock and returned to the river to help restore critically endangered oyster beds.

Jeff said oyster shells were one of many waste materials diverted from landfill by RRA’s Noosa team.

“The oyster shell recycling project is a worthy project to be a part of, supporting real change to the local environment, which is of great benefit to the Noosa community.”

Reviva Noosa operates under contract with Noosa Shire Council. The Sunshine Coast community helped Reviva Noosa divert more than 445 tonnes of waste from landfill for reuse and recycling in 2020/21. The operations provided 13 employment opportunities, 15 formal training opportunities and 100+ hours of in-house training and mentoring.



Stevie Ping (left) and Mitch McIntyre

RRA TOOWOOMBA

Jamie Currey is a proud Barkindji woman from Far West NSW. The single mum of three children says it was always hard for her to find work because she didn’t have many marketable skills, but that changed when she joined RRA.

Jamie is gaining skills and qualifications that will lead to more job opportunities down the track. Her job with RRA has given her a greater respect for reusing, repairing and upcycling household goods and diverting waste from landfill, something that’s important to her when it comes to caring for country.

“It’s very important that everyone does their part to heal our beautiful country and the land we live on.”

Reviva Kleinton opened in May 2021, creating job opportunities for Jamie and four others. It’s RRA’s second reuse shop in the region, with Reviva Wellcamp already well-established in Toowoomba.

RRA Queensland Manager Jeff Prater said: “The Toowoomba team have continued our growth in the community and shown their commitment to change and development.

“Seeing the team leaders step up and take on greater responsibility has been so good to see.”

RRA Toowoomba operates under contract with Toowoomba Regional Council. The Toowoomba community helped RRA Toowoomba divert more than 1,200 tonnes of waste from landfill for reuse and recycling in 2020/21. The waste management and diversion activities provided 18 employment opportunities, 40 formal training opportunities and many hours of in-house training and mentoring.

“They do not judge you here. They support people from different backgrounds and cultures, and give everyone a go.”

JAMIE CURREY
RRA TOOWOOMBA



“There’s a lot of Aboriginal guys working here and it’s great to see them with stable jobs and seeing their self-worth grow. The shops look deadly.”

RUSSELL PING | RRA MIDCOAST REVIVA AREA MANAGER

Community Recycling Centre



RRA MIDCOAST

2020/21 was a huge year for RRA’s MidCoast operations. In March, we commenced a new 10-year contract for operations, which included expansion into Taree.

The new contract includes reuse shops, Community Recycling Centres, transfer stations and weighbridges across Taree, Tuncurry, Bulahdelah, Stroud and Tea Gardens.

“We are excited to have secured the sub-contract with JR Richards & Sons for operation of the MidCoast Waste Management Facilities. The contract is the largest in Community Resources history and secures over 32 jobs for the next ten years,” said RRA General Manager Matt Curtis.

“The expanded contract means more waste diversion, more chances to engage with and educate our community and more employment and training opportunities.

“Transitioning to new contract terms can be challenging, but the team has shown great resilience and growth and we’re really proud of how they’ve adapted.”

RRA’s MidCoast reuse shops at Taree, Tuncurry and Tea Gardens were rebranded to Reviva, a transformation that was led by Russell Ping,

Photo Russell Ping, RRA MidCoast Reviva Area Manager

who returned from Noosa to become MidCoast Reviva Area Manager.

“I’ve been away from the area for 30 years and I was really keen to come back,” Russ said.

“This is my mum’s Country, Worimi Country, and I’m really happy to be back down this way.”

This year, the Return and Earn Automated Depot team processed 7.6 million containers and served 15,490 customers. A second singulator will be installed early in the new financial year.

The MidCoast community helped RRA MidCoast divert more than 3,295 tonnes of waste from landfill for reuse and recycling in 2020/21, up more than 700 tonnes from the year before. The waste management and diversion activities provided 48 employment opportunities, 49 formal training opportunities and many hours of in-house training and mentoring.

RRA SYDNEY (MCRS)

For John Huynh, community engagement and connection is a big part of his work.

John leads a six-person team as Operations Manager of RRA’s Mobile Community Recycling Service (MCRS), an award-winning, problem-waste collection service for three of the biggest Councils in Western Sydney.

He came to Australia as a refugee from Vietnam in 1980 and joined RRA in 2016, referred by a Job Active provider.

“As soon as I met RRA General Manager Matt Curtis and saw the truck, I knew this was the job for me,” John said. “I love my job because I meet lots of customers and it makes them so happy when we pick up their problem waste and electrical waste.

“I tell customers how important it is to recycle things like oil, paint and batteries. They like to know that these things can hurt the environment if they’re not disposed of correctly.”

The MCRS is a one-of-a-kind Community Recycling Centre (CRC) on wheels. Through the service, customers can safely dispose of common household problem waste including paint, motor oil, cooking oil and batteries, as well as electrical waste including televisions and computers.

John and his team provided service to more than 6,428 residents across Western Sydney this year, an increase of 1,458 service calls on last year. Customers rated the service 4.97 stars out of 5 and 100% said they would recommend it.

Matt said: “The thing that makes the MCRS so successful is the connection to the community. The MCRS team works hard to achieve the best results for the community, the environment and our Council customers.”

The MCRS operates under contract to Cumberland, Parramatta, and Blacktown City Councils. The Western Sydney communities helped the MCRS team to divert 196.95 tonnes of problem and electrical waste from landfill in 2020/21. The service provided six employment opportunities, six formal training opportunities and many hours of in-house training and mentoring.



John Huynh, MCRS Operations Manager

RRA MOSS VALE

Tamara Strong is known as a reuse champion. In six years of working at RRA Moss Vale, the local mum of three has developed a talent for transforming discarded objects into works of art.

As her talent has grown, so too has her passion for diverting waste from landfill.

A pile of metal can become a beautiful wind chime in her hands. And this year she won RRA’s Reuse, Repair and Repurpose competition with her Christmas display complete with reindeer, nutcracker and Santa.

“I love being creative and reusing things that are going to landfill.”

When Tamara joined RRA in 2015, she needed a chance. She’s now developed skills including test and tag, forklift, senior first aid and Certificate II in Retail. She’s also done training in customer service and merchandising. And she’s bought her own home.

