



  
greenacres

2022 Annual  
General Report



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## Acknowledgement of Country

Greenacres acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we live, work and provide our services, the Yuin and Tharawal/Dharawal Nations. We pay our respect to all First Nations Elders past, present and emerging for their continuing tradition, memories and protection of their culture. We also extend those respects to our First Nations participants, members of our workforce, their families and carers.

We stand with these leaders of First Nations communities in continuing connections to the water, culture, community and unceded land. We recognise the hardships our first nations people have suffered both past and present and value the strength and resilience they have engrained within their culture. At Greenacres we are committed to maintaining these respects and providing culturally safe spaces for all First Nations people in their deserved journey toward reconciliation.



# The Greenacres Difference

From the initial little school back in 1953, the first of its kind in the Illawarra, to the multifaceted organisation we have today, every program and service has been developed with one goal in mind – enriching the lives of people with disability by giving them choice. The founding families of Greenacres started the long fight for inclusion by insisting that their children with an intellectual disability had the right to an education like every other child. Those same families worked together to create one of the first employment facilities in the region for people with disability. Today we continue to imagine the possibilities and strive for creativity and innovation across our sites and centres, programs and supports.

Our sites and services may have grown but the one thing that hasn't changed since 1953 is that we want the very best for every person who walks through our doors. Almost 70 years later, we are still the Greenacres family and Greenacres remains one of the leading disability service providers in the region, providing services and programs throughout the Illawarra and the Shoalhaven. Every week we support over 600 people to live the life they imagine.

Greenacres continues to be a loud voice and advocate for the rights of people with disabilities including the right to work and live an inclusive life. If you ask people what they love most about Greenacres they will tell you that it is the fun and friendship and especially coming together for great events throughout the year like our annual Picnic Day, our awesome BBQs and the festive Christmas party at the Fraternity Club. They also love

giving back to the community through some of our great volunteering opportunities.

We wouldn't be the organisation we are today without our wonderful staff who really do love working for Greenacres. They are dedicated, resilient and adaptable and go above and beyond to develop skills, increase self-esteem, create memories and make dreams come true for our participants. It's also our generous donors and key stakeholders who over the years have contributed so much to enable many wonderful opportunities, all the while leaving behind an incredible legacy that continues to make a difference in the lives of Greenacres participants - together we are the Greenacres Difference!





# Who We Are

Greenacres is one of the largest disability service providers in the Illawarra. For almost 70 years, we have been committed to supporting people with disability to achieve their dreams.

We are a trusted name in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven with a reputation for innovation, flexibility and quality support.

This year we provided training, employment opportunities, overnight accommodation and life and leisure programs to just over 600 people with a disability.

# Vision and Purpose

**We Imagine:** Every person with disability creating their own positive future

**We Will:** Support people with a disability to transform their ideas and goals into experiences and achievements

**We Believe In:**  
Respect | Empathy | Fairness | Integrity

# Business Objective

To be a sustainable, quality focused and values driven organisation which is responsive to the needs and goals of people with disability.



# Message from the Chair

Greg Parrish

2022 has proven to be another very challenging and disruptive year for Greenacres and the wider community. COVID 19 and the NDIS pricing regime continue to have a significant negative impact on Greenacres financial outcomes. Particularly impacted are our Social Enterprises which continue to suffer significant financial strain.

To ensure that Greenacres operations are fit for purpose to operate under the new NDIA pricing regime, the Board of Greenacres endorsed a significant restructure of the organisation. Restructures are always difficult but as a Board we fully supported the actions of our CEO and leadership team in implementing a new structure designed to improve our service delivery and our capacity to grow in a more sustainable way.

The final change to ensure we are fit for purpose is to review and modify the business model in our Enterprises to give our supported employees every opportunity of maintaining their employment with Greenacres. The start of this process has been to align the hours worked by supported employees with the available work. This review will continue to occur during 2022/23.

On this note Greenacres, through our CEO, continued to play a leading role in the Fair Work Commission to resolve the vexed issue of how wages are determined for supported employees. Just as the Fair Work Commission decision will have a major impact on Australian Disability Enterprises so will any recommendation of the Royal Commission into the Abuse Neglect and Exploitation of People with a Disability. We are expecting recommendations which will change the way we provide supported employment.

Greenacres has begun to position itself to best respond to any Royal Commission recommendations but ultimately it will take a sector wide response to ensure job opportunities for people with disabilities are protected in one form or another.

I want to congratulate our executive team and staff for taking the action that was necessary to protect participants during the prolonged COVID 19 pandemic conditions. I also want to thank the staff who made the decision to accept

mandatory vaccinations as directed by Government. These actions and the safeguards we put in place meant we took all reasonable steps to keep everyone as safe as possible.

Greenacres continues to be in a sound financial position despite the challenges caused by the long pandemic and changes to the way the government funds disability services. This sound position will allow us to finalise our structure and prepare us to thrive in delivering quality services to those we support.

During the year, we have welcomed two new Executive Officers to the team with Leanne Field as Chief Financial Officer and Audra Tuckwood as Chief Commercial Officer.

Over the next 12 months the Board will focus on our future, including innovation and growth and as an organisation we will review our strategic plan.

I would like to thank all my fellow Board members Stephen Dawson, Sonia Minutillo, Trish McClure, Chris Burrows, Marcela Kohazy, Henry Crawford and Carol Brain and the many other volunteers for their dedicated efforts. Finally let me thank the entire Executive team and our staff for their efforts in what has been another difficult year.

**Greg Parrish**  
Chair of the Board

# Our Board



**Greg Parrish** – Director; Chair; Member of the Audit and Risk Committee; Member of the Property and Investment Committee 2020 - 2021; Former Company Secretary 2020; Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee 2019; Appointed to Greenacres Board May 2013. CPA, MBA and GAICD. Chief Operations Manager - Catholic Diocese of Wollongong.



