



INNER SYDNEY VOICE Annual Report 2020

About ISV

We acknowledge and pay our respects to the traditional owners of the lands across the areas that we service, particularly the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation — traditional owners of the land upon which our Waterloo office is located.

Inner Sydney Voice is a peak body promoting social justice and social inclusion. We provide information, advocacy, support, and community development for the local government areas of City of Sydney, Bayside, Randwick, Waverly, Woollahra, and the Inner West.

A not-for-profit organisation, Inner Sydney Voice has — for more than 40 years — empowered people to demand an equal say in the decisions that affect their lives and their communities.

OUR VALUES:



Participation

Everyone has the right to participate in decisions that affect their lives.



Diversity

Diverse backgrounds, cultures, strengths, and perspectives are cherished social assets.



Empowerment

When all people are equally empowered to participate, it leads to fairer outcomes.



Fairness

Fairer societies are happier, healthier, safer, and stronger.

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Fresh perspectives and new ideas

As Chair Michael Mackenzie-Shreenan reports — despite enormous challenges this year — Inner Sydney Voice has gone from strength to strength.



I'm pleased to introduce you to the Annual Report 2019-2020. We trust it will give you a good overview of the work, the governance, the performance, and the future direction of Inner Sydney Voice.

Firstly, I would like to thank the previous Board and staff who left us with an excellent strategic direction plan. This year we completed 80 percent of our planned strategic actions for the period and have commenced our mid-term review of our strategic progress. We have been working hard during the year in improving our internal governance and operational systems and will be focusing on the organisation's growth going forward.

We said farewell to our star policy advocate and Communications Officer, Geoffrey Turnbull, who retired in April. Geoff — who also served this year as interim EO — was with us for a total of seven years. The ISV team will greatly miss him, but we take comfort that he is still utilising his

advocacy skills elsewhere. Although it was sad to say goodbye to Geoff, we were very happy to say hello to Claire, Christopher and Tracy who joined our core staff team this year.

Unfortunately, funding for ISV's Waterloo Aboriginal Liaison Officer came to an abrupt end this year. This decision by the Land and Housing Corporation (LAHC) was not only short-sighted, but also irresponsible. We will continue, however, to advocate in this space for the independent resourcing of the community during the most extensive and likely longest social-housing redevelopment in Australia's history. Many thanks to Pam Jackson for fulfilling the liaison officer role and for being pivotal in pushing for an Aboriginal affordable housing strategy in Redfern and Waterloo.

In that regard, Inner Sydney Voice worked with the Chair of the Aboriginal Interagency, Warren Roberts, in drafting a letter to the NSW Premier calling for action on affordable housing in the area. It was signed

by 11 Aboriginal organisations, 12 supporting organisations, and nine Sydney University academics. Over the last year, a group of Aboriginal-controlled organisations have been meeting and refining the "ask" and seeking support for affordable housing from local MPs and others.

I'm pleased to announce that ISV's Targeted Earlier Intervention contract with the Department of Communities and Justice has been renewed for another five years. This further cements ISV's reputation as a regional sector support organisation and the funding will give us a refreshed focus on our service delivery in the years ahead.

Meanwhile, our work and experience in the community resilience and emergency planning space continues to grow. Considering the events of the last year, this work has become more critical than ever. And our Commonwealth Housing Support Program (CHSP) work continues to be highly valued by the sector, and our inaugural CHSP Futures Conference was a great success and something we will be building on moving forwards.

Finally, heartfelt thanks to our family of dedicated directors, staff, volunteers, funders, members and supporting stakeholders who have all contributed to ISV's success this year. As Chair, it has been a privilege to be a part of the organisation's journey during the past 12 months.

"Our work and experience in the community resilience and emergency planning space continues to grow. Considering the events of the last year, this work has become more critical than ever."

Challenges and outcomes

Connecting with community during a global pandemic has not been easy. But, as Claire Mennie reports, ISV has still managed to make solid progress across key areas.



Who knew? When I was offered the post of Acting Executive Officer at Inner Sydney Voice, I did not expect that by the time I start-

ed the job there would be COVID-19 social-distancing restrictions in place! It has been a strange and unsettling time for all. Before going any further, I would like to offer my sincere thanks to Geoff Turnbull for spending the time to steer me through all things ISV while handing over the Acting EO baton. Most of ISV's work during 2019-2020 was during Geoff's tenure as Acting EO. So, a huge thank you goes to Geoff, the Board, and the staff team for their fantastic contribution over that time.

