



"A Place to Belong"



**Annual Report 2016**

## A Place to Belong

Open House is a Christian charity that has been serving the community for more than 45 years.

The team at Open House is deeply and proudly committed to a friendship based model, with outreach to old, young, disadvantaged, disabled and lonely people left behind, unwanted, unloved, or forgotten by society. For all these people we are "A place to belong," For many participants in our programs, we are their family.

Much of our work is with disadvantaged youth from low socio-economic or dysfunctional circumstances. Our early involvement in their lives helps them re-engage and stay on the straight and narrow. We help prevent them, through our offers of friendship, one on one mentoring, and role modelling, from taking troublesome paths that might otherwise lead to detention, suicide, violence, unemployment, teen pregnancy, drug dependency, or other serious consequences.

Multiple participants come back, sometimes decades later, to say Open House literally saved their, or their loved ones' lives.

We serve people of all ages from babies or young children and their caregivers, through to older Australians via our friendly club-like activity groups and meals.

Open House receives some funding from the government but our work is largely made possible by donations from generous individuals, organisations and sponsors. They are our lifeline.

In this Annual Report we tell you about our programs and the successes we had in the year ended 30 June 2016. Thank you for helping us give so many in the community a place to belong.

## Chairman's Message

Open House opened its doors in April 1971 to offer holistic friendship and support to young people who had nowhere to go but the pub. In April 2016 we celebrated 45 years of providing that same holistic friendship and support, but now to people of all ages.

Some readers will remember that in the 1970's a large number of coffee shop type programs opened. Today very few (if any) are still going. (Our first bookkeeper doubted that we would last five years!) Open House's longevity is testament to God's faithfulness and the outstanding support and commitment of, - can I say thousands? of people, ranging from volunteers, staff, prayer and financial supporters, churches and businesses who have had a concern for the disadvantaged in our community and believed that Open House was making a difference for the better in their lives.

The 2015/16 year was also notable for a number of other events;

- Our long serving CEO, Ross Oldmeadow, retired after 16 years. In last year's "Chairman's Message" I made reference to Ross' retirement. He left us in September so I again acknowledge his outstanding contribution, both as a volunteer and CEO, over more than 40 years. We wish Ross God's blessings in his new life in Lismore, NSW.
- Our new CEO, Paul Burgess, has now been with us for over a year and he has settled in very quickly. His relaxed yet clear vision for the future of Open House was demonstrated when he presented to the Board a Five Year Strategic Plan early in 2016, which the Board unanimously endorsed. So we look forward to Paul

taking us forward into the 3rd generation of leadership and service to the community.

- Ross Macmillan, a volunteer and Board member for over 25 years, also choose to retire. Ross' contribution was always thoughtful and sometime provocative, but he had a deep commitment to improving the lives of those in need.
- We completed the renovations to the former manse making it suitable for staff, volunteers and participants alike. Thank you to Howard Raggett (Architect) and Don Cameron (Project Management) for providing pro-bono support to the contractors, staff and participants, which has resulted in a fresh facility to complement the other buildings at Macleod.
- Whilst we celebrate the above and other events during the year, the real sense of thankfulness is that, with the support of staff, volunteers and supporters, the love of God, as expressed through the holistic model we seek to provide, has enabled many disadvantaged people to find acceptance and encouragement in an otherwise difficult walk through life.

Open House is a community based work and, as such, we will continue to show Christ's love and encouragement with the support of the wider community. Thank you for the past support, however the need for this type of ministry is as real today as it was in 1971 so we look forward to your continued walk with us into the future.

David Woods OAM  
Chairman

## CEO's Message

This has been my first full year at Open House and I am glad to say that it has been an encouraging one. I have spent the time getting to know everyone involved in the Open House family. One thing that has clearly come across to me is that Open House is truly "A Place to Belong" and that we have a real and significant impact on the lives of so many people. My hope is that this will continue well in to the future.

As with any transition, change is inevitable and new things develop. It has been a year of consolidating and constructing foundations in preparation for planned future developments.

In the last year we:

- had some staff decide the time was right to move on to new ventures, and others have joined the team with enthusiasm.
- transformed the old manse from a place of residence to a place for the community, providing access for all. It now consists of new offices for our services department, a small meeting room and a well-appointed kitchen area.
- took delivery of a new modern Renault bus so now we can transport our participants to and from programs in greater numbers, safety and comfort.
- in development with everyone involved with Open House, prepared a Five Year Strategic Plan to set the direction for the next five years.

Open House is now well prepared to move the organisation forward to its 3rd Generation. We are ready to write the next chapter in the life of Open House and its participants.

Paul Burgess  
Chief Executive Officer

# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2016

## Youth Programs

In 2016 the youth program was again key, with qualified youth workers and trades people, assisted by multiple volunteers, supervising workshop based activities for youths – both male and female, and providing suitable adult role models. Our non-judgmental, accepting of all, friendship model makes Open House attractive to boys and girls who do not like school or other programs. For many we are their last chance.