This year Tamara and the Moss Vale team, led by RRA Moss Vale Manager Steve Glendenning and Assistant Manager Ashlei Krebs, trialled a new point of sale system, Retail Express, now being rolled out across all RRA Reviva shops.

“The Mossy team was a test case for the software. They did a great job,” Steve said.

“The system is working really well for us and provides us with plenty of information about our diversion impact.”

RRA operates the Reviva Moss Vale reuse shop under contract to Wingecarribee Shire Council. The Southern Highlands community helped the Reviva Moss Vale team divert 484.36 tonnes of waste from landfill for reuse in 2020/21. The reuse shop provided 8 employment opportunities, 9 formal training opportunities and many hours of in-house training and mentoring.

“I love being creative and reusing things that are going to landfill.”

TAMARA STRONG
RRA MOSS VALE





RRA DUNMORE

For regular visitors to Revolve Dunmore and The Tinkering, the reuse shop and community space is not just about reuse and second-hand goods; it's about having a chat, people asking how you are and genuinely wanting an answer.

Our regulars include elderly gents who visit every day to find tools or lawnmowers, former refugees who come in for electrical goods, and Tinkerers who share the community space every Friday to learn new skills and enjoy each other's company.

For the Illawarra community this is a safe place to connect, shop, find inspiration and learn; a unique space where everyone is welcome.

As one regular visitor said: "Love, love, love going to Revolve Dunmore and The Tinkering. It gives me such a feeling of power being able to make things and create. Best therapy ever."

RRA Dunmore Manager Jarrod Roskell said: "I'm proud to lead this team of hardworking people. This year they have gone above and beyond in customer service, waste diversion and sales."

The team has upskilled on merchandising, machine operation, customer service and safety. They worked alongside Deputy General Manager Ally Glendenning to redesign and refit the shop.

"Ally helped us to make the most of our space, breathing new life into our displays," Jarrod said.

Photos at top Jarrod Roskell and The Tinkering

Ally said: "Jarrod and the whole Dunmore team embrace everything I teach. Every time I visit, I see that they have implemented the tips from the previous visit.

"I'm so impressed by the improvements they have made this year in terms of the customer experience, sales and waste diversion."

The team served a record of more than 17,500 customers this year. Despite a decrease in capacity due to COVID-19, The Tinkering welcomed 523 community members to 60 events.

RRA operates Revolve Dunmore under contract to Shellharbour Council. The Illawarra community helped the Revolve Dunmore team divert 1,957 tonnes of waste from landfill for reuse and recycling in 2020/21 and provided 9 employment opportunities, five formal training opportunities and 100+ hours of in-house training and mentoring.

"We cannot thank the Illawarra community enough for their support of Revolve Dunmore."

JARROD ROSKELL | RRA DUNMORE MANAGER

RRA ACT

When ACT manager Lori Roberts-Scott met Cherie Bastin in 2020, she knew she'd be a perfect fit for RRA.

At the time Cherie was doing it tough - she was unemployed, struggling financially and unable to secure long-term housing.

Cherie started working for RRA as a green waste attendant then transferred to the weighbridge. She embraced the opportunity.

"Cherie became our health and safety representative, did mental health first aid training and obtained her NMI certification in her first three months with RRA," Lori said.

By June 2021 Cherie had found long-term housing and transitioned to full-time employment in the waste industry with one of RRA's partners.

"Seeing Cherie get back on her feet was really rewarding," Lori said.

"She's in a job she loves and doing well, it's all I could want for anyone."

More than 75 per cent of RRA's employees in the ACT were facing barriers to employment when they joined.

Cherie says her time with RRA provided her with skills for future employment and gave her confidence.

"Having someone believe in you is sometimes all you need to help you believe in yourself." CHERIE BASTIN | RRA ACT



RRA operates the public and commercial weighbridges at Mitchell, Mugga Lane and Mugga Quarry on behalf of ACT NoWaste. The team also operated the Belconnen weighbridge until its closure in September 2020.

ACT weighbridge operations served more than 664,000 customers and provided 23 employment opportunities, 8 formal training opportunities and many hours of in-house training and mentoring in 2020/21.

RRA CONSULTING SERVICE

Through consulting we share our experience from our ten successful reuse shops, including site design tips to maximise diversion and revenue models.

This year our consulting activities were impacted by travel restrictions due to COVID-19. With ongoing border closures in Western Australia, we supported the East Kimberley Job Pathways (EKJP) team via online meetings and phone calls in a limited capacity.

"The EKJP team have powered through, building on the foundations we set up in previous years. We look forward to being able to visit and provide more insights and training in the years ahead," RRA General Manager Matt Curtis said.

A highlight this year was consulting for Muswellbrook Shire Council. Matt, Ally Glendenning and Dani Tuazon (Community Resources Technical Writer) visited Muswellbrook Waste Management Facility to assess the facility and understand the site flows and limitations.

"We provided the Muswellbrook Shire Council waste team with a detailed report including shop and site design drawings, options for running a reuse shop and techniques to maximise waste diversion," Ally said.

"Council has used the report to put forward a reuse shop concept which will benefit the community and maximise waste diversion from landfill."

RRA's consulting team works with Councils and community groups to design and set up reuse shops, develop and train reuse shop staff and implement recycling and waste diversion activities.

OUR IMPACT



260
Employment opportunities provided



9.1K
Tonnes of waste diverted from landfill



538K
Mattresses recycled



7.1K
Tonnes of steel recycled



920
Tonnes of timber recycled



1.1K
Tonnes of foam recycled

Soft Landing is a national social enterprise that collects and recycles mattresses to keep waste out of landfill and create jobs for people experiencing barriers to work.

Photo: Villiame Tukana, Soft Landing Smithfield

A WORD FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER



This year we collected and recycled more than 538,000 mattresses and ensembles, keeping them out of landfill and recovering many thousands of tonnes of steel, foam and timber for genuine reuse back into the circular economy.

It was a record intake for Soft Landing – almost 73,000 more units (mattresses and ensembles) than last year and by far the largest volumes we've ever seen. The volumes were largely driven by the impacts of COVID-19, but also a growing community and customer awareness of the importance of recycling and reducing landfill.