And a lot has happened during the past 12 months. In December 2019, the Redfern and Surry Hills Resilience Committee completed a Resilience Handbook for local social-housing residents. ISV's resilience work continued and expanded through a social housing project in the Hawkesbury-Nepean Valley. This was achieved via funding from Infrastructure NSW and in conjunction with the University of Sydney and Wentworth Community Housing.

A key focus of Inner Sydney Voice over many years has been the areas of Waterloo and Redfern. Since Waterloo was marked for redevelop-

ment, ISV has been heavily involved in ensuring community voices are heard during the planning process. However, at the end of the financial year, the Land and Housing Corporation (LAHC) ceased all funding for capacity building within Waterloo. This included funding of an ISV-managed post — that of the Aboriginal Liaison Officer, ably filled by Pam Jackson.

The defunding means that there no longer exists any independent dedicated assistance to support and advocate on behalf of the Aboriginal community as the Waterloo development plan progresses. LAHC's failure to deliver on the promised human service plan is of significant concern to the community, ISV and its partners, and we will be continuing to advocate strongly in this space until previous undertakings are delivered.

Following the last AGM, we have been joined by six new Board members who — since being appointed — have helped revise ISV's internal governance systems and processes. ISV has also recruited new staff members including Tracy Hamilton, who — as Resilience Officer — is overseeing the Hawkesbury-Nepean project mentioned earlier. And Christopher Kelly, whose duties as Communications Officer include the editorship of Inner Sydney Voice magazine, which — thanks to funding from the Department of

Communities and Justice (DCJ) — landed through letterboxes in June 2020 after an 18-month break. The DCJ funding has also assisted ISV to support community connections within the City of Sydney, Randwick, Bay-side, Waverley, Woollahra, and Inner West local government areas via the Targeted Early Intervention Program.

During the financial year, ISV's strategic plan was reviewed by both the staff team and the Board. I am pleased to report that — despite a global pandemic! — the staff team has made good progress across all the key themes: community, people, external relationships, and resources and governance. The resulting health restrictions in place have impacted adversely on ISV's ability to connect with local communities in terms of our contract commitments and the strategic plan. It will be important to monitor closely just how connected we are to the communities we serve as we progress through the coming year.

The focus, then, moving forwards, will be on ensuring that more co-ordinated, targeted, and effective communication methods are used to ensure our existing contracted outcomes are met. This is especially true of the DCJ contract which stipulates that ISV serve five distinct geographical areas. ISV will also focus its efforts on alternative income streams by tapping into the staff team's skillsets and abilities. These income streams will be required if we are to build on and increase our capabilities in the fields of resilience, aged-care, and children and families. Thank you to everyone for their achievements during these challenging times, I look forward to working together with you all during the year ahead.

"It will be important to monitor closely just how connected we are to the communities we serve as we progress through the coming year."

Back on message

Clear and coherent communication is crucial at the best of times but, as Christopher Kelly writes, even more so during a life-threatening pandemic.

After commencing the role of Communications Officer in March this year, number one on the to-do list was to reactivate ISV's social media feeds. Australia by now was in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic with communities under lockdown. It was crucial, then, that ISV's social platforms provided inner-Sydney residents with the very latest information available.

Among ISV's COVID messaging: we informed communities of a DCJ scheme to offer repurposed laptops to families in need; we put a callout for community volunteers on behalf of the Centre for Volunteering; we promoted Community Wellbeing Clinics inviting people to be screened and tested for the coronavirus; and we advised international students and temporary visa holders of emergency relief payments.

Next on the comms to-do list was to kickstart ISV's website. Information was updated, images refreshed, and new content uploaded — including a COVID Support Directory. Sourced from information obtained from community workers across the inner-Sydney region, the directory lists the various support programs in play to help communities survive the COVID crisis.

The website's news section was resuscitated. Among the stories featured: we explained the Waterloo rezoning process; we encouraged inner Sydney residents to respond to the NSW Housing Strategy discussion paper; we circulated government advice on wearing masks in the community; and advocated for digital inclusion in public housing. The E News portal was also revived to host regular COVID Updates.



And, after an 18-month hiatus, Inner Sydney Voice magazine landed through letterboxes in June this year. Much of the publication focused — unsurprisingly — on COVID-19. With the virus exposing the need for people to be guaranteed economic security, ISV magazine suggested that perhaps now was the time that Australia embrace a universal basic income. "The idea is that every adult Australian citizen would receive an unconditional income — no strings attached, no questions asked. UBI is a hand up rather than a handout."

