

Servants  
COMMUNITY HOUSING

A photograph of a middle-aged man with a shaved head and blue eyes, wearing a black t-shirt. He is standing outdoors in front of a house with large windows. There are white roses in the foreground and background. The lighting is bright, suggesting a sunny day.

# 2022 Impact Report



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# Message from the CEO



**Amanda Donohoe**  
Chief Executive Officer

Two of our residents have lived at 'Carrical' for 40 years, longer than the 36 years we have managed the property, and many have been with us for over 15 years. We have journeyed with our long-term residents as they age and have witnessed the decline in their mental and physical health. We have gone above and beyond to help them remain living with us because it is their home. Often they have no one else and we become family.

Like adults with ageing parents, we find ourselves meeting with case workers to discuss life-changing decisions as we juggle the balance between the desire of our resident to age in the place they view as home, versus our capacity to care for someone with high level needs. We are personally involved because we view our residents as more than just a 'client'.

We have walked that tightrope for a long time and seen the value in our model. We do not offer professional medical support that exists in aged care or supported residential services. Instead, we offer personal connection and a community to belong to. We work hard to provide a safe environment and although shared housing is a challenge in this COVID world, most of our residents are up-to-date with vaccinations, less than half have contracted COVID and none have been hospitalised.

The need for our model is dire. More people need hope, safe housing and a loving community. We are exploring and actively looking for partnerships with landowners to expand and house more people.

Rising costs are our latest challenge. How could we pass increased living costs on to people that are already struggling on meagre Centrelink payments that do not automatically increase with the CPI? Thankfully, our broader community is supporting us, and we remain grateful for all the donations and volunteers that are helping us to continue to serve.

We are delighted to have signed an MOU with Habitat For Humanity who will be assisting us to build a low-cost bungalow at our women's house which will provide another home for an at-risk female. Subsidised housing requires a subsidy and we appreciate the contribution from Habitat and our landlords who provide a subsidised rent. I thank our Board and Property Advisory Panel for their wisdom, advice and encouragement and to our dedicated staff and volunteers who so willingly give their time and effort to provide a community of hope to our residents.

**We live in challenging times but our sense of purpose remains strong and we look forward to strengthening our communities in 2023.**

# Message from the Board



**Stephen Baxter**  
Board Chair

**Without a doubt, the 2021/22 year has been challenging. The continuing pandemic along with government lockdowns has taken its toll. However, through the dedication and hard work of our team working together, across our Servants community we can say with satisfaction and confidence, "we have been there for each other".**

This time last year, after a difficult year we had no way of knowing the ensuing 12 months would be perhaps even more demanding with increased challenges for residents and staff. Even now, we have yet to see the full economic and social impact of the pandemic. Yet, due to the perseverance and diligence of our people we remain strong and resilient.

So again, as I said last year, on behalf of the board, thank you to every person—residents, managers, staff and volunteers—for your contribution in ensuring each house remained safe and healthy through difficult and trying times.

While the challenges of these past years have taken much of our attention, Amanda and the board have worked hard to ensure we don't lose focus on the future. The impacts of the pandemic have put pressure on our model causing us to reflect deeply and explore diligently how best to ensure a sustainable future.

The 'Servants' model of providing daily meals with live-in house managers provides a high level of care for residents yet sits outside most governmental planning and policy. Applying for government grants is difficult as we don't currently own land. A Property Advisory Group has met during the year to assist in finding a pathway ahead.

The prolonged lockdown also affected our finances. Costs are rising, and last year we joined many housing organisations whose bottom line was impacted by government programs to house homeless people in hotels, impacting our capacity to provide long-term solutions to homelessness and social isolation. Our houses are now at capacity and we have returned to the pre-pandemic reality of waiting lists for people to access our services.

These pandemic years have certainly been challenging. Yet challenges are not unique. Many across our houses face them daily and find in Servants a safe place to begin to find a way through and overcome whatever difficulties they are facing.

