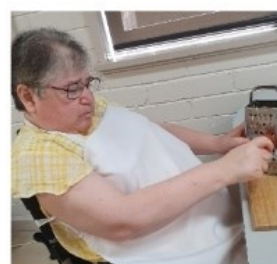




Knoxbrooke *Talk*



Inside this edition:

From the Group CEO

Social Enterprises update

Outer East update

West Gippsland update

Support Options Update

2023 SUMMER

EDITION

Welcome 2023!

I hope you enjoyed quality time with family and friends over the recent summer holidays. Leading into Christmas, at Knoxbrooke we were right into the festive spirit with many Christmas events happening across our services. We enjoyed celebrating the accomplishments of 2022, looked forward to the holidays to come and contemplated what 2023 might look like. It wasn't lost on us that this was our first return to

large-scale community events and the simple joy of enjoying each other's company was tangible. On a personal level, I loved every minute of Decembers celebrations! Nothing quite beats chatting with our many clients, families, staff and supporters. The goodwill towards Knoxbrooke and those that make it real every day is immense.



After 6 years of volunteering as Director and the last 2 years as Chair, Prof. Colin Higgins has stepped down from the Board and is replaced by Deputy Chair, Michael Briggs. Knoxbrooke is fortunate to have volunteer Directors, who each bring their talents and expertise to bear for the betterment of Knoxbrooke. I would like to

thank Colin for his selfless support of Knoxbrooke. From a governance perspective, the past few years have been demanding yet Colin would always make himself available for those important conversations. Colin holds a senior position in academia and is an expert in strategy. Through Colin bringing his expertise to Knoxbrooke, we are a stronger and more purposeful organisation than ever before. Thank you, Colin.

The Knoxbrooke Board is currently undergoing a planned governance renewal. In coming months, new Directors will be introduced to you as the Board fills identified vacancies. Knoxbrooke Enterprises, a subsidiary of



Knoxbrooke, which is responsible for Knoxbrooke's social enterprises is also recruiting for one vacancy. Should a Directorship on the Knoxbrooke Enterprises Board be of interest to you, please feel free to contact me to discuss.

Once the governance renewal process is finalised, the Board and leadership will turn its attention to the important task of 2024-2026 strategic plan formation. You will be asked to provide input into the development of this plan as it will guide Knoxbrooke's future. I strongly encourage you to participate and share your views as this will enable Knoxbrooke to tailor our services to better meet your needs.



Kind regards

Kristian Dauncey
Group CEO



Yarra View Bushland

Trevor Norman
Interim General Manager

In case you hadn't noticed, Yarra View and Bushland Flora Nurseries has been rebranded as Yarra View Bushland Nursery. It's a low key change which aligns the nursery with the broader suite of Knoxbrooke branding and simplifies dealings with customers and suppliers.



The other piece of exciting news is the return of Scott Buckland as General Manager of Yarra View Bushland. He's been sorely missed and it's great to have him back!



While it hasn't been a typical summer the warmer weather and a decent amount of rain have really accelerated growth across

the three nursery sites. All sites have been extremely busy and are full of great quality stock. We continue to recruit for a range of different nursery roles to help manage the workload.

The Commercial team continue to tender for project work. Production of stock for the level crossing removals at Derrimut Road and Mont Albert, as well as the housing commission complexes in Prahran, Brighton and Flemington, are well under way. These projects have created a significant amount of work across the three nursery sites.



Work on the full implementation of Evergreen Connect continues and significant efficiencies have already been achieved. We've commenced the process of having customer orders picked at

Wandin so they can be sent to York Road for consolidation with the rest of the order and despatched. This process avoids the need to undertake general transfers of stock and the double handling which it causes. Well done to Josh and his team for this initiative.

Following the successful implementation of the Supported Employee teams at York Road and Clegg Road (rollout at Wandin will occur as soon as an Area Supervisor is employed) we have turned our minds to the recruitment of Employment Coaches. These coaches will work 1:1 with Supported Employees and also



support the Area Supervisors themselves. We have two Employment Coaches commencing at York Road next week and we're looking to recruit more!



Welcome Back Everyone! We are looking forward to Knoxbrooke Enterprises having a huge year of Growth in 2023 for all 4 our business divisions as we look at investing some extra resources to create some exciting new opportunities. Over the past 3 months, our Enterprises businesses have matched our beautiful weather, with lots of positive news and improvements being made in each business.

