



Knoxbrooke *Talk*



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SPRING EDITION

From the Group CEO

2021 has seen our communities persevere in previously

incomprehensible circumstances. It has been heartening to see how supportive we are toward each other as a community, entirely focused on helping others to see the lockdowns through with as much cheer as possible. The reports within this edition of Knoxbrooke Talk are testament to that spirit.

The 2021 calendar has also seen Knoxbrooke undergo a number of significant independent audits. This has included Knoxbrooke's first ever, NDIS Quality and Safeguards audit. Being new, it was quite an undertaking and completed in difficult circumstances. I am pleased to share that Knoxbrooke passed the audit very well with no major non-conformances raised. Knoxbrooke has been granted NDIS provider registration status until 28 September 2024. Knoxbrooke Enterprises has also undergone a voluntary ISO 9001:2015 audit for the nursery business. No major or minor non-conformances were raised and accreditation has also been granted for this important quality standard.



At Knoxbrooke's governance level, we have seen a number of new Directors join the Board including:

◇ Katherine Boiciuc as Knoxbrooke Group Director, recognised as one of Australis's 29 inspirational women making waves in STEM, global keynote speaker and Director at Maximus International

◇ Lyn Shalless as Knoxbrooke Group Director, Chief Financial Officer of Trinity College with over 25 years of senior management experience in the corporate sector for both

private and ASX listed entities

◇ Paul DeStefanis as Knoxbrooke Enterprises Director, Finance Manager at Circus Nexus and previously Financial Controller of the Knoxbrooke Group for a cumulative period of 15 years

◇ Alan Soderlund as Knoxbrooke Enterprises Director, founding partner of Australia's largest wholesale plant market operating in three states and previously Director of the Victorian nursery association for many years

We are delighted to welcome such talented individuals, contributing freely their expertise as volunteers for the furtherment of Knoxbrooke's mission and ultimately for the benefit of the people we serve.

Earlier in the year, Knoxbrooke accepted the resignation of Ron Barbaroux, Director of both the Knoxbrooke Group and Knoxbrooke Enterprises. For over 8 years, Ron provided wonderful guidance, ideas and energy to Knoxbrooke's many endeavours. We would like to thank Ron for all that he contributed; it was vast. We wish Ron the very best and look forward to Ron staying close to Knoxbrooke into the future.

Kind regards

Kristian Dauncey

Group CEO



Social Enterprises

It's been another very challenging few months across all of Knoxbrooke's social enterprises. Some have been operating at reduced hours and some have endured lengthy closures due to the restrictions and difficult operating conditions. I would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every team member across all our enterprises who have shown resilience, respect and support for each other and for Knoxbrooke, as we navigate a path through. I would also like to thank everyone within our teams for your commitment to meet the vaccination requirements set by the Victoria State Government that has

⇒ In July Yarra View Nursery and Bushland Flora Nursery were formally merged together and are now known as Yarra View & Bushland Flora Nurseries (YVBLF). The



change has been very well accepted in the market and will allow for improved operational efficiency.

⇒ YVBLF recently supplied the 500,000th plant to the Mordialloc Freeway Project! We are now over 75% complete for the largest project ever awarded to a social enterprise in Victoria. A fantastic effort by the team.

helped ensure we can stay operational and work together safely. I am extremely proud of your commitment.

As I write this piece the next stage of the Victorian Roadmap to re-opening was released, which provides great hope for an almost normal summer period. I am certainly looking forward to a break and meeting up with friends and family like never before.

Some key highlights over the last 3 months include:



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⇒ Staying with YVBLF, I am very pleased to advise that we have been awarded the Lilydale and Mooroolbark Level Crossing Removal projects. Supply will commence in November for the station openings and progress into February / March 2022. Its another great example of the great work we do and the wonderful support from the Level Crossing Removal Authority. Keep an eye out for our plants as you head into work.

⇒ And in June this year the long awaited gazebo at the front of the York Road site was formally opened by members of the Lilydale Rotary Club and Knoxbrooke Enterprises Chairman, Murray Coulthard. I would like to again thank the Lilydale Rotary Club for the very generous support with

the gazebo that will provide shelter during the summer and winter months. This is a wonderful example of the community working together on community focused projects.