**Trish McClure** – Director; Chair of the Governance Committee 2020 - 2021; Appointed to Greenacres Board as an Alternate Director 8 November 2018; Appointed as a Director on 14 November 2018. Former Chair - Carers NSW. Former Director - RDA Illawarra. Former Director - Rural and Regional Planning and Development - Transport for NSW. Traffic and Transport Services Manager - UCI World Championships Cycling.



**Stephen Dawson** – Director; Deputy Chair; Chair of the Property and Investment Committee 2020 - 2021; Member of the NDIS Safeguards Committee 2020 - 2021; Appointed to Greenacres Board May 2008. Director - Illawarra Diggers, Aged and Community Care Limited. Legal Practitioner and Accredited Property Law Specialist.



**Henry Crawford** – Director; Chair of the Participant and Carers Reference Group; Member of the Property and Investment Committee 2021 - 2022; Appointed to Greenacres Board November 2020. Former Asset Manager Steel Treatment and Caster Services - BlueScope Steel. Long-term co-carer for a person with disability. Currently Retired.



**Sonia Minutillo** – Director; Treasurer; Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee; Member of the Audit and Risk Committee 2019; Appointed to Greenacres Board June 2016. Director, Investigation and Reporting – Information and Privacy Commission NSW.



**Marcela Kohazy** – Director; Deputy Chair of the Participant and Carers Reference Group; Member of the Governance Committee 2021 - 2022; Appointed to Greenacres Board 2020. Professional Member of the Australian Marketing Institute. Marketing and Communications Manager - Woonona Bulli RSL Club.



**Chris Burrows** – Director; Company Secretary; Member of the Audit and Risk Committee; Member of the Governance Committee 2020 - 2021; Appointed to Greenacres Board as an Alternate Director June 2016; Appointed as a Director in February 2018. Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. Member of the Australian Human Resources Institute. Manager, People and Culture - CEnet.



**Carol Brain** – Director; Member of the Audit and Risk Committee; Appointed to Greenacres Board as an Alternate Director in November 2020; Appointed as a Director November 2021. Former Locum Generalist Solicitor - Illawarra Legal Centre. Previously the NDIS Appeals Coordinator - Illawarra Advocacy 2017 - 2019. Semi-retired Legal Practitioner.



# From the CEO

Chris Christodoulou

Our year 2021/22 was definitely a year of further disruption. We saw the introduction of new NDIS pricing, COVID 19 on the increase, and Greenacres having to undertake a major restructure.

The NDIA pricing changes were always going to adversely affect Greenacres, and it is for this reason we needed to undertake a major restructure during the year to ensure that our operations matched the new way government expects service delivery to take place. The decision to carry out a restructure was the correct strategy because as expected we lost over \$1.5 million dollars even after the financial support we received from JobSaver. A number of the Executive Team left the organisation during the year and found other positions.

The major restructure that occurred throughout the organisation (with the exception of our Enterprises) was a significant undertaking. At the time, of writing our Enterprises have commenced an operational review. A number of staff members took voluntary redundancy, and it should be noted no employee was made forcibly redundant. All affected staff were offered alternative positions and treated very fairly.

The focus of everything we did in the restructure was to ensure we did not affect frontline staff positions so as to not impact participants.

Notwithstanding the restructure, our financial position is still expected to be negative in 22/23 depending on how fast we can make changes to our Enterprises. Our Enterprises are key to keeping people with disabilities in employment and so the changes we make need to balance our Enterprises becoming financially viable and the needs of our participants.

As part of the review of our Enterprises we are developing new initiatives including our **Woolly Gong** and new **imagine** products. The **imagine** range will initially include hand poured soy wax scented candles, botanical bath salts, lavender scented wheat heat packs and gift hampers. Over the next 12 to 24 months, we will be reviewing and modifying our Enterprises Business Model to provide a wider range of opportunities for our supported employees. We are currently developing an online shop.

To support our future growth strategy, we have developed

an online booking platform called Greenacres **imagine**. This will assist social media savvy participants book their activities quickly and efficiently.

Greenacres has now assembled a Leadership Team that is a combination of experience, youth, enthusiasm, and innovation to take us forward. The team is highly motivated to ensure we provide the best outcomes for our participants and have an absolute commitment to ensuring Greenacres is innovative and adaptive to change within the framework of our values.

Notwithstanding the disruption associated with the restructure and of course COVID 19 we have continued to provide a wide range of quality supports to our participants.

It is often the case when an organisation is going through major change that there will be those that will not agree. Change is never easy, and it certainly is never perfect. I want to thank our Leadership Team and the commitment of our frontline support workers who looked beyond self-interest, stayed the course and who will take us forward in the future.

I thank the Board of Greenacres for their ongoing stewardship of the organisation and in particular our Chair Greg Parrish who has personally assisted myself during this very difficult time. Our future is positive, and I look forward to celebrating Greenacres 70th Anniversary next year.

**Chris Christodoulou**  
CEO





# CEO Walk and Talk



So many activities were curtailed due to the COVID restrictions of 2021, however one special get together continued to keep our participants connected - the 'CEO Walk and Talk'.

As restrictions were eased, the first group activities allowed to gather had to be outdoors. This aligned perfectly with our CEO Walk and Talk Program, so Chris our CEO, and his loyal band of walkers met up on the first Sunday this was permitted, to share what was happening in their lives, get some exercise and have a 'physically distanced' coffee to round off the morning.

Wearing our masks as well as a smile that we could still see in our eyes, the CEO Walk and Talk showed how much having a personal connection with each other is so important, not just for our physical health but also our mental health.

The Walk and Talk still continues along with the great catch ups with coffee to make our Sunday mornings. What a great way to start the day!



# People and Culture

2022 saw the establishment of a strong, united and talented Leadership Team at Greenacres. We welcomed two new Executives, Leanne Field, Chief Financial Officer and Audra Tuckwood, Chief Commercial Officer. Both Executives bring a wealth of experience, knowledge and enthusiasm to our Leadership Team.