Waratah Environmental (Gardening)

After lots of rain leading up to Summer, when the warm weather finally arrived, our Waratah Team was swamped with customers wanting their lawns mowed and they did a great job servicing everyone. With our customers giving us regular work, we are now looking to recruit 4 – 5 new supported employees to join our Waratah gardening team. In December we had Chris Siegert join our Waratah Team as a Supervisor. Chris brings a wealth of gardening and landscaping experience having previously run his own business in this field and he will be great



with training our employees. Please Welcome Chris to our Team. I would also like to acknowledge that Darren Kleeven and Daniel Somerville have both been with the Warragul Team for 1 year in February. On February 1st we picked up our Brand New LDV dual cab Ute for the Waratah team, the team will now travel in style between jobs, and we are planning to sign write the vehicle so that everyone in the area knows who we are.

Jigsaw (Survey Pegs and Kindling Firewood)

Orders for our own range of Survey Pegs have been steady over the past 3 months, whilst the Sales for our Kindling / Firewood have slowed with the warmer weather. The Jigsaw Team have recently expanded our range of products and we are now manufacturing our own range of Tomato and Vegetables Garden Stakes made from quality hardwood timber. We have also expanded our range of survey pegs by offering pegs with White Painted Tips. In November Chris Rhodes joined our Jigsaw Team as a Supervisor. Chris has over 30 years' worth of Boilermaker and Maintenance experience and he has already been excellent with training our Jigsaw employees. David White (Jigsaw Supervisor) left our team in November after 10+ years with us. Unfortunately, the Packaging side of our Jigsaw

business has been slow of late, but we are working hard to bring in some new customers work.

Outsource -Mt Evelyn

There has been a real “Buzz” at Outsource Packaging over the past few months as we picked up 2 new customers in late November who have kept us very busy with work right up to and after our Christmas break. Both of these customers will have ongoing work for us throughout the year which will make sure that we always have plenty of work to do. The Outsource Team have also completed a major clean-up of our working areas and the warehouse as well as tidying up our outdoor areas and sheds. We have also been quoting several new customers for some exciting new work which we are hopeful of winning in the coming months. Everyone is Welcome to visit

spending some time working with our Outsource team.

Yarra View Horticulture (Mt Evelyn)

Our Yarra View Horticulture team has been very busy leading up to Christmas as everybody needed their gardening and home maintenance completed before the holidays. This time of the year can be challenging as we try and satisfy everyone’s expectations. Our largest customer has been undergoing some process changes at their end and this has been a challenging time for our teams. We continue to work closely with them to ensure that this partnership is good for both organisations. I would like to acknowledge our Horticulture Manager (Paul) for his efforts to tidy up the outdoors areas at My Evelyn over the past 2 months.



Outsource for a tour and to see the great work that our teams are doing. Over the past 2 months we have had more work than what our teams can handle and so we are still looking to GROW and increase the number of Employees and Staff at Outsource in the coming weeks. We would also love to see some more Volunteers



Achieve

Michael Beavis
Manager Achieve

I love music. All types, all genres, all periods – My playlist doesn't discriminate. When I stop and recall the significant moments I have experienced in my life, there is a soundtrack that emphatically plays in my mind's eye. Each recollection of memories is connected to a specific song. Some of the songs are strong, confident, and passionate, while others are slow and melodic odes to events that illicit hurt or sorrow. Each perfectly belongs where it should, and when I hear these songs, I can't help but feel like I have been transported through time and space to that exact moment.

Now, I beg of you. Please, don't misunderstand me! I don't choose the songs, or the feelings they invoke. These songs are etched in my head by



the happenings at the time. I am simply a slave to whichever brain chemistry compels me to reminisce in this manner. I am not in control of this process!

And, as I packed my duffle bag on the eve of the Achieve Adventure Camp, I thought long and hard about which incredible song would be seared into my brain for remainder of my life. How would I recall the first Achieve Camp? Months in the making. Blood, sweat and tears. Monumental history in the making. Surely, no song could possibly testify to the greatness that would dawn on *Friday 16th December 2022!*

... Justin Bieber – Baby ft. Ludacris. Like a tattoo, for better, or worse, it's a part of me now.

I do wonder how it came to this, because during the two-hour long trip to Camp Getaway in Axedale, I couldn't hear a single thing. You see, excitement has a tangible sound. It's impossibly



loud, and vaguely sounds like a ten young adults jammed into a mini-bus filled to the brim with caffeine and sugar. There were giggles, and squeals and a whole range of other unworldly noises that emanate from the seats behind the driver. It was omnipresent and here to stay.