In July, as a result of lockdown 6, the retail nursery, Yarra View Garden Centre, sadly had to close its doors with all retail unable to operate. The team, led by Josh Kyne, Commercial Business Manager, transitioned quickly to online trading, click and collect and a limited delivery service – all for the first time in

the garden centres 20+ year history. The market response was very strong, and trade built quickly. Just last week over 250 orders were taken online for the week! The store then re-opened with a huge 'bang' on Friday 22 October with just 4 days notice! Again, the team responded and with the support of many within the broader York Road team the store was ready to invite the public in for the first time in 3 months! The future of this little enterprise looks very bright indeed. Well done to all involved in the transformation of the business and if any of the Knoxbrooke broader family are in the area or looking for plants for your garden or in the home, please call in.

Also in July, Jigsaw in Warragul, commenced production of Survey Pegs for the first time. This business was very gratefully passed on to Knoxbrooke by Mr Steve Symes, a Warragul local, who was retiring from operation. We are extremely grateful for Steve's support of Knoxbrooke and we look forward to building the business in the coming months to provide even more fantastic employment opportunities in the region.

Stay safe everyone.

Scott Buckland

CEO - Knoxbrooke Enterprises



Outer East

As with everyone in Metro Melbourne, our services have adapted to the prolonged COVID lockdown. Our Achieve team have offered interesting and engaging online content for our students since July and as at early October there have now been more online sessions than face to face sessions this year.

The online cookery days are always a highlight and most of our students join each day. Our team are offering additional electives including Minecraft which is proving to be very popular. We hope to open up slowly with face to face activities beginning with a slightly late Halloween celebration on 3rd November.

We have had strong interest in enrolments for 2022 and we are excited about our growing number of students. Eight of our students are looking to transition into work opportunities at our Yarra View Nursery and Outsource. We are currently recruiting for an Achieve Pathways Coach which will also support our students on the next step of their journey to employment or volunteering opportunities.

Our 365 team have been kept busy during the lockdown with families still needing support. Although some clients have put support on hold most families have continued to work with us during the lockdown. We are providing support for clients to attend appointments for COVID vaccinations and when required COVID testing.

After a period of consolidation, our 365 service is now looking to grow and new clients are welcome. Recruitment for additional staff has been successful in Warragul and the Outer East.

Our 365 team is looking forward to being able to support clients in the community again as restrictions slowly ease over the next month.



West Gippsland

We have said goodbye to some treasured friends over the past months, but we have also welcomed some fantastic young and enthusiastic educators into our little community, coupled with the ever-changing Covid environment, Mawarra has been reinvented several times over the past few months. Our latest evolution is to PODS, where the centre is divided into four, so that if one POD needs to isolate due to COVID exposure, the other four can operate as normal. What all these changes have shown is the resilience and brilliance of staff, client, and their families to make things work, always find the positive and best of all we have become closer as a community as we continue to support each other during this challenging time. The PODS are full of laughter

and the clients engaging and connecting. As the weather warms up, we are doing COVID safe community activities and feedback has never been more positive.

The launch of Achieve West Gippsland gets closer and continues to build momentum, it is beginning to take shape in earnest with Kellie Shields taking carriage of the program. Kellie will meet with Michael and Matt to do training and understand all things Achieve ready to begin in 2022.

The Op Shop & Sorting centre continue to kick goals, with Kerryn coming on board as the new manager and our wonderful Di stepping back to

volunteer. We have seen a surge in sales, increased social media interaction and foot traffic which is wonderful to see. We have welcomed some new volunteers and continue to be so grateful to the team of staff and volunteers for all their tireless effort. We are excited to introduce some more supported employees to the team very soon.

We are certainly all looking forward to Summer



SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT FUNDING

The transition from DMI set weekly to hourly funding has been a challenge for many. The NDIA have recognized that some planners and LACs are not creating plans, using the new model adequately thus a Community Engagement Team is being formed to manage any issues faced by supported employees, their families, LAC's, planners, and providers.

This is good news, although a bit late for many who have already been through the "Review of Reviewable" decision process and in some cases the Administrative Appeals Tribunal to address funding shortfalls.