Our team managed the peaks and met contract obligations and performance standards – a great achievement by all. Across our sites we have adaptable, responsive and committed leaders – a very big thank you to Julie Shannon, Joe Rasmussen, Kylie Roberts-Frost, Jason Heron, Kiana Smithers, Darren Rye, Steve Maizels, Geoff Brown, Mike Pennington, Harry Daniels-Grant, Josh Glanville and your teams.

We provided new employment opportunities for 260 people during the year, while our existing core workforce increased over the year to 171 employees at 30 June 2021. Most of our staff have experienced systemic disadvantage and discrimination, and they come to us seeking opportunity.

This year we were recognised by Settlement Services International and Members of Parliament, and by our customers, for our social impact.

A photo exhibition showcasing the people at our largest site in Smithfield demonstrates the value that our staff bring, to a work environment that is tough and not for everyone.

Our manual mattress deconstruction methods are jobs-rich, meaning we pursue job opportunities above purely mechanical shredding and other methods that provide little employment and community benefit.

We keep our by-products in Australia to maximise reuse of materials and support local industry. We're proud of our model and what we do and we are continuing to focus on the commercial side of our business.

The mattress recycling industry is facing some very real challenges, including a lack of downstream markets for the components that we recover – steel springs, timber and foam. We're working through these challenges and implementing recommendations of a strategic review by Social Ventures Australia, to future-proof our organisation.

In 2021 our collection and recycling prices increased, in many cases for the first time in three years, a decision that reflects the rapidly changing costs of collecting and recycling mattresses. This is a necessary move that has seen us lose some customers and keep others who value, and are prepared to pay for, the social and environmental outcomes that we create.

We've secured major customer contract extensions this year, in Sydney and Western Australia in particular. We also completed the transition of the Product Stewardship Scheme to an independent company and charity. We continue to work with the scheme – now known as the Australian Bedding Stewardship Council (ABSC) – as their preferred mattress recycler, to find solutions to problem waste from mattresses, and to provide insight into mattress collection and recycling trends.

In closing I would like to acknowledge the impact that COVID-19 has again had on our workplace and our lives. My significant gratitude and respect goes to our staff, our managers and our colleagues throughout all of Community Resources for outstanding commitment, care, adaptability and expertise. We simply would not be able to do any of what we do without each one of you. Thank you.

CHRIS RICHARDS

SOFT LANDING GENERAL MANAGER

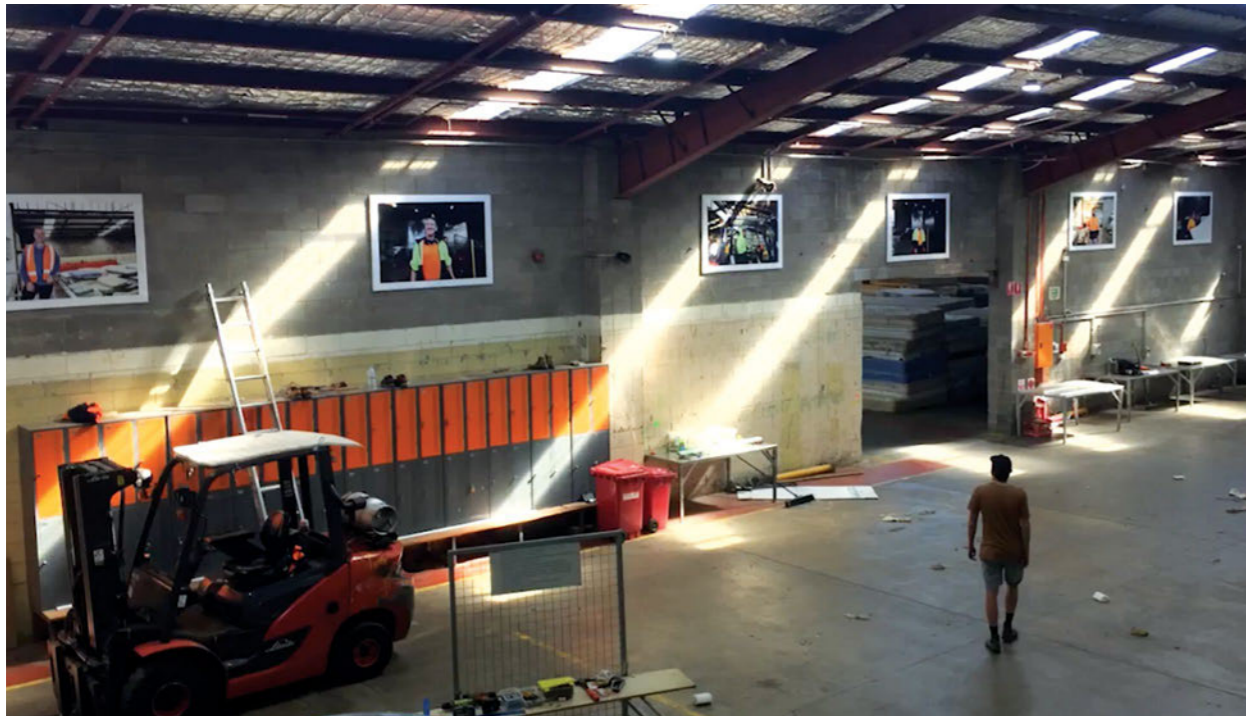


PHOTO EXHIBITION AT SMITHFIELD

In late 2020 one of our funders, Westpac Foundation, organised a photoshoot at Smithfield with Flashpoint Labs, a values-aligned photo agency that employs and mentors Indigenous and diverse youth.

After the photoshoot Flashpoint photographer Tomasz Machnik proposed the idea of a walk-through exhibition at Smithfield.

“They were such a lovely group of guys. There was something so gentle about them, I wanted to capture it, honour their hard work and make them feel respected and acknowledged,” he said.

We gave him the green light to print, frame and mount 17 huge portraits of our staff on the walls of the Smithfield site. Tomasz, Joe and our technical writer Dani Tuazon volunteered their time over the October long weekend to make the installation happen – a job that required a forklift to hang each print.