As we left Ringwood, headed out of Melbourne, and met country roads, the sound of the *excitement* only appeared to increase. I had hoped the sugar-rush would run its course, but every passing pothole, cow and hay-bale just amplified the sound coming from behind the driver's seat. Soon enough, asphalt turned to stones, and suburbia transformed into bushland. Camp Getaway was tucked far enough from

Bendigo, that it actually snuck up on us. One U-turn later, and the bus was creeping down the dirt driveway as staff greeted from our accommodation.

Engine off. Bodies out. I had safely delivered our VIPs to the party! Gleefully sliding from the driver's seat and stretching my legs, I called out "Let's unpack the bus and take our luggage to our rooms!" I was met with resounding silence. Not just the silence you would expect from mallee bushland, but unnatural silence. The type of silence you would expect ten young adults had suddenly lost their confidence. The awkward sound if nervousness had replaced all of their excitement... Oh dear.



In a sense, it was reassuring to see a sense of normality return to our Achievers. Our eventual arrival in Axedale had hit home a sudden realization that we were not their parents, but more importantly, that they were responsible for their own choices and actions. Yes, they would need to carry their own baggage. Yes, they would need to assist with shopping or cooking. Yes, they would need to be responsible young adults. Of course, the Knoxbrooke team would be there to assist each and every individual, but our role was that of support. This weekend was about providing the people in front of us with the opportunity to access the community *as young adults*.

It took some explaining, and each person reacted to the idea in their own time but

provide a person with a true sense of choice and control, and it doesn't take long before the good times pour down.

By dinner time, the majority had the idea of how this weekend was going to roll. The group had decided that we were heading to the Manchester Arms in Eaglehawk for some music, dinner and a few drinks before watching Nathan "Whippy" Griggs perform a live whip cracking show in the beer garden.

An early start on Saturday morning saw the group travel to Echuca Moama for the day. A eye-opening trip down the Murray River by Paddle Steamer provided each of us with some real insight into the devastation caused by the recent floods in the area. A pie and a cold drink later, and it was time to visit the "olde" lolly shop in the main street for a sugar hit before travelling back to Axedale.

There was unanimous decision to tuck into KFC at Rosalind Park and enjoy the dinner with the fruit bats, before venturing out to the Zone Fun Park for a few rounds of competitive laser tag. The night later presented itself with opportunities to responsibly purchase some drinks, and enjoy some downtime in the rec-room back at Camp Getaway.

By the time Sunday 18th December 2022 had rolled around, the nervous energy from day one had become a distant memory. The group before us were all about making the best of the time that they had left. A few options for the day were thrown around, but it was never really a discussion – our final activity would be three

rounds of Go-Karting. For most, it was the first time behind a steering wheel and in reach of an accelerator. There was slips and spins along the way, but it was an incredible sight to behold as people grew more confident behind the wheel... nudging and bumping their mates out of the way on the race way. I had never been more proud.

And as first ever Achieve Adventure Camp wound down, I would love to write that the drive back to Ringwood was subdued, and that the ten-young adults sitting behind me were so exhausted that they slept the entire way, but that would be a down-right lie. An amazing weekend full of adventure, fun, friends, and sugar ensured that scenario would never be a reality for me. The sound of *excitement* lasted all



the way down the Calder Highway, through Melbourne, along Eastlink and back into Ringwood.

But with the Achieve building in sight, I truly did wonder whether our trip to Camp Getaway would have a lasting impact on those joined us. Would they remember those forty-eight hours in Bendigo each time a particular song played at a party, when they went out with their mates, or in ten years' time when they spent time with their own families?

As they disembarked from the vehicle, all I knew for certain was that quiet had suddenly taken over the vehicle. For the first time since Friday afternoon it was just me, my thoughts and a random song playing ever so dully on the radio.

“Baby, baby, baby, oohh.”

Justin Bieber is in my head... Forever.



Do you wanna build a snowman?"

Silly me, I thought this was the Winter edition...
With a balmy current February temperature of 14 degrees in Melbourne, forgive my confusion!



Firstly, I would like to say a HUGE congratulations to our very own 365 Senior Coordinator, Karolina Szymanska, who is now "Mrs Karolina Ambruskiewicz" after marrying her sweetheart Piotr on the 10th of January. You looked stunning Karolina, and we felt so privileged to be a part of your special day!

Summer is a quieter period for 365 participants and staff, with less support required in some instances due to work or day services closed for the holiday period, or families heading off on well deserved holidays not requiring 365 to tag along.