We also have new Area Coordination, Engagement and ADE Employment Supports teams that have created an efficient and energetic dynamic across the organisation.

2022 presented many career development opportunities for staff, and we are proud to have promoted seven staff, created a new participant-centred quality and practice coordinator position and welcomed 42 new staff to the Greenacres family.

We are fortunate to have talented and passionate staff across all levels and areas of Greenacres and look forward to an exciting year ahead, where we will heavily invest in training and providing career pathways for our staff.

## Greenacres Snapshot

### Staff Stats

Full Time	62
Part Time	135
Casual	74
<b>Total</b>	<b>271</b>



### Supported Employee Stats

Full Time	21
Part Time	183
Casual	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>206</b>



### Service Awards

We love celebrating the amazing people who work at Greenacres, especially those who have achieved their long service milestones.

As has been the tradition for many years people receive their awards at our end year Christmas party at the Fraternity Club. Those unable to attend received their awards at our BBQ in April.

Congratulations to all recipients.

- 5 years – 18 staff
- 10 years – 26 staff
- 20 years – 10 staff
- 25 years – 5 staff
- 40 years – 1 staff

### Participant Stats

The majority of our ADE and ASK participants engage in both programs and are represented in both figures.

ADE 206

ASK 256

CLL 387

# Our Culture of Quality

In 2022, Greenacres successfully complied with three external audits. Our ability to successfully meet the oversight of external auditors is a direct result of the hard work, dedication, empathy, integrity and professionalism of every single member of the Greenacres team, together with the implementation of our robust processes and practices and the quality of support we provide to our participants. We congratulate everyone involved on such excellent outcomes.

## AS/NZS ISO 9001:2016



In March 2022, Greenacres successfully met the specific requirements of AS/NZS ISO 9001:2016 (Australian and International Standards) relating to Quality Management Systems. At the centre of this Standard are eight fundamental principles of quality management:

- Customer Focus
- Leadership
- Involvement of People
- Process Approach
- System Approach to Management
- Continual Improvement
- Factual Approach to Decision-Making
- Relationship Management

A fantastic outcome demonstrating our ability to consistently provide products and services that meet customer and applicable statutory and regulatory requirements.

## AS/NZS 5377



In May 2022, we were audited on all applicable requirements of relating to the collection, storage, transport and treatment of end-of-life electrical and electronic equipment. We met the objectives of the assessment and achieved certification to AS/NZS 5377, (Australian and International Standards) enabling us to join the National Television Computer Recycling Scheme from 1st July.

This is a fantastic outcome for our e-waste operation which is opening up opportunities for increased business.

## NDIS Practice Standards (Quality Indicators)



In June 2022, we were audited on all applicable requirements of the NDIS Practice Standards (Quality Indicators) for every service we provide for the renewal of our NDIS provider certification. No Major - Non-conformances were noted by the auditor. In the report they submitted to the NDIS, the Auditor

said that they “believe that the disability service organisation has the capability to systematically meet the requirements of the standard” and have recommended our registration be renewed.

The auditors always provide feedback on some of their main observations, and we wanted to share a few of the most noteworthy.

In terms of what we do, they said:

- Participants and their representatives described how Greenacres works closely with them and their families to ensure support and the service delivery environment meets their needs, preferences, and goals.
- The service believes its essential to deliver participant-centred supports and that communicating and listening to the needs and goals of participants not only ensured services are responsive and appropriate for the individual, and this collaborative approach also focuses on achieving those goals. This was evidenced during participant interviews and representatives who reported that their adolescent/ young adult is respected and supported to be themselves and make their own choices.

In terms of how we do things, they said:

- Greenacres continued to maintain a well-implemented integrated management system based on the requirements of the NDIS.
- The organisation is also certified to ISO 9001:2016 and as such has an established quality management system that underpins the organisations processes, human resources and aligns service delivery for participants to regimented protocols that are subject to review and assessment to ensure that the organisation continually strives to meet participants’ needs.

In terms of how we listen to our participants, they said:

- There has been an increase in participant carer Board members since the previous NDIS mid-term audit, and the Participants/Carers Reference Group has started to meet since the terms of reference for this group were approved



**REGISTERED  
PROVIDER**

# Your Voice

## Greenacres Participants and Carers Reference Group

When the Greenacres Board set up its Participants and Carers Reference Group, it did not know that many significant new initiatives and important decisions would require input directly from the Group, including:

- The restructure of the Organisation
- New TV Ads
- The creation of our new online booking platform - Imagine
- The Sector Campaign to improve the NDIS
- The Campaign to overturn the new proposed Plan Assessments

The above were all issues discussed and acted upon by the Group.

The Greenacres Participants and Carers Reference Group met on three occasions and at each meeting good discussion and debate occurred in a collaborative and inclusive fashion. Greenacres wishes to thank all the members of the Group:

- Christen Martin
- Gillian Bathe
- Henry Crawford (Chair)
- Jade Stewart
- Kathy Hubbard
- Kerry Stratton
- Lindsay Robertson
- Marcela Kohazy (Deputy Chair)
- Mel Carey
- Mikael Nyrhinen
- Trish McKay

## Wedding Bells

We are delighted to celebrate the wedding of two of our participants, Karen and Mathew, as they start the next chapter in their lives as Mr and Mrs Evans.

The wedding was officiated by our very own Mick Joseph, who is our truck driver. The service was held at MacCabe Park and attended by many fellow participants and staff from our Greenacre's family, all of whom were very excited to be a part of the wonderful celebration.

Pictured is the lovely couple saying their vows to each other while Mick Joseph officiates the wedding. After the ceremony the party-goers went to City Diggers to continue the celebrations.