The knock-on effects of communities plunged into sudden lockdown were also explored, such as the spike in domestic violence cases across the country. "As the coronavirus spread and Australians were ordered to stay in their homes, women found themselves trapped indoors with their abuser." And, as Australians began to feel imprisoned in their own homes, the mental health of many began to fray. As we reported: "People are



feeling overwhelmed, worried, lonely, concerned about their health and the health of friends and loved ones; they're anxious about money, job security and the economy."

Also among the features in the winter 2020 issue of ISV magazine: residents of the Waterloo estate talked about how they were coping in self-isolation. "There's a feeling of entrapment and not knowing what's going to happen next." And a paper developed by the Sydney Policy Lab explained why community action is central to creating a successful post-COVID society. "Government action by itself cannot control a pandemic. The attitudes, behaviour and expectations of individual citizens and communities are fundamental to the move toward a stable future."

It's fair to say that my first three months as Communications Officer at ISV has been quite the rollercoaster ride. Here's to clinging on and staying strapped in for the next 12...

Collaboration and engagement

In a year of unparalleled challenges, the Commonwealth Home Support Program — through its flexibility and responsiveness — has continued to provide older people with the care that they need. Tim Horton reports.

Most people want to stay in their homes as they age — that's the finding of the Royal Commission into Aged-Care Quality and Safety. Furthermore, research indicates that the type of assistance offered by the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) provides the exemplar for Australia's preferred aged-care structure.

Indeed, when COVID-19 significantly impacted the lives of older people, the federal government leaned on CHSP to provide a speedy response. Local councils also called on CHSP to deliver vital services — such as deliveries of essential household items. Providers rose to the challenge, too, by finding innovative ways to connect with older people while still maintaining regular services in ways that met public health requirements.

During the financial year, the Eastern Sydney Sector Support and Development Officer (SSDO) continued to promote the value that CHSP adds to the aged-care system, as well as supporting collaboration amongst local providers during the COVID crisis.

Collaboration was a key theme of the 2020 CHSP Futures Conference, which brought together more than 300 provider staff, volunteers, and consumers from across the country. The significance of the event was acknowledged by the attendance of the Minister for Aged Care and Senior Australians, Senator Richard Colbeck; NSW Ageing and Disability Commissioner, Robert Fitzgerald; and local federal member, Tanya Plibersek.

Presenters made a clear case for the flexibility and responsiveness of CHSP, including the ways providers engage directly with consumers

to understand what wellness and reablement means for them. This was particularly timely — given that the conference took place just a week before the COVID lockdown began. Attendees overwhelmingly praised the conference — especially the quality and content of its presentations — and there was strong demand expressed for another event in 2021.

Over the past 12 months, the SSDO continued to convene the Eastern Sydney CHSP Forum, and the City of Sydney and Eastern Sydney Abuse of Older People Collaborative. The forum continues to hold strong support amongst providers and the move to remote meetings during the lockdown saw an increase in attendance. Included among the major initiatives this year: the convening of a wellness and reablement meeting, and an on-line COVID workshop. The workshop confirmed the need for improved provision and use of IT by older people, with stakeholders expressing a keen interest in establishing a working party to move this forward. Meanwhile, the

collaborative set to work on developing a protocol which would assist direct workers and coordinators to identify, address, and refer instances of suspected elder abuse.

With an ongoing need for providers to be supplied with information about how to address the pandemic, much of the SSDO's work in 2020 focused on COVID-19. With the situation still uncertain, the SSDO will continue to foster service responses to COVID in the future, particularly amongst the vulnerable communities in inner Sydney's public housing estates.



Strengthening resilience

As Tracy Hamilton explains, a social housing project in the Hawkesbury-Nepean Valley aims to raise awareness about flood risk management.

Funded by Infrastructure NSW's Flood Risk Management Strategy, the aim of the Get Ready for Flood Social Housing Sector project is to work with a broad range of stakeholders — social housing tenants, housing providers, community organisations, emergency services, and various levels of government — to strengthen social housing communities' resilience to flood events in the Hawkesbury-Nepean Valley. Inner Sydney Voice continues to work closely with Infrastructure NSW, The University of Sydney, and Wentworth Community Housing to deliver this project.