The personal impact for participants, as well as financial savings for society of our programs, is huge. For example, the annual cost of keeping just one youth in detention is over \$235,000. Just one person saved

through our youth workshop program gives a "positive rate of return" to society. Similarly the social and economic cost to society of teenage pregnancy or drug use is high. Our joy is saving and making lives!

In 2016 we saw several youths go on to apprenticeships, employment and training. For many others we built or restored their self-esteem.

An activity of note in 2016 was a three week aviation program that taught participants about aviation and all the different employment opportunities it presents. The highlight was a flight in a modern Cirrus SR22 light aircraft from Moorabbin airport.





## Backyard Sports

Every Thursday after school Open House's youth workers ran a popular outdoor games session for up to 30 boys and girls in a local park – the Malahan Reserve. It's all about having fun in a safe environment and everyone was welcome. Games included soccer, footie, basketball and more.

Our program provided youths with an opportunity to get out of the house, away from television and computer screens, and something healthy and fun to look forward to. Some participants, once they experienced the friendly nature of our offering, later found their way to on site programs at our Macleod facilities.



## Boys2Men and Fun4Girls

During 2016 Open House again ran its after school programs on Mondays for primary aged boys and girls. The program starts in the hall, for example, with a game of dodgeball. Later the groups split into two for special activities.

Often the boys and girls lack suitable parent role models in their lives. Open House

provided mentors for them. Children got to experience, in groups of six or seven, fun, friendship and people who take a real interest in them as individuals.

In 2016 the program included fun activities, like learning how to track in the bush, cooking pancakes on an open fire, team games, crafts and park events.

A highlight in 2016 was a visit by the local police who talked about their roles and answered the many questions the children had. Open House plays an important role in building positive mindsets for the children early in their development about the police.

We provided the girls an opportunity to develop new friendships and skills with an emphasis on friendship and teamwork, e.g.,

sharing and rejoicing about what has been happening in the last week and encouraging success. All participants also had some personal craft or workshop projects which they completed.

Open House equipped the children on the program with life skills, like manners, proper diet, coping, problem solving and good family relationships.



## Wellbeing at Schools

In 2016 Open House helped at Macleod College with their Breakfast Club for students and ran a friendship based lunchtime drop in program for year eight and nine students. This program built and strengthened connections with the students and their awareness of the offerings available literally across the road at Open House.

## School Holiday Program

Our new-for-2015/16 holiday program was a safe and popular activity with children and parents alike. The Hall and Welcome Centre made perfect venues, and activities like basketball, table tennis and other fun games were supplemented by outings to Laser Tag and picnics in local parks. Best of all, most of the children come back term break after term break.

"This is the best holiday club ever, we have so much fun and get lots of time for free play," says eight year old Reuben, who has attended six other holiday programs. "I like the ratio of staff to children on the program – it means they get lots of one on one attention," says Reuben's dad.



## School Holiday Program



## Fun4 Teens - Friday Night Drop In

One popular new programs in 2015/16 2016 was a relaxed Friday afternoon drop in "café like" centre for children, followed by a similar offering for teens in the evening at our Macleod facilities.

This was a chance for children and teens to unwind after a busy week in a friendly, safe and fun atmosphere. The offering included tasty cooked light snacks with some healthy fruit. With lots of volunteers and youth workers there was always someone to sit down with for a chat or to see who can perform like NBA superstar Steve Curry at the basketball hoop in the hall.

A drop off service was offered for those participants needing a safe ride home.





## Programs for Grown-Ups

Our programs for grown-ups were varied and took place most days of the week. Where participants struggled for transport, we collected and returned them in one of our buses.



### Community Meal

On Tuesday nights a regular group from nearby suburbs met for a shared pre-prepared meal, friendship and conversation around a table in the Welcome Centre. For some attendees this was their only external interaction during the week, so it is a most important social occasion for them.

There were lots of friends from Open House and others in the community present, including a 30 year plus volunteer. Footie was usually the opening, but far from the only topic of discussion.

## Clubwork, Painting and Art & Craft



For those people with a creative bent our Clubwork program, run during the week, was the place to be.

As well as arts and craft like painting, embroidery, carpet making and drawing there was a regular sing-song, lunch, teas and coffees from our well spec'd kitchen and lots of friends – both staff and volunteers who are interested in what everyone is up to. Many birthdays were celebrated. Everyone is special at Open House.

Participants' art works were entered into the Whittlesea Show – with several winning prizes.

A highlight in 2016 was a card making workshop where participants made beautiful gifts for their loved ones with string, ribbons, pearls, and special cards or papers.



## Visits and Appointments

In 2016 team members from Open House, with lots of volunteers, made many hospital and home visits to comfort participants in times of loneliness sadness or need, or when they simply wanted a friend by their side.

They also accompanied older folks to doctor, government agency and other appointments to give support and a helping hand.

## Bible Fellowship

During the year an enthusiastic group met on Thursdays at Open House to praise God by way of singing, bible study and fellowship. Each week a different guest led the worship, so there was lots of variety.