# Enterprises and Innovations

## COVID downturn & lockdowns



Although the COVID downturn and additional safety requirements created challenges, Greenacres Enterprises continued to operate, servicing our customers and providing employment and support for many supported employees. To ensure a safe environment, a range of COVID safe protocols and training continued to be implemented.

During the 2021 COVID Lockdown, we were able to keep our supported employees engaged and safe at home with daily zoom sessions run by the Kickstart team. Two, two-hour sessions were run each day, five days a week. The purpose of these sessions was to alleviate isolation and keep everyone connected during uncertain and difficult times.

Each day supported employees participated in social games and activities including bingo, Family Feud, Wheel of Fortune, trivia, random fact quiz, true or false, name that song, and general social chit-chat with themed days – crazy hair, onesies, wear a wig, football jersey day, wear your PJs day and favourite outfit. Each session ended with a 3-minute dance off!

## Packing, Assembly, Labelling and Shrink Wrapping

Following the impacts of COVID which resulted in a significant downturn within the packing and labelling business, it has been pleasing to see regular key account customers returning towards the end of the financial year. This highlights the quality and professional service that Greenacres provides and is highly regarded for.

Our focus is shifting from having a Sydney based Business Development Coordinator to a newly created position, Head of Marketing and Sales, based in the Illawarra to focus on new business opportunities and local prospects. A review of our pricing was undertaken and adjustments to the quoting tool resulted in price increases to customers to offset increased costs impacting profitability including transport, wages, and raw materials.

With each new customer order, our supported employees receive skill development in a range of tasks, and it is pleasing to see the competency progression of our employees. Throughout the year we have packed, assembled or labelled a range of products from cosmetics and clothing to sandbags, toilet brushes and fishing rods, plumbing supplies to cochlear implants, and a range of foods and beverages, often for some very well-known national and international brands.



## Body Safe Body Bags



Two new welding machines for the *Body Safe* body bag production were installed, resulting in the output of a higher quality product and improved operational efficiencies. Following meetings with our medical sales agent, a new marketing initiative was implemented to tell the story of the *Body Safe* Bags shining a light on them being made in Australia in Wollongong by people with disability. Our *Body Safe* Bags enterprise is a great example of an inclusive workforce, where qualified sewing machinists supervise and upskill our supported employees who have gained skill development in operating technical machinery. We are currently pursuing additional business from NSW Health which will increase our revenue in this area.

## Copper Recycling

Following the purchase of the copper granulation machine, Greenacres has begun the early stages of processing cables. We successfully sold our first few batches of copper and purchased a new weighing platform to facilitate future growth in this area. Through a new partnership with a large contractor, we look forward to expanding this business unit which will provide employment for at least 2 supported employees.



## E-Waste

Greenacres Industries achieved Global Compliance Certification as an E-waste Operation

An audit to AS:5377 was undertaken in May 2022 which enabled Greenacres to recycle, store, dismantle, sort and pass downstream processors. It also enabled Greenacres to have access to the National Television Computer Recycling Scheme. It is now leading to growth opportunities and a developing partnership with a large contractor. The marketing flyer was updated to reflect certification. There is a crew of approximately 10 supported employees who have undergone training in dismantling various types of e-waste, who are now capable of continuing to successfully operate this growing business section.





## Brewing Up A Storm Café at the SES

Having operated through one of the most challenging periods for hospitality providers, the team at Brewing Up A Storm (BUAS) celebrated 5 years in business at the Wollongong SES building in August 2022. NSW State Emergency Services (SES) Commissioner Carlene York joined us to acknowledge the excellent service provided by our supported employees, led by our wonderful Café Supervisor.

The team deliver great coffee that makes a difference and offer a range of delicious lunches and treats that all of our customers enjoy. In addition to running the café, the team provide a catering and function service to the SES, as well as fulfilling some general office tasks and kitchen duties. Over the past 5 years, our supported employees have developed new hospitality skills and now have greater confidence in areas including customer service. The SES staff often comment on how much they love the interactions with our supported employees during their lunch breaks.

The success of the BUAS SES café has led to a new opportunity to open a second BUAS café at Warrigal Care Shell Cove in September 2022, enabling new skill development and employment opportunities.

## KJ Scaffolding Crew

A team of 5 supported employees led by our experienced Supervisor continue to service KJs by handling returned scaffolding equipment, where they dismantle, sort and check components ready for reuse. The team attend daily toolbox meetings and have opportunities to join in with the wider KJ team for additional safety discussions, creating an inclusive work environment. KJs continue to be very happy with the work undertaken.



## Wollongong's New Ambassador

Meet **Wooly Gong**! We have a new ambassador for Wollongong and the Illawarra region, created and designed by Greenacres and supported by many prominent leaders and businesses of the Illawarra. Victoria Velozo, Greenacres Coordinator of our Outsider Art Program has done all the designs!

**Wooly Gong** loves everything Wollongong has to offer. Our food and coffee culture, our bars and music scene, our beautiful beaches, culture, and escarpment.

He proudly supports local businesses and the **Wooly Gong** range includes t-shirts, tote bags, a cookie and a fantastic foodies hamper! We have partnered with Illawarra businesses who produce locally made treats to make this special hamper showcasing some of the Illawarra's finest products.

Launched on September 14th at our pop-up retail store in Wollongong Central, the UOW UniShop and via ACEIT's **Wooly Gong** online store. WIN television sponsored the initiative by producing and airing a **Wooly Gong** commercial and running a news story. There was also a wonderful write up in the Illawarra Mercury.

Our objectives with respect to this initiative are to:

- Provide work and training opportunities for people with disabilities. This includes retail and customer service training and packing work (core business)
- Demonstrate Greenacres commitment to our region by promoting the Illawarra and its local businesses (reputational)





## Launch of Greenacres' New Range of *imagine* Products



Supported employees commenced manufacturing a new range of homewares products including:

- Hand Poured Scented Soy Wax Candles
- Botanical Bath Salts
- Lavender Scented Wheat Heat Packs
- Gift Packs
- Gift Hampers

To complete our gift hampers we have partnered with blackMILK, a local manufacturer, and are proud to support other businesses with products handmade in Wollongong.