On the Tuesday, our team walked into work to enormous photographic prints of their faces, hung high on the factory walls.

NSW State Manager Joe Rasmussen said: “It’s one thing to sign a consent form allowing a photographer to use your image, and something quite different to find two square metres of your own head looking down at you when you arrive at work on a Monday morning.

“Afterwards, quietly, I checked in with each of the people in the photos to make sure it really was OK. The reaction was the same every time – shy, somewhat shocked but quite determined the image should stay up.”



“We wanted to honour their hard work and make them feel respected and acknowledged.”

TOMASZ MACHNIK | FLASHPOINT

Photo at top Tomasz Machnik installing photo exhibition at Smithfield

SMITHFIELD

Our Smithfield site is our largest and based in the Fairfield LGA, which resettles the largest number of humanitarian migrants in Australia each year.

“Just one in three refugees have a job five years after resettlement in Australia,” NSW State Manager Joe Rasmussen said.

“It can be tough for them to find opportunities, even if they were highly qualified in their country of origin.”

Watisoni Vereivalu was a primary school teacher in Fiji. When he arrived in Australia six years ago, work wasn’t easy to find.

“People would find out about your visa and think it was too difficult to employ you, so I was really happy when Soft Landing took me on.”

Watisoni, who is on a temporary protection visa, has been working at Soft Landing Smithfield for two years. Having permanent employment allows him to support his family back home.

“Working at Soft Landing means I can pay my rent and help my family in Fiji who have been having a hard time during the pandemic.”

Joe said: “Every day we see examples of how having and keeping a job can change someone’s life. We’re privileged to work with and learn from refugees who are hardworking, motivated and have much to teach us when it comes to hardship, resilience, and the value of family and community.”

Of the 44 staff at Smithfield, most are on temporary protection visas or at different stages of attempting to become permanent residents.

Our staff profile reflects the area and the relationship we established in 2019 with Settlement Services International (SSI), a community organisation that supports former refugees and asylum seekers. SSI provided dozens of candidates at short notice when a business restructure meant that we had to more than double the Smithfield workforce.

This year Joe won a SSI Community Appreciation Award for his contribution to refugee employment, with SSI recognising his “dedication to the learning, growth and success” of staff.

Photo Joe Rasmussen

“We’re privileged to work with and learn from refugees who are hardworking, motivated and have much to teach us when it comes to hardship, resilience, and the value of family and community.”

JOE RASMUSSEN | NSW STATE MANAGER





“There are very few opportunities for a second chance. To find stable employment can be life-changing – and that benefit flows into the whole community”

KYLIE ROBERTS-FROST
ACT STATE MANAGER

HUME

In June 2020 the ACT team had a stockpile of mattresses and needed extra hands on the cutting floor.

ACT State Manager Kylie Roberts-Frost said: “The bushfires in late 2019 and then COVID-19 led to more people doing clean-outs of their homes. We also had a steel press out of action.

“The usual slowdown that comes in the mattress recycling world in the winter months never came in 2020.”

Kylie and the team decided to try something different, tapping into a new target group with barriers to employment.

They partnered with ACT Corrective Services to place suitable candidates with Soft Landing after release from custody.

“Ultimately it’s really hard for some of these guys to reintegrate into the workforce once they’ve been in custody,” Kylie said.

“There are very few opportunities for a second chance. To find stable employment can be life-changing – and that benefit flows into the whole community.

“Our relationship with ACT Corrective Services is great and they provide support throughout the process.

“We bring people on as casuals to see how they go and if it works out, we try to make them permanent.

“Jason Heron our Hume Site Manager and myself try to be as supportive as we can, but these guys face different challenges and we don’t have a corrections background. Knowing we have that extra support from Corrective Services is really helpful.”

Kylie comes from a corporate background, and it’s a big change for her to be employing former detainees on parole, rather than university graduates.

“It’s so different to what I have experienced, and it’s so much more rewarding to give an opportunity to someone who hasn’t had access to the resources and education that were easily available to many of my former employees.”

The ACT team has now cleared the mattress stockpile and staff numbers are back to normal levels. Given the success of the partnership, Soft Landing will continue to work with ACT Corrective Services to provide opportunities for people facing barriers to employment.

Photo Kylie Roberts-Frost



JASON HERON

Jason joined Soft Landing through the Work for the Dole program in 2016. He became a casual then a permanent, working across the cutting room and developing leadership skills. He’s now Hume Site Manager and leads an 18-person team.

“It’s pretty amazing to see the changes here over the last five years with the growth of the team and the increase in mattress volumes,” he said.

“Mattress trends have changed too. There are no longer busy summers and slow winters. The last two years have been busy all-year-round and sometimes it’s tough to keep up.

“We’ve got a lot more mattresses coming in and we have to work hard to process them quickly, which can be difficult when you’re doing everything by hand.

“We’ve also got to think about how we deal with things like pocket springs which are becoming really popular but are challenging to recycle.”

Jason likes to help his team on the cutting floor whenever he can.

“It’s a good opportunity to talk to the guys, see how they’re going, find out what’s working for them and if they need help. Some of our team come from some pretty tough situations, so it’s good to work on the floor with them and have a chat.”

Despite the challenges, Jason says it’s a good thing that people are becoming more aware of the need to divert waste from landfill.



“The community is starting to think a lot more about recycling and the environment, so I see it as a good thing that we’re so busy.”

JASON HERON | SOFT LANDING HUME



(From left) Josh Glanville, Pat Conroy and Joe Rasmussen

HUNTER

National Recycling Week in November 2020 was an opportunity to build profile in our local communities and highlight our recycling outcomes.

An article on the Hunter team caught the eye of two local MPs who acknowledged the team's hard work and commitment to diverting waste from landfill.

The article in the Newcastle Herald led to a Community Recognition Statement in the NSW Parliament by Member for Charlestown Jodie Harrison.

Ms Harrison praised the Hunter team for processing higher-than-usual volumes of mattresses during the pandemic and called out Hunter Site Manager Josh Glanville as "a great leader in challenging times."



"We're collecting for Councils to keep as many mattresses out of landfill as we can, so we're pretty busy."