**As we look forward to the coming year we do so with a quiet confidence. Servants is about being there for each other during whatever challenges we face. And we will continue to be there for each other.**

# Our World is in Turmoil

There's been COVID, the war in Ukraine, a change of Federal Government (and a State election pending), rising inflation and interest rates, floods, a national housing crisis ... the list goes on.

For those of us on social media or glued to the news, we watch the challenges of a changing world unfold before our eyes. But for people experiencing homelessness, and those with acute mental illness, it can feel like the world is moving into new and scary places beyond your control - and leaving you behind.

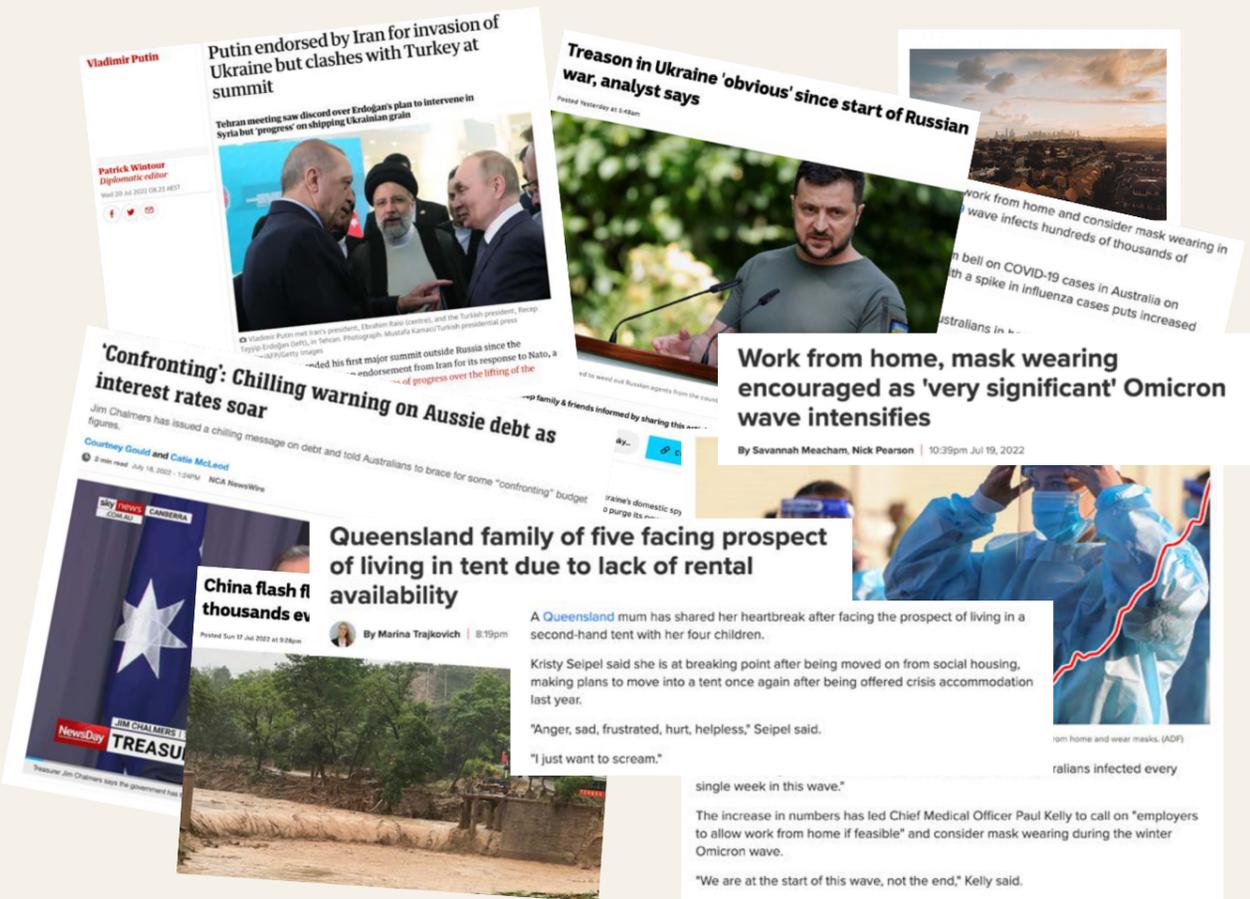
**At the 2016 census, over 116,000 Australians found themselves homeless. The 2021 census will likely shed light on even more difficult conditions.**

At the national level, only time will tell where these conditions will lead. Locally, we're feeling the impact clearly.