Products are available for purchase via Greenacres Support Office, pop up retail displays in Wollongong Central, at the UOW UniShop and via social media platforms.

We are currently developing a new online shop on the Greenacres website and will develop a marketing strategy to maximise future revenue from this new range. Our plans include wholesaling the *imagine* products to a variety of retail outlets from boutique gift and homewares stores, pharmacies and allied health professionals. In addition we will be promoting our luxury gift hampers to organisations looking for corporate gift giving ideas.

# Safety Together

## Awareness and Training

At Greenacres we are committed to the safety of our people – our most valued asset. It's no secret that the last few years, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, have presented us all with complex and ever-changing challenges.

We continue to find ways to raise awareness of the importance of work health and safety and to ensuring we provide environments that are free from physical and psychological harm. Each month we highlight key safety messages such as:

- Safe manual handling
- Safety around forklifts
- Fire safety
- Wellbeing

We encourage everyone to get involved. We had a reduction of lost time injuries (LTI) with 2 reports.

COVID-19 continued to require our focus. The tracking of positive and close contact cases resulted in early testing and identification of cases who were symptom free. No widespread outbreaks across Greenacres resulted in minimal disruption to staffing services. Approx 500 RAT tests were facilitated by Greenacres, and we continued our commitment to high standards of embedded hygiene practices that remain in place as best practice across Greenacres locations.

We had:

- 220 known participants and employees with COVID reported to Greenacres with their safe return to work assessed
- 437 cases of close contacts occurred within Greenacres. Their exposures were risk reviewed and return to work requirements communicated to those effected.

In addition to our continued efforts to manage COVID 19, we also reviewed and improved:

- Contractor management compliance and safe work practices
- Processes and procedures for sourcing and onboarding new contractors
- Safety around participant activities, prior to and during activities

We also initiated a Planned Preventative Maintenance Program.

To increase physical health and wellbeing, we encourage everyone to get involved in the 'Steptember' Challenge, especially with people working from home causing many of us to miss out on incidental exercise. It was a really fun team activity that encouraged us all to get moving!



## The COVID Vaccine Hub came to Greenacres

With COVID dominating Australia in 2021 Greenacres rolled up its sleeves to help support the vaccination of our vulnerable participants, their families and our staff. At that stage of the pandemic, the 'Vax the Illawarra' campaign was encouraging the entire community to get behind the message that, as a region, we needed to get to 90 percent of eligible people vaccinated. Naturally, Greenacres jumped in with both arms (so to speak) and offered to coordinate a vaccination hub at its North Wollongong base.

Partnering with Aspen Medical, as well as a number of key disability providers in the region, and with only a few weeks of planning, Greenacres hosted their first vaccination days from Tuesday the 5th to Thursday the 7th of October 2021, utilising our wonderful Kickstart Centre as the hub. Over 150 vaccinations were delivered during the 3-days with everyone buzzing about the positive impact that the hub created. Follow-up booster days were then scheduled 3-weeks later to complete the program.

Greenacres was certainly proud of the leadership that we provided to our many participants and families that came to the hub. In some cases, some of our participants were so anxious about having the dreaded needle, the support from some familiar faces was the only reason they agreed to have the vaccination in the first place.



## Preparing for Emergencies

In July 2022 our Enterprise buildings maintained their Fire Safety Compliance requirements to EPA Regulation 2021. As required, the certificate is lodged with Wollongong City Council and Fire and Rescue NSW. We participated in regular fire and evacuation



toolbox talks and practiced evacuation procedures, incorporating Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEP) supporting those with individual needs.



# Living Life Your Way

Greenacres Community Life and Leisure services comprise of day programs stretching from Corrimal in the Northern Illawarra suburbs to Bomaderry in the Shoalhaven. With fifteen sites and over 300 people with disability supported each week, the division is the largest in the organisation. Day program supports are mainly group based with centres operating between 9am to 3pm Monday to Fridays as their core hours with early and late supports (plus weekends) also provided as participants and families require. Transport supports are also provided as part of this service option.

## Zoom at Greenacre Road

While it was definitely not the same as being together in the centres, some of our Greenacre Road participants used Zoom to stay connected during the very long lock down of 2021.

As anyone who has used Zoom knows, there are always a few minor technical hiccups to iron out in the beginning, like camera direction and mute buttons but in no time the participants were zooming like professionals!

Greenacre Road Coordinator, Maree Geraghty, said at the time, “the Zoom sessions have been a fun way to try and keep connected”.

“We try to keep the sessions small so that everybody has a chance to talk and contribute,” Maree said.

“After saying hello and catching up with each other, we then do an activity together like playing a song using instruments they might have at home, playing an interactive game like Bingo or decorating the same picture.”

While we look back at what was less than 12 months ago, we can only think how extraordinary times were. We are no doubt happy they are just a memory and are thrilled we are back in centre.

## Fitstix for Fitness

Based on the idea that drumming is a very effective way of working out, our participants loved unleashing their inner Ringo Starr.

Everyone in the class was given some lightly weighted drumsticks to get the blood pumping with some simulated drumming. Fitstix is a mix of isometric movements, cardio and strength conditioning which sculpts muscle and burns calories.

Fitstix is a fantastic workout for Greenacres participants because it has a great soundtrack and is suitable for people of all ages and fitness types including those with limited mobility. The routines are all simple to follow and as they are set to calibrated songs, it is easy to get the rhythm down.



# Get Creative, Get Moving, Be Social

From jumping in the pool for aqua aerobics to busting moves at Zumba, our CLL staff are ready and willing to support their participants to give any activity a try! The Greenacres' individual support approach means that there is no definitive list of activities that our CLL centres participate in. If there is a support or activity that our participants would like to try, we work with them to make it happen. Our aim is always to support our participants to transform their ideas and goals into achievements and experiences, whatever they may be.