KIANA SMITHERS | ILLAWARRA SITE MANGER

In February we welcomed Federal Member for Shortland and Shadow Minister Assisting for Climate Change Pat Conroy to Soft Landing Hunter.

Mr Conroy met the team and had a tour of the site. Josh and NSW State Manager Joe Rasmussen gave him a snapshot of the work we are doing to divert waste from landfill and create jobs.

After his visit to Soft Landing Mr Conroy said: "I was really pleased to hear about their focus on providing employment opportunities for people struggling to find work."

Joe said: "The thing about the Hunter business is that it has stabilised precisely at the same time as the world has gone crazy. That's a testament to Josh's work, and to the team pulling in behind him."

ILLAWARRA

For Kiana Smithers, moving into a management position as a young female in a male-dominated workplace was challenging at first.

The Illawarra Site Manager had been working with Soft Landing as an Admin Officer since 2011 and was promoted to the role in mid-2020.

"I think it took a little bit of time to gel as a team when I was first promoted to the role, but now we're all on the same page and have a great working relationship," she said.

The Illawarra team is Kiana and four employees who arrange collection and storage of mattresses from the Illawarra and the South Coast before they are transferred to Soft Landing Smithfield for processing.

"We've got two trucks, a storage container and four guys at the moment. We're collecting for Councils in Wollongong, Shellharbour and Eurobodalla to keep as many mattresses out of landfill as we can, so we're pretty busy."

"Over the last year COVID has definitely made things more challenging. I'm restricted to how often I can visit the team and managing remotely can be hard because I like being on site, but the guys are doing a great job of keeping things running."

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

A way of looking outside the box and trying new things is delivering good outcomes for Soft Landing WA.

This year an increase in mattress volumes from 83,000 to 124,000, along with operational changes to increase efficiency, almost doubled revenue and significantly improved margins in the west.

A new contract with one of the Metropolitan Regional Councils in Perth that covers five Council areas increased volumes by 20 per cent alone. The WA team also picked up other Council contracts and mining services work.

Staff numbers at the Wangara site almost doubled at times during the year, from 25 to just under 50. A second shift helped the team get through the extra volumes.

WA Manager Mike Pennington joined Soft Landing in 2020, bringing with him many years of experience in waste management. He started reviewing processes and making improvements to our WA operations with an eye on expansion and growth.

"You can't put the blinkers on and say this is all we do. The better way is to look at new opportunities and how we can be a sustainable business for many years to come."

Soft Landing WA is in a unique position to break new ground, with currently no other mattress recyclers in Perth. This year the team started collecting and recycling couches for three WA Councils, removing metal frames and foam. This had never been done before – couches were previously 100 percent sent to landfill.

Soft Landing WA is also collecting white goods for Councils, degassing fridges and separating metals for recycling.

A second WA site is on the table for consideration. The Wangara site is north of the Swan River and services south of the river, up to 200kms away.

"We're evaluating a presence south of the river as well. We would love to spread our wings and make sure we're established close to our customers, which would allow us to keep our prices reasonable," Mike said.

Most importantly, Mike and the team have cracked the challenge of disposal pathways for pocket springs in mattresses, through a three-year supply deal with metal recycling company Sims Metal which has given them access to a huge shredder that shreds, sifts and cleans steel.

This comes at a time when Soft Landing sites on the eastern seaboard are looking for new ways to dispose of pocket springs via scrap steel sales.

"If we're looking forward, we can also look at whether we invest in recycling our recovered materials ourselves, rather than relying on third parties."



Mike Pennington | WA Manager

VICTORIA

Our Victorian team based in Bayswater Melbourne spent 2020-21 working through rolling lockdowns.

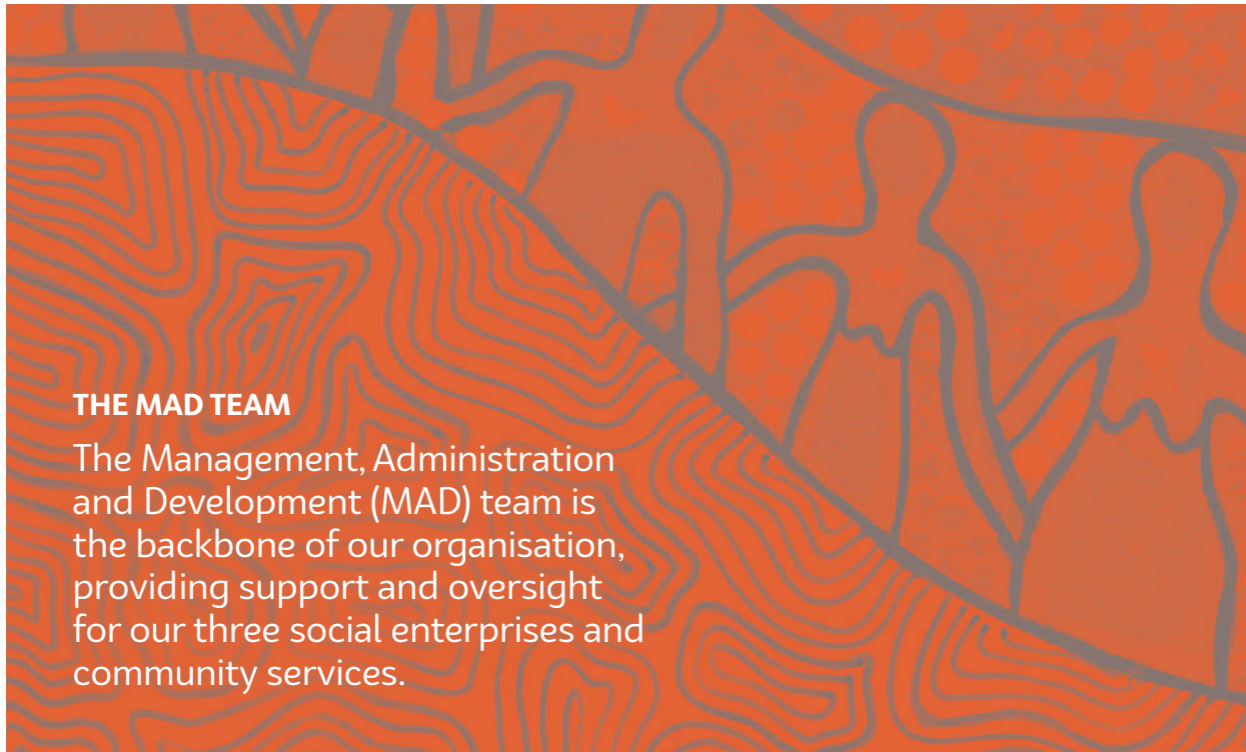
Masks, sanitiser and additional health and safety measures became part of daily life, but the work itself did not change as Soft Landing provides an essential service.