Whilst the Victorian government housed homeless people in hotels throughout COVID, the program has now ended and we have once again found that demand for our services increased. More people are in need of housing than we can house. There really is a housing crisis.

Poverty, isolation, loneliness, and disconnection from community are just some of the challenges more Victorians are facing.

And amongst this, more than ever, the world needs communities who lead with generosity, inclusion, and a respect for the inherent dignity of every person.



# Serving a Community in Need

In Boroondara, the Servants community has continued to go the extra mile, providing people at risk of homelessness with safe, affordable housing and a community who loves them.

Throughout COVID and beyond, we've been committed to keeping our residents safe. In fact, we were fortunate to have had no cases of COVID in any of our houses until January 2022.

And despite the world's challenges and changes, we won't turn our backs on those in need.

In fact, while the headlines share constant bad news, we're creating moments of joy, beauty and connection that remind us time and time again why we exist:

**To create communities where respect, dignity, hope and opportunity are nurtured.**





DARREN SHOWING OFF HIS ART!

## Working together

Our team have the privilege of working closely alongside case workers who support our residents. For many case workers, Servants is the ideal place for a client to find home.

This year, we wanted to share just a little of what we've been hearing from our local case workers:

*"Homelessness in Victoria is such an epidemic, that it's rare you have the opportunity to move a resident into a house you think they'll enjoy. But when a room opens with Servants, and I get to move a resident in, I feel genuinely excited for the life they're about to begin.*

**Because of the care and sense of community, Servants is the best place they can be.**

*"a well-managed and safe environment for our very vulnerable clients. The rooms are large ... the food is of a high standard and the staff on-site are caring and supportive.*

**My clients are very happy here as they feel safe and secure.**

# Impact

## *a Year in Review*

The last Victorian lockdown took up three months of the 2021-22 Financial Year. Despite this challenge, our community has:

HOSTED

**6**

Fresh & tasty community dinners



SPOKEN WITH

**1500**

People at schools and churches



WELCOMED

**60,000**

Honey bees to Carrical and Hamer



PROVIDED

**95**

Safe, stable rooms to people at risk of homelessness



ENJOYED

**30+**

BBQs + working bees alongside residents



SUPPORTED

**6**

Residents into the next step of independence, now living in the private rental market



*And much, much more!*



BEES AT HAMER & CARRICAL

# A Fresh New Look

Since 1986, Servants has been supporting people in need across the Boroondara community. As we lean into our purpose and goals for the 2020's, we decided to refresh our look to reflect the professional, vibrant, optimistic culture we've created!

# Servants

COMMUNITY HOUSING

## LOGO:

We are all interconnected, and our logo reflects this through connected lines. The script is clean and professional.

## COLOURS:

We wanted to communicate how vibrant life in our community can be - and our colours do this perfectly! The palette is fresh, energetic, and compliments our optimistic, 'see the best in people' approach.