Phase one began in 2019. Some notable achievements included: the introduction of Social Housing Community Resilience Network (SHCRN) meetings; the mapping of community housing stock against probable maximum flood levels in the Hawkesbury-Nepean Valley; the development of the Community Centred Emergency Preparedness (CCEP) tool — created in partnership with University of Sydney; and the establishment of a workshop trialling CCEP with community members in Bligh Park.

Several lessons were identified through the activities completed and the meetings held: greater clarity was required around the roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders

involved; a strategy was necessary to support stakeholders working together outside of the SHCRN structure; and the concept of disaster resilience needed to be embedded within future plans, processes, and procedures. Also, it was vital that a communication mechanism be established between SES, community housing providers and key community organisations; and that further information was gathered on existing community networks within the Valley.

In 2020, the Get Ready for Flood project was extended for another 12 months due to the important lessons learned from phase one and the general feeling that the work had only just begun. Phase two began in March with the recruitment of a new Community Resilience Project Officer (CRPO). Shortly after, COVID-19 hit Sydney resulting in events and meetings being held remotely.

Liaising closely with Infrastructure NSW and University of Sydney, a change in approach and direction was thought necessary. It was decided that SHCRN would meet quarterly instead of monthly; University of Sydney would connect with SHCRN members — particularly housing providers and community organisations — to document their experiences through COVID-19; and, with the aim

to better ground the project and work towards more practical outcomes, a place-based approach would be taken by the project in South Windsor and Riverstone.

The plan for the remainder of the project articulates three outcomes to be strived for within the Hawkesbury-Nepean Valley: that social housing tenants are better prepared for flood events; that housing providers are better equipped to support tenants in strengthening resilience to flood events; and that a broader network of stakeholders and agencies are organised and coordinated to strengthen community resilience. Place-based work will continue within South Windsor and Bligh Park due to the high concentration of housing stock, the presence of a high flood risk, and established relationships with community organisations and agency representatives.

With the Bureau of Meteorology forecasting a period of wet weather ahead and the dams reaching close-to-full capacity, the Get Ready for Flood project needs to be placed at a high level of priority. Crucially, shared responsibility needs to be better articulated and adopted to better support social housing communities within the Hawkesbury-Nepean floodplain.



Transition and consolidation

2019-2020 has been a year of ups and downs. But, as Treasurer Sylvie Ellsmore writes, ISV ended the financial period in robust shape.

Towards the end of the financial year, ISV unfortunately lost funding for the important Aboriginal Liaison Officer role and, consequently, we had to say our farewells to Pam Jackson. We also said goodbye to Geoff Turnbull, who had been with ISV for many years, and left us for his well-deserved retirement.

Due to COVID-19, for much of this year, staff have had to work from home rather than in the office. Many staff joined the ISV team just as the pandemic hit. Despite the challenges faced, they have done an amazing job in difficult circumstances, especially in

finding new ways to work and connect with the community remotely.

In positive news, Inner Sydney Voice was able to re-secure a number of the grants which support our core operations, including the five-year Targeted Early Intervention Community Builders funding from the NSW government. We transitioned to a great new accounting team this year (thanks Anna and John) and dealt with a number of historic accounting issues. Much credit for helping get our administration in order is owed to Acting EO Geoff and our incoming Acting EO Claire Mennie, who have done an

amazing job steering the organisation through this difficult period.

In total, ISV's income for 2019-2020 was \$835,750, which is higher than last financial year. The one-off federal government COVID stimulus grant for not-for-profits (\$100,000) was a significant contributor and meant that ISV ended the year in the black, with a surplus of \$87,069. We are very lucky to continue to have in-kind support from the City of Sydney, which provides the office space for ISV in Waterloo. The significant majority of ISV's budget is directed towards staff salaries.

While our reserves mean ISV is in a strong position for the future — and we would be able to operate for a period if we were to lose current grant funding — we remain overly reliant on government grants, which make up more than 90 percent of our income. One of our key challenges for the future is to diversify our funding to ensure we remain a strong and independent organisation that can run new programs and supports that our local communities need.

