



Getting out and about with the new car!

## WORKING TOGETHER TO BUILD BETTER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES

Thanks to the fantastic support from Apex Horsham Club 15, the Centre for Participation has purchased a brand new car to service the community.

Centre for Participation Acting Chief Executive Officer Robbie Millar welcomed the donation, which he said will primarily benefit people aged 65 years and older across the region through transport services using volunteer drivers.

'We have a lot of people who need shopping assistance, medical transport, meals and social connection,' he said.

'The new vehicle is being used to take residents to medical appointments in Ballarat or throughout the Wimmera. We often do regular medical appointments, with multiple trips to Ballarat each week, for example.'

The Centre for Participation's Laneway – Café without Borders will also benefit from the donation.

'The café does home-delivered meals, primarily for people who are over 65,' Mr Millar said.

'We have volunteers drop those meals off – a little bit like a meals-on-wheels service, but more mainstream and with meal choices.'

Mr Millar said he was thrilled Apex Horsham Club 15 had chosen to support the community organisation.

'We only get funding to deliver our services, not to upgrade cars or upgrade our facilities,' he said.

'We're forever trying to look at ways to get other sponsorship and philanthropic money in to support our core services and better serve our community.'

Apex Horsham Club 15 President Dylan Fulton said this was one of the largest donations they've ever made, and that it was great to be able to work together to provide such an important asset.

'We're always looking for new members too, and would love to welcome in new people who would like to build better communities with us,' Mr Fulton said.

If you're interested in finding out more, look for Apex Horsham Club 15 on Facebook, or call **0411 164 103**.

# KEEPING NETWORKS STRONG IN CHALLENGING TIMES

## COMMUNITY TRANSPORT AND SOCIAL CONNECTIONS UPDATE

Since the beginning of the pandemic, our community transport and social connections team has been busy finding new ways to support people who use our services.

While the impacts of COVID-19 have been very challenging, we've been able to continue meeting the needs of our community by being innovative. The way we deliver our services has changed and adapted extremely well to the restrictions that now apply for clients, volunteers and staff.

With our men's bus outings and ladies' cuppa and chat sessions on hold for now, our fantastic volunteers are still keeping in regular contact with people through phone calls and letters. We've also had one of our volunteers, Robyn Abbey, providing a 'library' delivery service to some of our avid readers.

Medical and allied health transport has now resumed after a temporary halt, as health practices adapted to meet the stricter hygiene and social isolation restrictions.

The forced innovations will no doubt change the way we do things forever, and provide a wonderful opportunity to engage in different ways with staff, volunteers and clients.



Volunteer Robyn Abbey is running a 'library' delivery service

## DID YOU KNOW?

Our community transport and social connections team can also provide assistance to eligible people aged 18–65 and their carers who don't have an NDIS plan.

These supports can include:

- > home-delivered meals
- > shopping assistance
- > planned activities one-on-one and in groups
- > friendly visiting
- > transport to non-emergency medical appointments.

If you think this may assist you or someone you know, please give us a call to find out more on:

**03 5382 5607**

## COMMUNITY VISITING SCHEME (CVS)

This program carefully matches residents in aged-care homes with volunteers, to help generate friendships and build social connections through fortnightly visits. With a focus on supporting aged-care residents who may not have family living nearby or receive regular visits, referrals are made by aged-care staff or family.



More recently, this program has expanded to in-home visits, where the volunteer can continue visiting once the person has transitioned into care.

CVS team member, Barb Eltze, said her background in nursing helped drive her passion for the program, as it is valuable for both the volunteer and person.

'We are always looking for dedicated volunteers in any local towns who wish to add value to someone else's life,' said Ms Eltze.

Photo: Barb Eltze, part of the Community Visiting Scheme

# NEW SKILLS, NEW OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH LEARNING

Interested in learning new life skills? Need to improve or brush up on a language? Looking to boost workplace readiness?

Getting involved in learning opportunities at the Centre for Participation is easy. While course offerings have changed during recent times, we are still providing different opportunities for people to learn.

Our learning environment is inclusive, dynamic and fun. Our skilled trainers include four staff with primary and secondary school qualifications. And our trainers genuinely love their work.

‘The most life-changing moment for me is when learners “get it”,’ said Acting Learning Manager, Kylie Zanker. ‘The moment that you see the pride, confidence and excitement – that’s what makes me smile, get up each day and teach.’

‘Whether it is financial literacy, computer classes, life skill development or conversation class – I can see people grow and develop to be the person that they knew they wanted to be,’ said Ms Zanker.

Likewise, the feedback from our participants is overwhelmingly positive, with one commenting that ‘talking, expressing, being involved in a group [is a] great experience. It’s a wonderful group of people.’

## STITCHING UP A NEW LEARNING COLLABORATION

Our conversational English class recently had a fantastic online session learning to sew face masks, joining remotely with the Harmony Sewing Group – an initiative of the Wimmera Development Association.

‘We saw that anything is possible if you put your heart into it,’ said Cecile Nence, Migrant Liaison Worker and English class teacher at the Centre for Participation. ‘We’re particularly grateful also to the Wimmera Development Association for loaning sewing machines and providing sewing packs to some of our students.’

Prior to the training session, student Hser Wah had created handmade masks for her family. But after the session the process is now much quicker and easier, even though it was her first time using a sewing machine.

Like this conversational English class, many of the classes offered at the Centre for Participation have now moved online.