## GRAPHIC ELEMENTS:

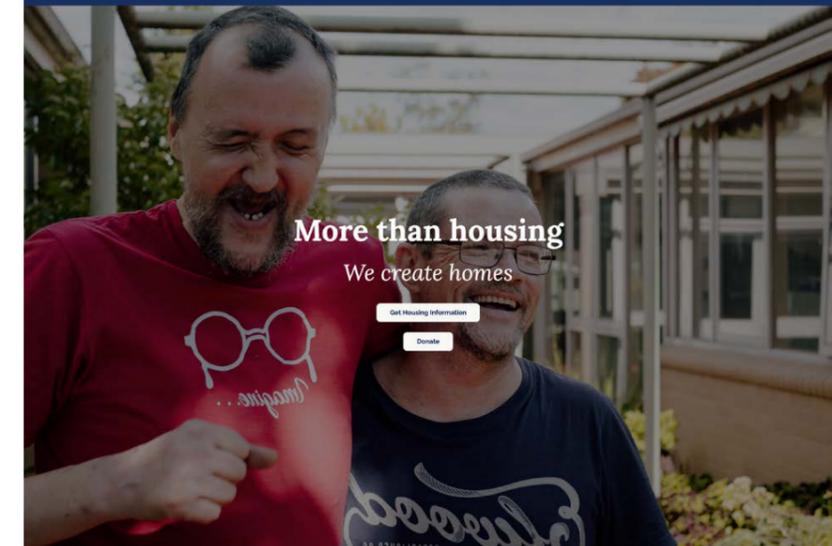
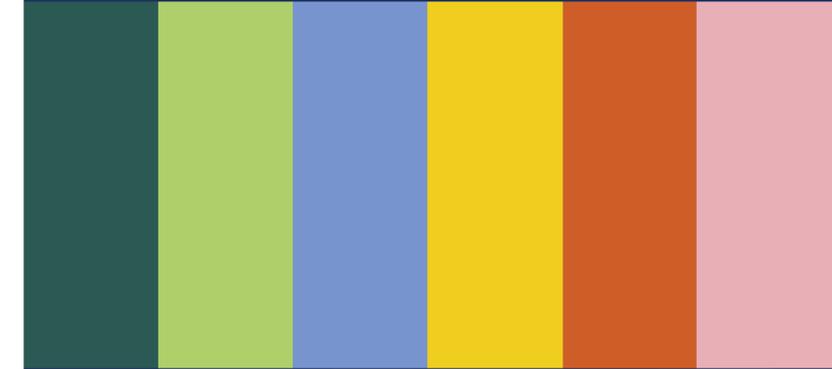
You'll see the 'thread' running through our designs. This is our constant reminder of how we're all connected. The speech bubble reminds us to always value stories, and to amplify the voices that connect and challenge us in helpful ways.

## WEBSITE:

We also launched a new website, with vibrant photos and a fresh energy that captures who we truly are. You can check it out at: [www.servants.org.au](http://www.servants.org.au).

# Servants

COMMUNITY HOUSING



# Daniel's Story\*

As we sit together, I pull out Google Translate. Daniel arrived in Australia in 2012, and the language barrier makes deep conversations more difficult. Originally from Iran, he speaks Persian, and his English is thick with accent. Daniel moved to Melbourne in the hope of a better life for his kids - but after a tragic accident at work, life in Australia became increasingly difficult. Now a resident with Servants, he has safety and a community to support him into the future.

Daniel has written his story in Persian, and it has been translated into English. The words are largely unedited - changed only to protect his identity - and are a poignant reminder of the importance of the safe housing and loving communities Servants is able to provide.

I arrived in Australia on 23/02/2012.  
 A better life for my children (live in peace).  
 I felt cheerful and comfortable

I was looking for a place to open a coffee shop and bakery  
 I bought this coffee shop, in Bororoondara, on 16/12/2013  
 I was a handyman and got a job  
 I was the technical officer with a furniture company  
 Because my family can live more easily  
 I always enjoyed working  
 I used to go to the furniture warehouse  
 at 7 in the morning until 5 in the evening  
 From 5 in the evening to 7 in the evening,  
 I used to clean the coffee shop and arrange the items for tomorrow  
 I was preparing the bread dough from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM  
 I rested from 9 to 11 at night  
 I used to bake bread from 11 pm to 2 am  
 I used to rest from 2 to 5.5 in the morning  
 I used to pack bread from 5.5 in the morning until 6 in the morning  
 Then I would deliver the bread to other shops  
 I have been married for 31 years  
 My daughter is 25 years old, and my son is 23 years old

I always worked with joy and pleasure  
 I never got tired of working  
 I enjoyed making fresh and special bread and pastries for people  
 I felt young and fresh  
 I was always proud of my work