In some instances, however, the holiday period can come with feelings of anxiety - "normal" weeks and routine are disrupted, things we look forward to not an option as they are closed – So this is where 365 has stepped in!

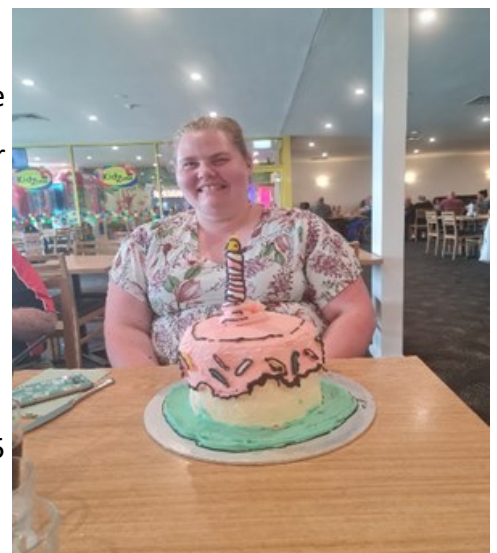
365 staff have supported many participants over the break, whether that was to complete Christmas shopping for family and friends, provide support to attend family festivities or just to hang out, support with general household tasks and watch a movie!

365 is now back in full swing, with all activities, workplaces, day services and SLES up and running for 2023. It's been a challenge to keep up!

365 are now supporting 8 clients attending Achieve, to actively promote engagement, positive behaviours, and greater personal outcomes

for those receiving our supports.

The relationship built between 365 Support

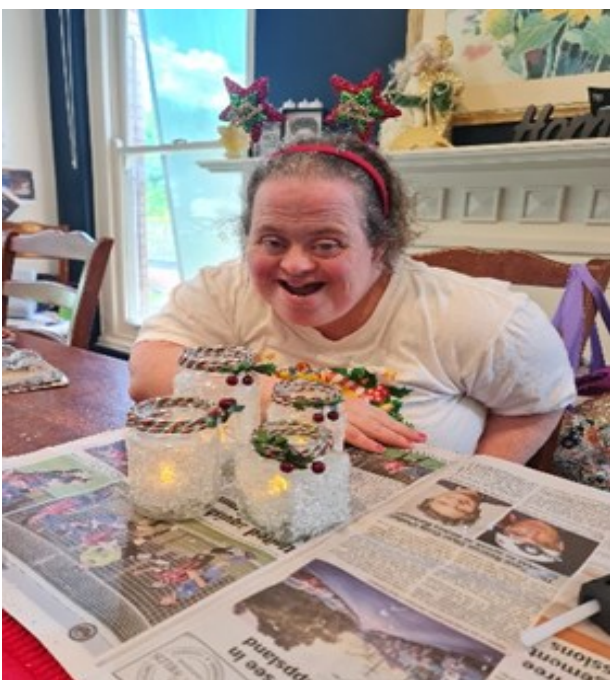


Workers, Achieve participants and Achieve Facilitators is creating a great culture between our services, which leads to goals being achieved meaningfully, and with purpose.



365 continues to receive requests for support everyday, and as a result of this are again recruiting up a storm to ensure we maintain our amazing personalised level of service, that we are incredibly proud of.

Knoxbrooke held its very first Camp in December, and it was an absolutely positive experience for all involved, and was hugely successful! 365 and Achieve staff supported 9 Achieve Participants on



a weekend away at Camp Getaway in Bendigo! Many fun activities were planned, but also changes made last minute due to varying factors. We managed to bring back all attendees in one piece, (!!) and the team are already planning the next camp which will hopefully occur in the first half of 2023! This is so exciting for us all! I would like to take this opportunity to thank Michael Beavis and Ash Dam for volunteering their time to make this pilot happen, as well as all the incredibly hard work it took from not only Mike and Ash, but also Fiona Sammut and her amazing NDIS team for the support in the background!



The team at 365 remain diligent, caring, responsive, and above all, provide impeccable high level support with a smile on their faces! I am incredibly proud of the team, their receptiveness to change, and willingness to give anything a go! We can't wait to see what awesome things this year has in store for 365 and Knoxbrooke! #teamworkmakesthedreamwork

West Gippsland

Claire Cutler
West Gippsland Regional Manager

Mawarra day centre has had an incredible few months, with the Mawarra Showcase being the highlight. Held at the West Gippsland Art Centre on 16th December 2022, our participants were able to perform a variety of musical numbers, a fashion parade, solos, and even an art exhibition. Over 60 families, friends, and carers attended, and we are already planning for our 2023 Showcase. We look forward to it being a permanent fixture on our calendar, given that it was received with such enthusiasm.