‘This has created challenges for students, some of which already faced barriers,’ said Cecile. ‘We have loaned laptops and iPads to students who didn’t have access to them, and have been investing many hours supporting students in need.’



A stitch in time: Miki, conversational English class student

## GROWING ENTREPRENEURSHIP

People with a passion for business had the chance to hone their skills in July, with 19 learners taking part in a 6-month Micro-Business Program.

This program has been supported by a group of skilled volunteers who are all committed to improving outcomes for people living in our region.

Topics covered include business structure, taxation, marketing, branding, food handling and customer service.

# SOCIAL IMPACT SNAPSHOT

## Bringing meals to you with Laneway – Café without Borders

Did you know that since the pandemic, our Laneway – Café without Borders, has been providing home-delivered meals? In fact, from early March until the end of August we have delivered 4,434 meals to our community, using our fantastic volunteers!

Volunteer driver Maurice Rudolph said knowing there are people out in the community willing to volunteer their time to assist was a stand-out feature of the initiative.

'It's a good feeling to be able to help someone who is not as able to access these services for themselves,' said Mr Rudolph.

Our Laneway – Café without Borders is also still delivering on its social purpose, to provide meaningful work experience to migrant women and young people of all abilities. Whilst this has had its challenges due to the pandemic and the changing restrictions, our team have worked hard to continue to ensure we are upskilling participants to improve employment outcomes for their future.



To your door: Volunteer Maurice Rudolph delivers a meal

## L2P – GETTING OUR YOUNG PEOPLE ON THE ROAD

Our TAC L2P Program assists drivers aged 16 to 21 with no access to a supervising driver or vehicle to gain the 120 hours' driving experience required to apply for a probationary licence.

One of our participants, Danny, lives in a small town, 25 minutes from the closest regional town. He has ten siblings, has left school and dreams of entering the Defence Force.

With no licence and limited access to public transport in his town, he was unable to travel to employment while waiting to enter the Defence Force.

Danny was matched to an amazing L2P mentor, Rod Colbert, who travelled from his home to collect the vehicle, then drove for 25 minutes to collect Danny for every driving practice session.

Mr Colbert began driving practice with Danny in May 2019 and during the next seven months, completed more than 118 hours over 44 sessions. During this time of exemplary mentoring, Danny was encouraged to reach out to a local workplace and gained seasonal employment.

Danny was successful in achieving his driver's licence in February 2020 – all thanks to his hard work and the dedication of Mr Colbert.



L2P mentor, Rod Colbert, helps learners get behind the wheel

## SUPPORTING VOLUNTEER MANAGERS

Our volunteer program has continued to support volunteer managers across the region. Like other programs, this has been through virtual meetings and activities.

Coming up we've got a virtual workshop with Rob Jackson – the Director of Rob Jackson Consulting Ltd, a consultancy

and training company that helps engage and inspire people to bring about change. The workshop will cover volunteer management during COVID-19, volunteer recruitment and re-opening or restarting your volunteer programs.

So join us for the workshop on **Tuesday 17 November** from 4.00pm to 7.00pm. Registration for the workshop is quick and easy – just head to our website for details.



Students Jack Fisher and Sarah Netherway get to work.  
Photo: Paul Carracher, *The Weekly Advertiser*

## GARDEN PROJECT GROWS COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

With some students participating in the Duke of Edinburgh's International Awards struggling to find volunteering opportunities during the pandemic, the team at the Centre for Participation has been looking for ideas to support students to achieve the volunteering portion of the award in a way that is meaningful and incorporates their skills, interests, talents and connections.

One option was creating a shared space outside the Centre for Participation building that could be used by service participants, volunteers and staff. The idea was to encourage people to meet in an inviting outdoor area while socially distancing safely, helping to increase social cohesion between the groups that use and support the Centre for Participation.

Jack Fisher and Sarah Netherway from Horsham College agreed to assist us with developing the garden through their Duke of Edinburgh project. The project required the students to come up with ideas for the space to make it sustainable

and movable, to engage the community for sponsorship and donations, and to generate local pride for the creation that showcases our services, people and connections. It has encouraged the students to look at planning, design and marketing skills, while thinking about the social impact of the project for the community.

The garden design developed with Jack and Sarah includes pallet furniture, fruit trees (citrus) in wine barrels, horizontal and vertical planters (primarily herbs and berries) and brush fencing. The garden has a focus on sustainability, flexibility (and movability) and multi-purpose use, while being inviting and creating a space to connect.

But now, we need community support to execute this project and bring the vision to life. Our community can assist through donations or sponsorship.

If you'd like to get involved and donate to this community project, please contact Stephanie Thomson at the Centre for Participation on **5382 5607** or email [stephanie@centreforparticipation.org.au](mailto:stephanie@centreforparticipation.org.au).

Contact us on **5382 5607**  
[info@centreforparticipation.org.au](mailto:info@centreforparticipation.org.au)  
[facebook@centreforparticipation.org.au](mailto:facebook@centreforparticipation.org.au)  
PO Box 267, Horsham, VIC 3402





**YES! I WISH TO MAKE A DONATION TO THE CENTRE FOR PARTICIPATION BECAUSE I KNOW TOGETHER, WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE.**

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PRIVACY STATEMENT: Details you supply to us are entered into the Centre for Participation database. We adhere to the Privacy Act. We do not disclose your information to third parties.

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Centre for Participation, PO Box 267 HORSHAM VIC 3402