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Inner Sydney Regional Council For Social Development Inc

ABN: 86 770 127 254

Income statement

For the year ended 30 June 2020

	2020 \$	2019 \$
Grants		
Grants	605,593	652,601
Other income		
Interest Received	1,423	2,993
Other Income	149,418	5,911
Other: Sundry	-	361
Workers Comp Payments Rec'd	80,739	-
	<hr/> 230,157	<hr/> 6,272
	835,750	658,874
Expenses		
Accounting	17,682	12,690
Adjustments and Roundings	(49)	-
Audit	2,300	2,500
Bank Fees	31	3
Board	227	38
Catering	5,307	4,247
Cleaning	2,983	2,610
Compliance	102	-
Computer Software, Accessories	136	489
Conferences & Seminars	4,901	2,310
Grants to be returned to fund	-	3,725
Insurances	3,838	3,824
ISV Inner Sydney Voice	4,810	5,858
IT Repairs & Maintenance	323	322
Minor Equipment	55	160
Office Expenses	3,285	3,065
Postage & Freight	478	354
Printing - external	-	3,454
Productions/Media Designs	505	3,213
Professional Fees, Consultant	19,354	28,611
Programme Expenses	-	1,732
Rent Expenses (Paid)	3,975	5,300
Rent in Kind - CoS	46,917	-
Repairs & Maintenance	1,046	-
Salaries	597,750	458,924
Staff on Cost	7,142	4,078
Stationery & Printing	10,368	12,045
Subscriptions & Affiliations	2,536	4,943
Sundry Expenses	21	162
Telephone, Fax, Mobile	8,448	8,242
Training	-	1,560
Travelling Expenses	4,212	2,235
	<hr/> 748,682	<hr/> 576,694
Net Surplus	87,069	82,180
Retained earnings at the beginning of the financial year	282,613	200,433
Retained earnings at the end of the financial year	<hr/> 369,682	<hr/> 282,613

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

These statements should be read in conjunction with the attached compilation report of MEAGHER HOWARD & WRIGHT.

Inner Sydney Regional Council For Social Development Inc

ABN: 86 770 127 254

Balance sheet

For the year ended 30 June 2020

	Note	2020 \$	2019 \$
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	3	550,900	435,849
Trade and other receivables	4	116,920	-
Other current assets	6	59,812	44,635
Total current assets		727,631	480,484
Non-current assets			
Investments	5	-	21
Total non-current assets		-	21
Total assets		727,631	480,505
Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables	7	179,783	66,117
Provisions Employees	8	128,267	86,075
Other liabilities	9	24,847	20,646
Total current liabilities		332,897	172,839
Total liabilities		332,897	172,839
Net assets		<u>394,735</u>	<u>307,666</u>
Members' funds			
Employee Reserve		25,053	25,053
Retained earnings		369,682	282,613
Total members' funds		<u>394,735</u>	<u>307,666</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.
These statements should be read in conjunction with the attached compilation report of MEAGHER HOWARD & WRIGHT.

**Inner Sydney Voice would like to thank
staff members, board members and
funders for all the hard work and
support during 2019-2020.**

Staff

George Barrett — Waterloo Redevelopment Project Officer 2019
Saskia Eichler-Cheney — Office Manager 2011-Present
Tracy Hamilton — Community Resilience Project Officer 2020-Present
Tim Horton — CHSP Sector Project Officer 2019-Present
Pamela Jackson — Aboriginal Liaison Officer 2019-2020
Charmaine Jones — Executive Officer 2007-Present
Christopher Kelly — Communications Officer 2020-Present
Claire Mennie — Acting Executive Officer 2020-Present
Nina Serova — Waterloo Redevelopment Project Officer 2019
Geoff Turnbull — Acting Executive Officer 2013-2020
Josephine Zappia — Community Resilience Project Officer 2019

Board

Philippa Barr — 2017-Present
Samuel Beattie — Secretary 2019-Present
Graham Brecht — Vice-Chair 2014-2020
Thomas Chailloux — 2018-Present
Niels Dempster — 2019-Present
Sylvie Ellsmore — Treasurer 2019-Present
Damiya Hayden — 2019-Present
Laura Kelly — 2018-2019
Michael Mackenzie-Shreenan — Chair 2019-Present
Kate Melhopt — Chair 2012-2019
Joel Pringle — Chair 2014-2019
Nigel Salmons — 2017-2019
Amanda Skropidis — 2017-2019
Lucy Stewart — 2019-Present
Fionn Taylor — Treasurer 2016-2019



Communities
& Justice

we are **inSW** Infrastructure
New South Wales

Commonwealth Home
Support (CHSP)



ADDF Alcohol
and Drug
Foundation
PREVENTING HARM IN AUSTRALIA