I had an accident on 10/14/2017  
 And I suffered a severe injury in my back  
 My back vertebrae 3,4,5 are damaged and my nerve is scratched  
 I can hardly move anymore  
 And I am always in pain  
 I can't sleep for more than 1 hour  
 I have a lot of pain when I wake up  
 I have to use very strong painkillers  
 My right hand has severe tremors

After the accident, I had to close the bakery  
 I didn't go to work on furniture  
 My income had reached 1/3  
 Only the coffee shop was working, and the rent was paid  
 I could no longer provide everything my family needs

I had some money saved  
 When that money ran out  
 Behaving badly with me little by little  
 They insulted me  
 They made it bigger for me

From the time of the accident until 3 years later,  
 TEC paid me a salary  
 He cut my salary from 14/10/2020  
 I had to borrow money from others  
 I had a land in my country,  
 and I sold it because of the debt I owed to others  
 But my wife said that you should not pay your debt  
 Creditors are your family. I did not accept  
 So, they hit me and threw me out of the house

I feel relaxed here,  
 No one insults me.  
 I am not stressed here.  
 The managers here treat me with respect  
 It is a lovely environment  
 I am not an extra person in the eyes of my friends who live here  
 I feel like I have a personality now  
 I am safe here  
 Considering that I do not speak English well,  
 they try to communicate with me  
 I don't feel alone

If it wasn't here, I wouldn't know what to do  
 I was in a very difficult situation, I felt helpless  
 I spent everything I had for my family  
 I had no money  
 I had no one  
 When they kicked me out of the house,  
 I asked God to give me an early death

I didn't think it existed here at all  
 When they welcome me with open arms  
 It is as if God has opened the door of his mercy on me  
 You gave me the world  
 You do not know how much I appreciate you  
 I hope no one will be like me  
 I would like to thank you, dear ones, who gave me this kindness  
 I hope God will answer your good deeds

\* Name changed to protect the resident's privacy



# Creating Opportunity

People need hope and opportunity to lead a fulfilling and meaningful life. This year, we've seen residents taking up (and creating) new opportunities!



Residents like Brent have continued their studies.



Resident veggie patches have been creating lots of fresh produce.



Connecting with Jobs Victoria to assist in getting back to work!



Helping out around the house at Christmas.



Getting back to exercising!



Peter & Cam were finalists in the Social Housing volunteer awards!

# Servants in the Community



January Jazz, with special guests Rhiannon Gill's Motown Review and Natasha Weatherill.



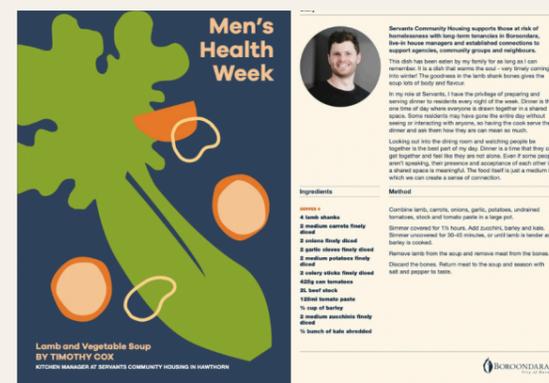
Speaking with students and teachers at MLC.



For this year's Glenferrie Festival, we built a bedroom on Glenferrie Road!



Speaking at the Surrey Hills ANZAC Day Dawn Service.



Our Kitchen manager, Tim, writing for Men's Health Week.



Rotary going the extra mile to support those in need, as always!

# Our Team

This page is dedicated and addressed to our incredible staff team:

You have gone above and beyond this year! Thank you. You embody the name 'Servants' every day, and never fail to bring your compassion, resilience and generosity to impact the lives of our residents.

Our office and house manager staff are listed below, but we're also thankful for the hospitality and heart from a wonderful group of cooks and cleaners who make our houses feel like home.