## Oak Street Parties Were Back Better Than Ever

There was only one word to describe the post lockdown birthday parties at our Oak Street Centre - Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious!

The team excelled themselves yet again creating a Mary Poppins themed event for their participant Mel which included a smoking chimney, a carousel horse and a special pink umbrella cake.

Just as you would expect from a Mary Poppins party, there was kite making, pavement chalk drawing, a spoonful of sugar race and pin the bow tie on the penguin.

Then, with barely time to take a breath, the team completely redecorated the centre for Abdullah's Shrek themed birthday two days later!

Pink and pretty was swapped for green and grungy while the sophisticated high tea for the Mary Poppins party packed away and replaced with the relaxed, swampy fun of Shrek and friends.



## Greenacres' Master Chefs Bake Up a Storm

Cooking programs are one of Skilled n Social's most popular activities which provides not just independent living skills but also a lot of fun. The program welcomes participants from a variety of Greenacres services and teaches them skills to live an independent life. Over sixty participants are involved each week with classes everyday, two to three classes each day. That's a lot of cooking!



While the previous COVID-19 restrictions kept the classes confined to the kitchen, the participants have now been able to get back to shopping, allowing them to practise their budgeting and shopping skills at local supermarkets.

As well as learning to prepare, cook and clean up afterwards, a typical class involves the group deciding on the menu, which consists of a main meal and a desert. These are either selected from a menu we prepare in advance, based on participants' suggestions, or by looking at what ingredients are in the kitchen and learning to find a recipe to match those items, which also reduces food wastage.

Our participants write out the ingredients, work out the budget, shop, scan and pay. Then it's back to the centre for the best part - cooking and eating together! We're sure Manu would give them all a 10 for effort!



## Outsider Artists – From Zoom then Room to Bloom

At Greenacres, we believe everybody has the ability to express themselves artistically – it is just a matter of finding your perfect medium. We have a dedicated art therapist who guides participants to discover their individual style of creative expression while improving their artistic skills. Artistic expression can also be explored through activities like woodwork, craft, sewing, knitting, jewellery making, photography and drama.

Putting the challenges of the COVID 2021 lockdown and restrictions behind them that included Zoom art classes and some one-to-one supports in the studio, the Outsider Arts team were thrilled to resume larger groups from the Ralph Black Drive Studio in 2022. With that came the decision by Art Therapist Victoria Velozo to resume the annual art exhibition, after a 3-year COVID hiatus. The biggest problem for her and the team, sorting through 3-years of collected art works to display!

Months of planning ensured and culminated with the Exhibition's grand opening on Thursday the 15th of September, at Project Contemporary Art Space, Wollongong.

With over 100 people in attendance, CEO Chris Christodoulou and Victoria thanked all those involved for the support received and acknowledged the 300 plus pieces provided by the Outsider Artists. The event was officially declared open by Louise Brand - Exhibitions Curator for Wollongong Art Gallery, to an appreciative audience.

A major highlight during the first week was the sale of one of the artists' collective paintings that was purchased by a visiting English Art Dealer. The artwork sold for \$1500 and featured iconic Australian native animals with an equally iconic gum tree. This was the first time our artists have sold works internationally and it was a thrilling result for all the artists' hard work. Five other pieces were purchased by the dealer who paid double the recommend price that was set on each of the works. Overall sales surpassed the previous exhibition held in 2019 with most of the purchase price going to the artist as their share of the profits.

This outcome also capped off a successful auction of other collective art pieces that was held earlier in the year at Greenacres' Gala Ball. Those funds raised have since gone back to the Outsider Arts studio, helping purchase of a new ceramics kiln that is due to be delivered later this year.

# Connecting in the Community

Greenacres partners with other Illawarra not-for-profit organisations creating tailored volunteering opportunities for people with an NDIS plan.

Greenacres Community Connect Program includes a wonderful partnership with IRT which enables the development of a range of garden maintenance skills while enabling participants to also give back to the local community.



Horticulturalists Matt and Trent teach our participants a range of skills from weeding to planting and propagating, pruning, mowing and whipper snipping.

When it's raining, the team learn how to safely use woodworking tools such as drills, saws and hammers to make some awesome products from cheese boards to utility boxes.

The social aspect of this volunteering opportunity is highly valued by the crew.

The Illawarra Diggers Aged and Community Care Program connects people with an NDIS plan to volunteering opportunities, that not only develop new skills and self confidence, but provide a sense of purpose in a fun environment.

Our Greenacres participants have been helping at the Illawarra Diggers Aged Care for over 3 years. Groups of participants attend on Mondays and Tuesdays, helping with a variety of day-to-day duties such as taking food to the residents at lunch, washing up dishes, cleaning tables, sweeping floors, and doing the laundry.

Participants start their day by visiting the dementia ward and helping the residents with their laundry. After that, it's time for some fun games of bingo, dancing to classical music or playing board games. Then they make their way to the kitchen to help out at lunch time, where they deliver meals to around 100 residents of the facility throughout the different dining areas. The group also take dishes to and from tables and refills tea, coffee, and milk containers. They sweep the floors and wipe down tables and railings.

The participants all enjoy helping the elderly and learning life skills that they can apply in their own lives.



# Getting Work Ready

## Kickstart for Life

Work Skills – our Kickstart for Life group have made significant progress from a wide range of skills-based training incorporated into the program, including IT training, hospitality training, interviewing skills and many other transferable workplace skills. They have gained knowledge and confidence in areas such as social skills, traveling independently and handling money. Greenacres support staff accompany participants on industry tours, community outings and work experience to apply learnings from classroom sessions in practical hands-on real-world settings.



## Kickstart Skilled n Social

High school students aged 12 - 17 have learnt new skills and had lots of fun cooking (and eating), playing basketball, creating art, enjoying movies and much more. On Monday and Saturday afternoons its all about building life and social skills.