The team managed to maintain continuity in operations throughout the year and kept a stable workforce of nine full-time staff.

Site Manager Steve Maizels said: "We've kept all our staff and our operations have not changed. We're a small but tight workforce and everyone gets along."

The Bayswater site is a new one. The team moved there in 2020 and has been working with scaled-down operations and offsite processing while planning approvals are underway.

A new steel press is in place, which will allow the team to manually deconstruct mattresses and recycle metal and foam, a move that will create more full-time jobs at the site.



THE MAD TEAM

The Management, Administration and Development (MAD) team is the backbone of our organisation, providing support and oversight for our three social enterprises and community services.

The team has a diverse range of skills and provides expert advice and services to our business units in communications and marketing, corporate support, finance, people and culture (HR) and quality assurance.

As our organisation grows, the MAD team is building foundations, improving governance and introducing systems and processes that meet growing needs. This year we took part in an independent governance review and continue to work with the Board on fit-for-purpose frameworks and processes.

We transitioned to a single, electronic pay system and started work on a new reporting system to efficiently capture and report our social and environmental impact to our customers and stakeholders. We onboarded PricewaterhouseCoopers as our new auditor, further strengthening our accountability and transparency.

We achieved ISO27001 Information Security Self-Accreditation as part of our commitment to stakeholders, including funders, clients and staff, to protect their data and privacy.

We worked with different parts of the organisation to improve oversight of key activities and enhance contract management capabilities to support compliance.

We developed new policies, including our Code of Conduct embedding our commitment to ethical and legal behaviours, and our Drug and Alcohol and Whistleblower policies. We rolled out training for these new policies to more than 600 employees and developed a new approach to employee onboarding.

We strengthened our brand, ensuring our purpose is clear and well-understood by our staff, partners and

customers, and supported business units in building profiles and promoting their products and services. We acknowledged and celebrated significant events including NAIDOC, National Refugee Week and Reconciliation Week.

As part of our ongoing commitment to safety and wellbeing, we recruited additional capacity in our People and Culture team.

Our Emergency Planning Committee continued to meet to respond to COVID, addressing safety and wellbeing for staff and other stakeholders, business continuity and compliance with legal obligations, guiding us through the COVID lockdowns and changing restrictions.

Our wellbeing program focussed on mental health and COVID resilience throughout the year, as our staff managed operational changes and remote working at different times.

In 2021/22 we look forward to welcoming a new CEO, following the departure of Jess Moore in May this year. Jess was CEO for three years and, before that, General Manager of Green Connect for five years.

She helped lead our organisation through challenges including droughts, bush fires, floods and COVID-19, demonstrating a real commitment to environmental repair and sustainability, and overseeing businesses and programs that diverted many thousands of tonnes of waste from landfill.

Jess increased the number of former refugees employed by Community Resources, diversifying our employment base by expanding opportunities from Green Connect in the Illawarra to other parts of the business. She will be missed.

FUNDING THE GAP

We met with people at all levels of government in 2020/21 to talk about our proven model of job creation and our plan to 'fund the gap'.

Our social enterprises can cover operational business costs and provide hundreds of jobs through trade. What we can't fund through trade is additional support for our staff with barriers to employment. This is what we call 'the gap'.

At Community Resources the gap is currently filled by staff who go above and beyond to support people with barriers to employment – and our philanthropic partners.

We are seeking a more sustainable funding model; an outcomes-based, government-funded program with agreed targets that can be used across our organisation – and potentially across the sector – and scaled-up to create more jobs.

Green Connect's successful youth employment program is a good example of how this can work.

Funded by the NSW Government, the program was aimed at young people who were unemployed, not in education or training (or at high risk of dropping out of school) and had multiple and complex barriers that made it hard to get and keep a job. The program funded additional support and training for these young people and well exceeded its two-year targets when it came to an end in early 2021.

Based on the Green Connect program, we've mapped out the cost of providing additional support over three years, organisation-wide and with measurable employment outcomes. This helps us better understand the true cost of supporting people with barriers to employment and shows our model can work on a national scale, with clear cost-savings to government and social and economic benefits.

We will continue this work in 2021/22, with government, philanthropic partners, other work integrated social enterprises and peak bodies for the sector.

MAGGIE JULIUS

WHS Adviser Maggie Julius is part of our People and Culture team, based at Soft Landing Smithfield.

Maggie's rapport with staff is key to her success in improving work health and safety at the site.

"This word always comes up when I speak about the team – it's camaraderie. They come from all parts of the world, from such different places, and when you speak to them it's like they are brothers and sisters, neighbours.

"They feel comfortable to share things with me – some of them are teaching me their language, Rohyinga and Fijian, and we're having a good old laugh about that."

Maggie worked in South Africa as a police constable and community service worker before moving to Australia in 2008.

Soft Landing NSW Manager Joe Rasmussen said: "Our business is set up to support vulnerable people. Our employees bring additional needs and the risk of miscommunication, and even further injustice, is quite real.

"When we created Maggie's position, the conversation was about finding someone with deep listening skills and empathy, who could create an environment of trust and give us the best chance of understanding the needs of our people.

"Maggie came on board and immediately met and exceeded our expectations in those areas. Her commitment extends to everything she does. We are a richer community for having her around."



"I'm always excited to come to work. It's such a great environment and the guys are so happy to be among each other."

MAGGIE JULIUS
WORK HEALTH & SAFETY ADVISER



Photo Ama Folly Bebe, Green Connect Farm, Illawarra

KEY FUNDERS AND PRO BONO PARTNERS

Thank You!