- CEO:**  
Amanda Donohoe
- Business Manager:**  
Mad Tucker
- Tenancy Manager:**  
Mikyla Battey
- Facilities Manager:**  
Mark Hislop
- Operations Manager:**  
Kara Thorne
- Kitchen Manager:**  
Tim Cox
- Communications, Engagement & Events Manager:**  
Jayden Battey
- Bookkeeper:**  
Nicole Hepworth

- CARRICAL House Managers:**  
Mark Buschgens  
Grace Donohoe

- Day Manager:**  
Martin Cotter

- HAMER House Managers:**  
Jayden Battey  
Mikyla Battey  
Joel Soh

- Day Manager:**  
Karina Battey

- ROMANA House Managers:**  
Anne Klaric  
Goran Klaric

- WOMEN'S HOUSE House Manager:**  
Gilda Lasabori

- Office Volunteers:**  
Susan Laird  
Kat Grosser (Communications)  
Chandi Piefki (Communications)

- Relief House Managers:**  
John Beveridge  
Julie Beveridge  
Ben Palmer  
Jordan Miller  
Chris Turner  
Karina Battey  
Mark Hislop  
Ann Hislop

Thanks also to our Board, led by Stephen Baxter (chair) and Donald Speagle (vice chair), and to our Property Advisory Committee.



# Servants in the Media

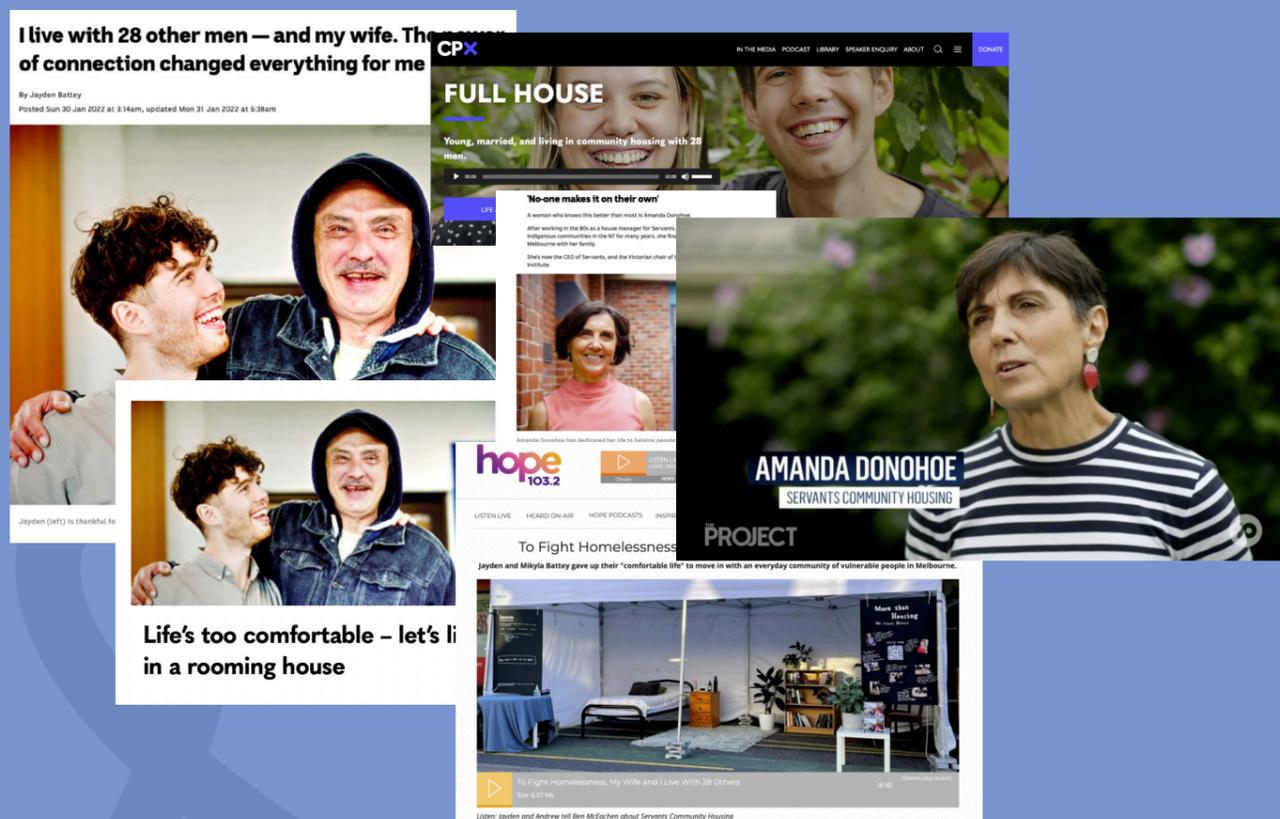
This year, we've been raising the profile of Australia's housing crisis, and our unique model of creating communities where respect, dignity, hope and opportunity are nurtured.