## Kickstart Careers

School Leaver Employment Supports provides a smooth transition from school to work.

Work Experiences – We appreciate all of the local businesses that have helped to provide work experience to the Kickstart crew, helping them on their path to successful employment. Coles Fairy Meadow was a massive supporter of our open employment work experience program. With the support of our two Fabulous support workers, Nicole and Rachael, 36 participants were able to successfully gain knowledge and experience that will last a lifetime, as they developed a range of transferable work skills. The program lasted 4 weeks and was a great success. Participants enjoyed work experience with many great local employers including Boost juice, Port Grocers, Dominos and many more – thank you all so much for your support.

Work Success – The role of SLES is to assist participants in finding employment opportunities, whether that be in open or supported employment. Many of the Kickstart SLES participants choose work within Greenacres Social Enterprises, while others choose open employment. We are proud of our partnership with Nanyabura, a cleaning company, who have moved completely away from hiring through job agencies, preferring Greenacres to provide them with suitable candidates to fill their roles. “We are quite pedantic with vetting who would make a good match for Nanyabura” says Nicole, the support worker who liaises with the business. “They’ll ask if I have anyone for the job and if I don’t, I won’t say that we do. This allows for the right person to fit into the right role for them. Many job agencies require people to apply for as many jobs as possible, which doesn’t often result in the right fit”. Greenacres is committed to finding our participants meaningful and sustainable employment, that aligns with their individual employment goals.





## Kickstart Takes a Snow Day

There was excitement all round when 26 participants and 12 staff from Kickstart took a 'snow-day' at Corin Forrest Mountain Resort, south west of Canberra, on what was a cold and very early August day.

The full day excursion was their first big trip since COVID and the first snow trip in quite a few years. With sleep barely wiped from the participant's eyes and the sun still a sliver on the horizon, the large Kickstart contingent left our North Wollongong basecamp for their huge day ahead.

First requests was 'carpool' karaoke where the adventurers made the most of their 3-hour travel time go that little bit faster and certainly with a lot of excitement and enthusiasm. Who doesn't love belting out anthems like Katy Perry's Firework, Miley Cyrus' Wrecking Ball and some classics from Queen! The Kickstart Crew did and then some!

There was the compulsory stop off at the Big Marino in Goulburn for a group pic and some pastry treats from the Trappers Bakery across the road, fuelling everyone up for the main snow-show ahead.

Arriving mid-morning, the gang were jumping out of their skin to hit the mountain in their ski gear, immediately making an impression with snow angels, toboggan races, snowmen and women plus the obligatory snowball fights – all good natured of course! By 1pm it was a lunch time with everyone exhausted but happy. The trip home was a little less raucous with most catching up on the sleep they missed. When asked what their favourite thing about the day, it was a unanimous 'all of it!' I think they'll be back again.



# Financial Performance at a Glance

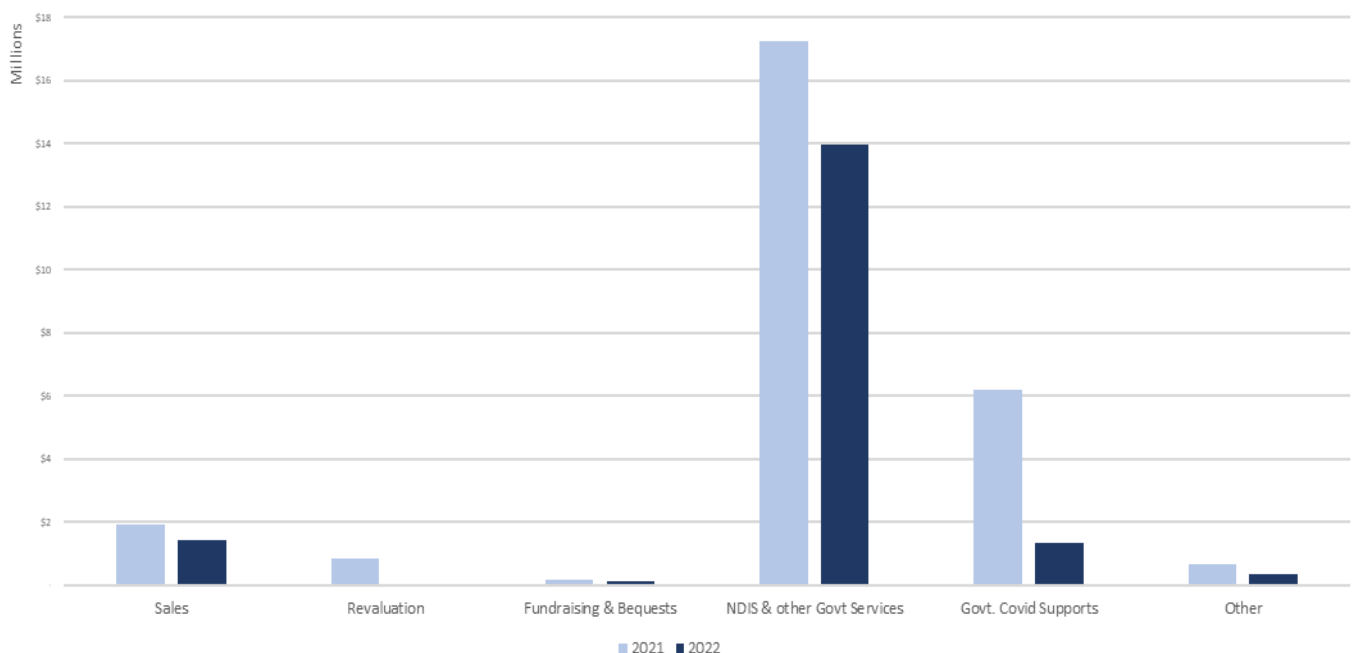
Our financial result for the 2022 financial year was substantially impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and the downward pressure on pricing under the new NDIS support worker cost model. In the end we recorded a deficit of \$1.3 million for the full year compared to the surplus of \$3.1 million for the prior year