Australian Department of Education, Skills and Employment

Australian Department of Home Affairs

Australian Department of Social Services
Community Home Support Funding

Capricorn Foundation

Impact Investing Australia

John Sevier

MinterEllison

National Indigenous Australians Agency

NSW Department of Communities and Justice

NSW Environment Protection Authority

NSW Environmental Trust

NSW Generations Fund (My Community Project)

NSW Roads and Maritime Services

Paul Ramsay Foundation

Qantas Foundation

Scanlon Foundation

Shorebirds Social Ventures Australia
(with the support of Gandel Philanthropy)

StreetSmart Australia

Sulo

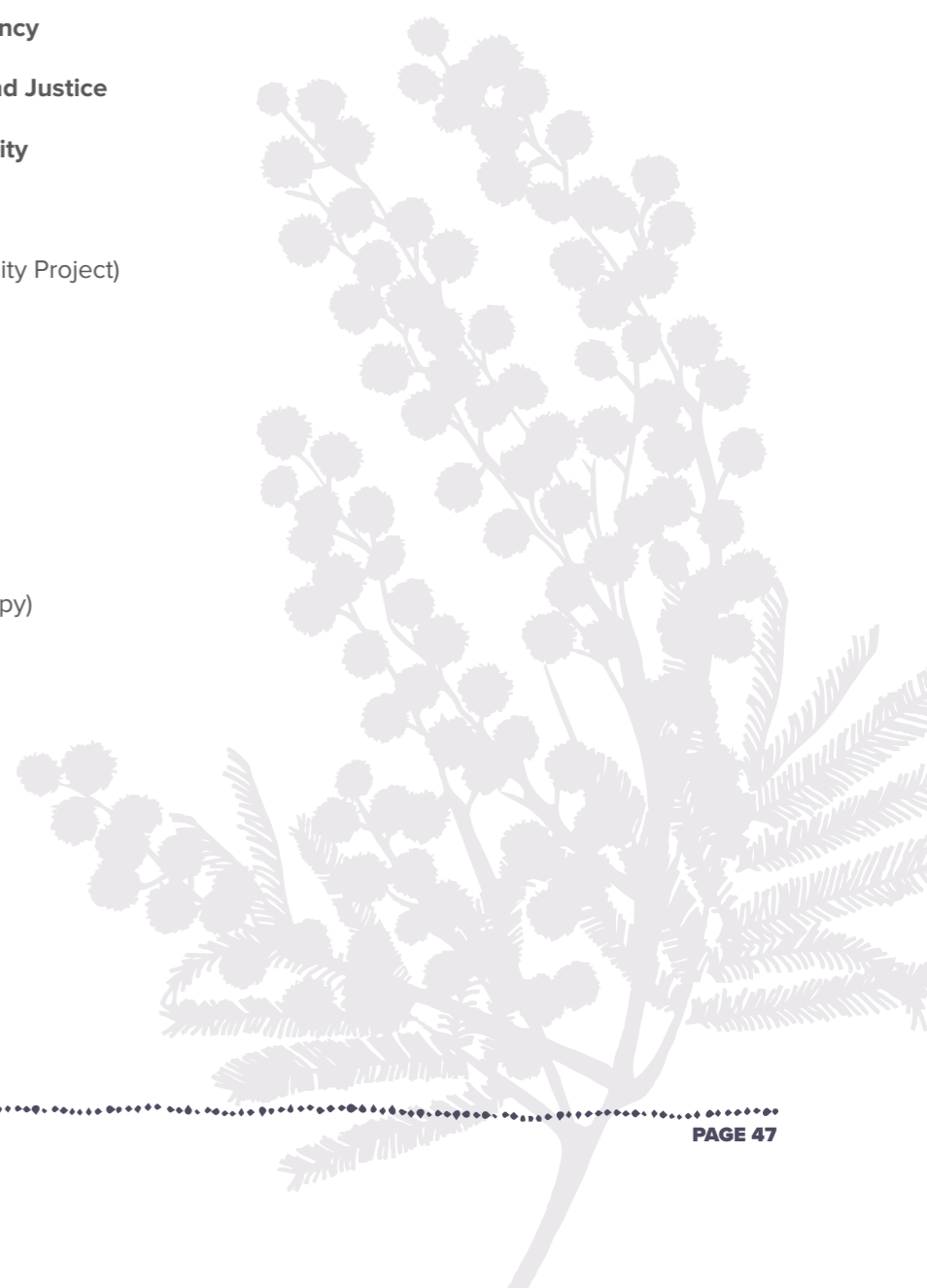
The Ian Potter Foundation

Transport for NSW

Veolia

Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation

Westpac Foundation



Financial Report



| | 2021 | 2020 | 2019 |
|--------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| REVENUE | 35,370,642 | 30,325,064 | 25,095,399 |
| EXPENDITURE | 34,640,169 | 29,773,987 | 24,627,152 |
| SURPLUS | 730,473 | 551,077 | 468,247 |

| | 2021 | 2020 | 2019 |
|--------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| CURRENT ASSETS | 7,158,429 | 4,560,981 | 3,227,846 |
| NON-CURRENT ASSETS | 5,025,062 | 7,496,922 | 2,395,832 |
| CURRENT LIABILITIES | 6,477,365 | 6,449,509 | 4,312,498 |
| NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES | 3,711,826 | 4,344,567 | 598,430 |
| EQUITY | 1,994,300 | 1,263,827 | 712,750 |

Community Resources' accounts were independently audited by PwC Australia.