An [article in ABC News](#) attracted over 500,000 reads in January.

Channel 10's [The Project](#) picked up the story, airing the Servants model across the country.

[Eternity News](#) jumped on board, and CPX included us in their [Thinking Out Loud](#) column and award-winning podcast, 'Life & Faith'.

[Hope 103.2](#) also interviewed one of our house managers and a resident, Andrew, for their Sydney audience.



# Cost of Living & Financial Overview

It's no secret prices are rising - and community organisations are feeling it. After an already tough two pandemic years, rising costs are hitting our bottom line, and making it harder to support people at risk of homelessness.

In 2020, a review by the Victorian government found there were only 12 affordable dwellings for families on Centrelink in Boroondara. In 1986, Boroondara house prices were 89% more expensive than metropolitan Melbourne. By 2020, they were 177.8% higher.

At a time when so many Victorians are doing it tough, it's taking wise governance, generous supporters, and a big effort by our team to keep doing what we do.

But Servants won't give up.

Of course, these increased costs are also making it more difficult for everyday Victorians to afford housing, leading to an increase in the need for safe, affordable housing such as we provide.

That's why, despite increased costs, we're actively looking to grow. We're investing time and resources in building strategic partnerships that will see more people housed in safe communities where they are seen, known, and loved.

If you are a developer, philanthropist or landowner looking to make a long-term investment in social housing, we would love to speak with you.

COMPREHENSIVE INCOME	2022	2021
Rooming houses	\$1,274,568	\$1,220,792
Other	\$263,713	\$516,509
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$1,538,281</b>	<b>\$1,737,301</b>
Operating Costs	\$1,075,428	\$984,116
Overheads	\$670,035	\$503,979
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>\$1,745,463</b>	<b>\$1,488,095</b>
<b>Surplus / Loss</b>	<b>-\$207,182</b>	<b>\$249,206</b>
FINANCIAL POSITION	2022	2021
Current Assets	\$1,222,183	\$1,417,244
Non-current Assets	\$692,114	\$709,742
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$1,914,297</b>	<b>\$2,126,986</b>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$236,709</b>	<b>\$242,216</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>\$1,677,588</b>	<b>\$1,884,770</b>

# 5k for 5k

With prices increasing, we're thinking of new ways to increase the supply of affordable housing in Boroondara and beyond.

## Introducing: 5K for 5K!

This May, we were overwhelmed by the support of 61 members of our community who banded together, raising vital funds for our new community fundraiser.



### Our 2022 totals:

**61**  
Participants

**1835km**  
Exercised

**316**  
Donors

**\$28,431**  
Raised

OVER  
**50,000**  
VICTORIANS STILL SEARCHING FOR A SAFE PLACE TO CALL HOME

**116,427**  
AUSTRALIANS HOMELESS EACH NIGHT



What are you waiting for?