## COVID 19 - Revenue Impact

The year started with four months of strict lockdown that significantly reduced our ability to deliver services. While revenue was down \$3.9 million for the year, more than 50% (\$2.2 million) was experienced in these first 4 months. Following the end of lockdown, services recommenced to more normal levels but continued to be impacted while we responded to mandatory vaccination rules and COVID isolation requirements. Towards the end of the year, the impact of positive COVID cases and compulsory isolation rules, impacted revenue again while supply chain issues for ADE customers reduced sales. In January we made the

decision to provide 3 days Special COVID leave for staff that were required to isolate in line with Health regulations. This amounted to an investment of over \$100k in the health and safety of staff and participants. It should be noted that, although revenue from services dropped \$3.28 million from 2021 to 2022, we received \$2 million less in COVID supports from the 2022 government JobSaver program than we did from the JobKeeper program in 2021.

Revenue Change 2021 to 2022

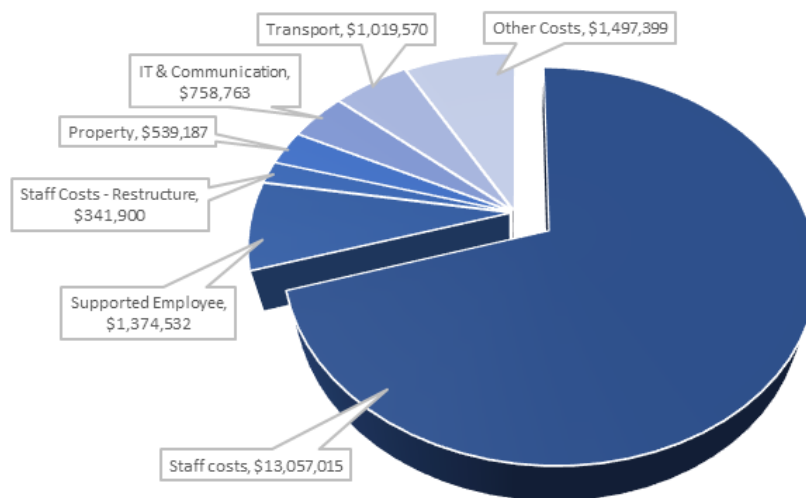


## NDIS Pricing model – Restructure Costs

As part of our Strategic goal to operate sustainably under the pricing and cost model framework, we have been working to better align our structure to meet the NDIS support worker cost model. We appointed PricewaterhouseCoopers to undertake a review and provide advice on the best structure moving forward. Following consideration of their advice and internal consultation we created a new structure that we believe will not compromise our underpinning commitment to delivering quality supports but will deliver greater

organisational efficiency. Along with the new structure came the creation of a new leadership team that will provide leadership both organisationally and targeted to distinct areas of responsibility. This restructure was achieved through voluntary redundancies, realignment of roles and a reclassification of positions across operations and corporate services. While this created a one-off staff restructure cost of \$342k, it was essential to ensure the long term sustainability of Greenacres.

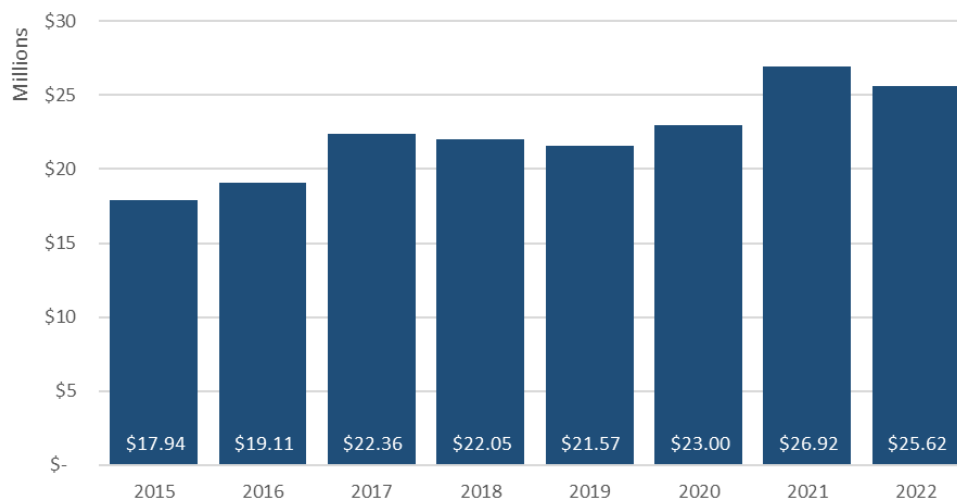
Expenses by Source - 2022



## Financial Position - Supporting the Future

The 2022 year was a challenge to Greenacres' financial performance however our financial position remains strong with Equity of \$25.62 million of which \$9.43 million was in cash. While the past few years have shown us that the future is unpredictable, we believe our financial strength, the changes Greenacres has made and the effort that has been put into responding and adapting to the impact of COVID-19 has put us in a positive place to provide quality and valued outcomes for many more years to come.

Nets Assets/Equity \$ million



# Thank You

Since our beginning in 1953, Greenacres has depended on the generosity and kindness of our community. We are very fortunate to have such wonderful support from our sponsors, partners and generous donors. Together with funding from community and government grants we are able to provide:

- Supported employees with the satisfaction of rewarding work
- Young people with disability options to transition from school to work life
- Innovative training and development programs
- Assistance and support for people with disability to gain open employment
- Leading lifestyle and leisure programs
- Boutique hotel style overnight stays to provide that much needed break to relax and recharge

We welcome donations from individuals and partners, all donations over \$2 are tax deductible.

If you wish to donate, please email [info@greenacres.net.au](mailto:info@greenacres.net.au)