Mawarra community centre continues to be a hive of empowering, energetic, and positive activity. All the rooms are busy with their programs, and you can always hear laughter, conversation, and friendship as you move around. Our out groups are exploring our beautiful region. It's been a great few months with new clients and programs, causing great enthusiasm around the centre.



MSN is back and popular as ever; we are looking to add another day due to exciting demand and a great opportunity. Our extras activities continue to be popular with surfing, musicals in Melbourne, markets, and discos, among the many varied activities on offer. We will continue to plan fun, engaging activities that suit family and participants' budgets and interests outside the standard 9 am-3 pm service.

Vintage Vibes continues to grow from strength to strength, with the support from the community increasing and very positive. Our Instagram page has over one thousand followers, and foot traffic has almost doubled. We proudly support other community charities with Clothes for Africa and the Korumburra Op Shop benefitting from our excess donations, so nothing goes to waste. The most significant impact of this success is the profit coming directly back to the Mawarra community centre. Our volunteers continue to work hard, and we are always so grateful to them for their generosity with their time. Our Supported employees are doing a fantastic job, have found their stride, and are continuously gaining and developing new skills. We proudly support six supported employees at Vintage Vibes now. Op Shop and the volunteers there are doing a fantastic job and providing such an important to the community. It is as busy as ever with solid sales and community support.



The new year is underway with plenty of activity and growth happening at Knoxbrooke.

The NDIS team manage the intake of all new clients and supported employees. It has been a busy period for the team with four new clients joining Mawarra in Warragul and ten new clients joining Achieve in Ringwood.

We have also been actively contacting supported employee candidates on our waiting list to fill vacancies across all of our social enterprises. Growing our businesses so that more people with disabilities can be engaged in meaningful work is extremely exciting, and the effort to get people employed as soon as possible is a welcome challenge for the team.

NDIS Plan Rollovers

Our NDIS support is needed more than ever as plans are now extended, rolled over and re-assessed. If a request for reassessment is made after a plan roll over date has passed it is a lengthy process to end the rolled over plan and start again. If clients and families are receiving letters indicating the NDIA intend to rollover plans please contact the NDIS team so that we can assess the funding required and advise you if a rollover is a suitable option.

It is evident that the NDIA are drilling down on plans and asking for significant evidence to increase funds, although we understand that this is strategic approach to



reduce fraudulent funding it is stressful for those that have to continually source reports or indeed validate their disability. The NDIS team are able to support and advise families through this process, even if it is just to have the process explained in “non-NDIS” language!

Feedback

In talking to clients and families regularly we hear a lot of great feedback about our services which is fantastic. If you would be prepared to publicly publish feedback it would be greatly appreciated here is a link to get you there [Google Review](#)

If you have any questions concerning the above or about the NDIS in general, please contact the Knoxbrooke NDIS Team, and we will be happy to help.

Email: ndis@knoxbrooke.com.au

Phone: **9758 3666** Outer East

5624 3400 West Gippsland



Spotlight

Recruitment for Supported Employees

Are you or someone you know looking for Supported Employment? We are currently recruiting across all sites at Knoxbrooke, particularly Outsource due to significant growth. If you are interested please call the Support Options team or email NDIS@knoxbrooke.com.au

to discuss this exciting opportunity.



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.

Management Team

Kristian Dauncey

Group Chief Executive Officer

Trevor Norman

Chief Financial Officer

Scott Buckland

General Manager
Yarra View Bushland

Abdul Bakhach

General Manager
Outsource

Fiona Sammut

Manager Support Options

Claire Cutler

Regional Manager West Gippsland

Janelle Ghent

Manager People and Culture



Registered NDIS Provider





Head Office

1/68 Charter Street, Ringwood
03 9758 3666

Our Locations

Achieve

38 Charter Street, Ringwood
03 9758 3666

Yarra View Bushland

136 York Road, Mount Evelyn
03 9737 0400

Knoxbrooke Outsource

21 Clancy Road, Mount Evelyn
03 9736 4984

Yarra View Garden Centre

136 York Road, Mount Evelyn
03 9737 0400

Mawarra

7 Percy Street, Warragul
03 5624 3400

Mawarra Opportunity Shop

40 Palmerston Street, Warragul
03 5624 3492

Vintage Vibes

14 June Court, Warragul
03 5624 3400

Jigsaw & Waratah

3 Ryan Court, Warragul
03 5624 3437