TAKE THE CHALLENGE



**1,835 kms**  
COMPLETED SO FAR

Individuals	Teams
Sharon Rowland 131.99 kms	The Syndal Sprinters 542.89 kms
Janie McInnes 102.3 kms	BEST Lifegroup 323.43 kms
Jayden Bailey 88.8 kms	Kew Res 302.28 kms
Catherine Pham 84.8 kms	Bayswater Bandits 287.24 kms
Rae Sharp 68.3 kms	Isaac & Natalie 101 kms

**\$28,431**  
RAISED SO FAR

Individuals	Teams
Ian Pratt \$3,710	The Syndal Sprinters \$5,885
Michael Heaton \$2,430	BEST Lifegroup \$4,343
Carly Donohoe \$1,790	Bayswater Bandits \$2,830
Mad Tucker \$1,350	Yarra Yabbies \$992
Elim Tai \$1,085	Kew Res \$765

### Help end homelessness: Exercise 5km each day from May 7 - 16.

Over 50,000 Victorians are on the Victorian Housing Register, still waiting for a safe place to call home. By joining 5k for 5k, you'll help raise vital funds to support more people in need.

Sign up online, join a team, and choose your own exercise and fundraising goals. Once you're signed up, talk to family and friends to help raise life-changing funds.

Then, from May 7 - 16, exercise each day to hit your goals!

Whether you walk, run, cycle, swim, skate or surf - every step and every dollar counts.

A huge congratulations to Ian Pratt (largest fundraiser) and the Syndal Sprinters from Syndal Baptist Church (biggest team, most money raised from a team).

### A SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS:





# The Neighbourhood.

## A new way to give

These days, everything is a subscription - and now, changing the world can be too!

At the heart of Servants lies the belief that every person has the capacity to change the world.

That's why we're excited to launch 'The Neighbourhood': a growing community of monthly donors passionate about ending homelessness in Melbourne. We call our members 'Great Neighbours', because that's exactly what they are.

Great Neighbours are invested in their community. They're passionate about making a change. They go out of the way to notice those in need.

When you join The Neighbourhood, you become part of a community making monthly donations that directly enable Servants to support more vulnerable people with safe housing and a community who loves them.

Sign up and make a monthly gift today:



[www.servants.org.au/neighbours](https://www.servants.org.au/neighbours)

# Thank You

Our wonderful community of volunteers, neighbours, supporters and friends are the backbone of this organisation. Their generosity has allowed us to navigate a challenging year well, and we are deeply thankful.

Allens Lawyers

Bakers Delight

Bank of Melbourne Foundation

Bendigo Bank

Blencowe & Co. Pty Ltd

BMDA Development Advisory

Breadstreet Bakery

Boroondara Community Outreach Ministry

Camberwell High School

Cannings Butchers

Canterbury Baptist Church

Christ Church Hawthorn

City of Boroondara Council

Community Housing Industry Association

Country Women's Association of Victoria (Boroondara, Fraser and Kew branches)

CyberHound

Deloitte

Department of Families, Fairness & Housing (Victorian Government)

Dulux Paint

Forest Hill Uniting Church & Op Shop

Grill'd Hawthorn

Hawthorn Community Chest

Hawthorn West Baptist Church

Holy Trinity Doncaster Anglican Church

Jenkins Foundation

Kew Baptist Church

Korus Connect

Leadership Victoria

Methodist Ladies' College

Michael Cutter

Nelson Alexander

Patchworkers and Quilters' Guild of Victoria

Prowse Quantity Surveyors

Rotary Club of Canterbury

Ruyton Girls School

Sackville Grange Craft Group

Schored Projects

Slovenian Catholic Mission, Kew

St Andrews Christian College

St Columbs Anglican Church, Hawthorn

St Hilary's Anglican Church, Kew

St John's Uniting Church, Elsternwick

Steeple Church & Steeple Hospitality

Strathcona Baptist Girls Grammar School

Surface Consulting Pty Ltd

The Cleaning Shop, Kew

The Food Store Cafe

The Housing Registrar, Victoria

The Office of John Kennedy, MP, Hawthorn

The Office of the Hon. Josh Frydenberg, MP

The Opalgate Foundation

Transurban

Trinity Grammar School

Visions Fitness Centre, Hawthorn

V&T Refrigeration

W&K Williams Pty Ltd

Xavier College, Kew

## Agencies who support us:

Access Health

Bolton Clarke Homeless Persons Program

Hawthorn Mental Health Clinic

SalvoCare Eastern Kew

St Vincent's Hospital