To date when plans come through with a funding shortfall, we have supported clients to lodge a "Review of Reviewable" decision, this practice has resulted in mixed results. In some cases, reviews have been declined without adjustment, largely due to the lack of understanding of planners and internal reviewers. It is anticipated with the Community Engagement Team in place this will improve. As a result, we are now suggesting two possible approaches to addressing shortfalls:

1. Apply for the Review of Reviewable decision with Knoxbrooke's proposal and progress report explaining the supports required, this approach is successful in 70% of instances.
2. Knoxbrooke put in place a short-term service agreement with the expectation that a Change of Circumstance Review be requested 3-4 months before funding is exhausted. It is anticipated that this approach will be more successful as it allows time for planners to become familiar with the funding model and Knoxbrooke will be able to demonstrate the support that has been provided and its costs.

Clients with plans that commenced prior to 1/7/2020 with a plan period of two or more years will have employment funding in the capacity building budgets in their plans, however, from 1/1/2022 employment funding will be claimed from Core budgets. It was anticipated that any participants with employment funding in the capacity building section of their NDIS plans would be contacted for a plan review prior to 31/12/21. However, NDIA are aware that planners may not be able to achieve this deadline, as a stop gap the agency will transfer the balance of employment funding from capacity building into core budgets. Clients affected will be contacted and advised that the funding transfer will ensure continuity of supports, but a review will most likely be needed as funding shortfalls are expected. Knoxbrooke have a record of the clients this



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will affect and will be in contact in the coming months to explain the early review process and provide a proposal for the new funding required.

NDIS Review Types

Plan Reviews – this relates to the standard plan review required at the end of each NDIS plan

Review of Reviewable decision – this relates to a request for a review within 90 days of a plan release where changes are required and/or funding is not adequate

Soft Touch Reviews- this relates to reviews where a small change is required i.e., Changing from NDIA Managed to Plan Managed.

Change of Circumstance Reviews-this relates to an unscheduled review or as the name refers your circumstances have changed and additional supports need to be funded.

Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT)- if a review of reviewable decision or change of circumstance review is declined the only re-course available is to lodge a claim through the AAT.

Knoxbrooke NDIS Team

Knoxbrooke have a dedicated team of staff available to help you with your NDIS needs, this is an unfunded team available to help you with planning meeting preparation, advocacy/support in planning meetings, change of circumstance or unscheduled reviews.

If you have any questions in relation to the above or about the NDIS in general, please contact the Knoxbrooke NDIS Team and we will be happy to help. We can be contacted at:

Email: ndis@knoxbrooke.com.au

Phone: 9758 3666 Outer East

5624 3400 West Gippsland



Matt H. Wright

Donate to Knoxbrooke

We value your support.

Your generous contributions help us to:

- Enhance our service offerings
- Help send members of our Knoxbrooke Client Council to the annual VALID 'Having a Say Conference'
- Purchase materials and equipment
- Improve facilities for our supported employees

If you can assist with a tax-deductible donation or would like to leave a bequest, please give us a call on 03 9758 3666



Respectful images policy



Knoxbrooke is wholly committed to a 'respectful images' policy that ensures that all photos of service users and their families that are presented in Knoxbrooke social media, website, newsletters, reports and flyers are respectful, dignified and fit for purpose.

Knoxbrooke has a wonderfully positive story to tell and we are keen to share our activities with family and friends of Knoxbrooke.

If for any reason you do not wish for your loved one to be included in photographs that may appear in publication or our social media page, or you would like a copy of our policy, please let us know.



Head Office

1/68 Charter Street, Ringwood

03 9758 3666

Our Locations

Ringwood Achieve

38 Charter Street, Ringwood

03 9758 3666

Knoxbrooke Outsource

21 Clancy Road, Mount Evelyn

03 9736 4984

Mawarra

7 Percy Street, Warragul

03 5624 3400

Mawarra Sorting Centre

14 June Court, Warragul

03 5624 3400

Yarra View Bushland Flora Nursery

136 York Road, Mount Evelyn

03 9737 0400

Yarra View Garden Centre

136 York Road, Mount Evelyn

03 9737 0851

Mawarra Opportunity Shop

40 Palmerston Street, Warragul

03 9622 0937

Jigsaw Industries/Waratah Grounds Maintenance

3 Ryan Court, Warragul

03 5624 3437

www.knoxbrooke.com.au