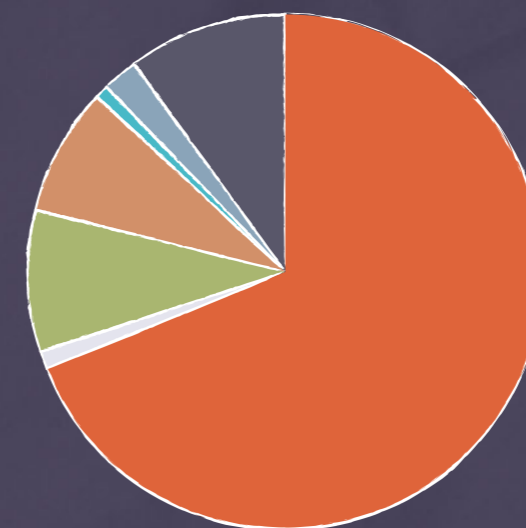
\$21,386,098

Total wages paid
(including on-costs)*

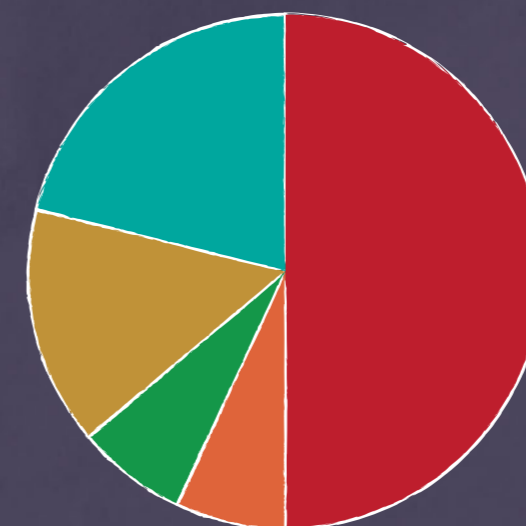


90%

Proportion of revenue
through trade



- Wages & Contractors 69%
- Administration & Finance 10%
- Materials & Equipment 2%
- Accommodation 1%
- Vehicles & Plant 8%
- Waste Disposal 9%
- Loss on sale of Property, Plant & Equipment 1%



REVENUE BY BUSINESS UNIT

- Soft Landing 50%
- Resource Recovery Australia 21%
- Community Services 15%
- Green Connect 7%
- MAD Team 7%

As at 30th June 2021 *Total Salaries, Wages COC and expenses

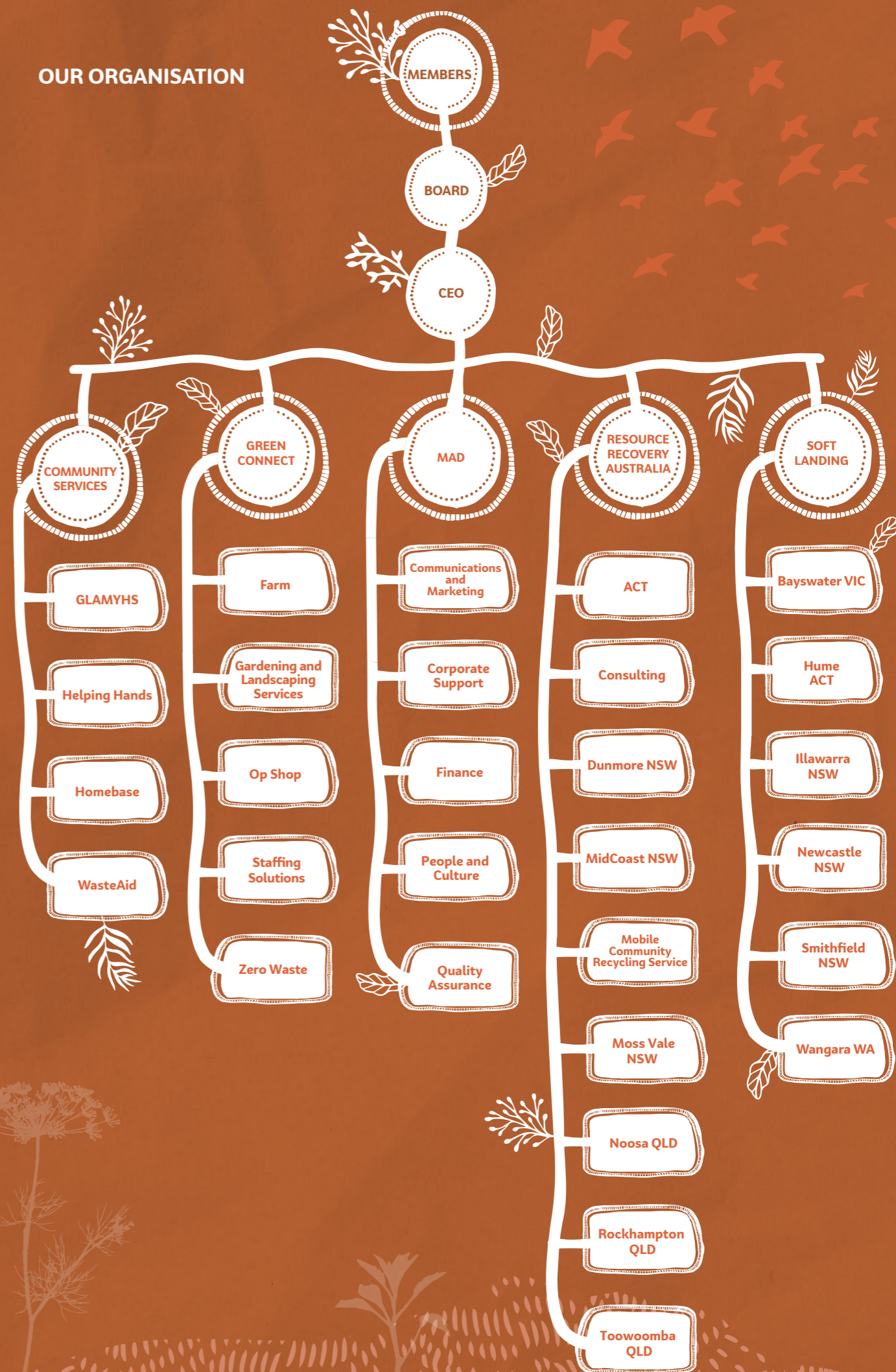
Our History





Photo Darren Evans, Depot Hand RRA Tea Gardens

OUR ORGANISATION



ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21

COMMUNITY RESOURCES HQ NORTH

Level 2 Bridgepoint
1 Manning Street
Tuncurry NSW 2428

COMMUNITY RESOURCES HQ SOUTH

5/82 Wentworth Street
Port Kembla NSW 2505

Community Resources Ltd ABN 90 746 695 414

02 6555 8922

www.communityresources.org.au