A special feature of the Bible Fellowship each week was the presence and guidance of the Open House founders George and Muriel Farrington and the chairman, David Woods.

For those who have difficulty with transport Open House offers a pick up and drop off in our new Renault bus.

"It is so spiritually uplifting to sing, pray and study the bible together each week," said one of attendees.

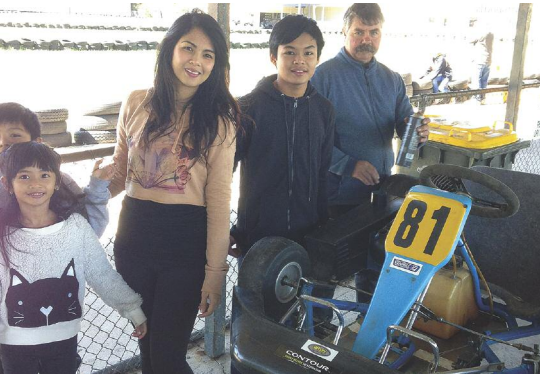


## Community Events

### Garden Boxes

The garden boxes on the boundary of our Macleod facility offered free naturally grown healthy vegetables to the community during the year and we are planning to expand the number of boxes in the next year. As we build out the community garden at our Macleod facility we will increase the opportunities for the community to participate in our "green thumb" projects.





## Festival and Events

During 2016 the Open House team attended multiple public events like the Banyule Youth Festival, staffing BBQs, talking with people of all ages in the community about their needs, and spreading the good word about our services on offer.

## Christmas Carols

Open House offered a Christmas carol service from its Macleod premises in December 2015 and will do so again in 2016 – led by the Salvation Army Band.



## Planned New Activities (Both Committed and Aspirational)



## Play Group

In the second week of October 2016 Open House started a playgroup for babies, young children and their parents or caregivers based at our Macleod premises. Locals were surveyed, flyers developed and distributed, including by way of displays in hugely supportive local shops, risk assessments undertaken and toys purchased.

Attendance at the first session was good and we look forward to meeting many more locals and their children as the program continues.



## Advanced Workshop

Building on the success of our workshops for school age children we are planning a workshop for school leavers to teach them work and life skills so that they may secure paid employment. Our CEO has run many similar schemes in the UK and we see the idea as being transferable, to Australia.

## Community Get-together

Open House works with lots of community groups in and around our base. For 2017 we are planning get-togethers with a number of groups to get even better feedback, for example, from local pastors and school principals.

## Other Ideas

We are ambitious in our plans to fully develop our mission, subject to ongoing

funding and approvals. We want to explore opportunities for an offsite satellite outreach and an on-site breakfast café, plus healthy living and parenting programs. We also want to give youth the opportunity to serve disadvantaged communities in the outback and or overseas.



## Volunteers, Placements And Supporters

With just ten permanent staff there would be a limit as to how many programs Open House could offer, and to how many people. In 2016 we were again blessed with the regular assistance of more than 50 volunteers, some of whom have served for more than 30, and in some cases 40 years. This is one of the reasons so many people keep coming back to programs at Open House, that is, the knowledge that they will always be welcomed by a familiar, friendly and caring group of people.

During the year we were blessed with multiple placements by students studying youth or community work keen to get some real life practical experience – usually for 100 or 200 hours. This is a triple win with Open

House benefiting from the assistance and infusion of the latest thinking and practices, the students getting participant contact, and mentoring from experienced workers, and for participants who love the variety of interactions with vibrant young people.

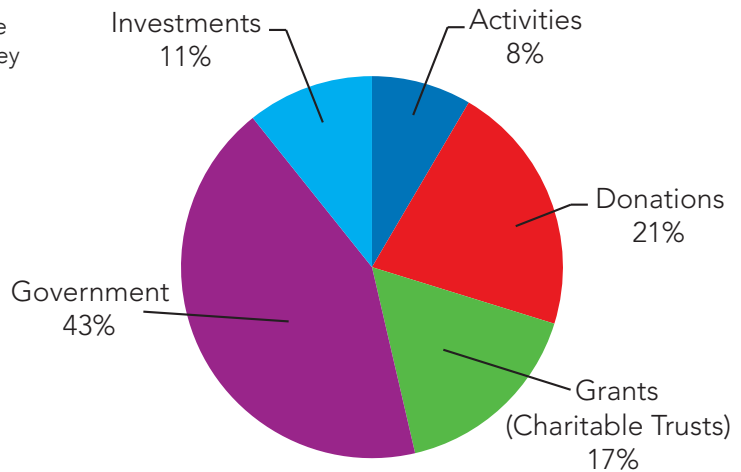
“I love the people who come to Open House and I love the feeling of really helping people,” said Val Armit, who has been a volunteer at Open House for twenty years, following eight years service at another Christian Charity in Ivanhoe. “Many of our participants are isolated, with no one to talk to when they are worried or excited about something. We are there for them to talk to, it’s like a family.”



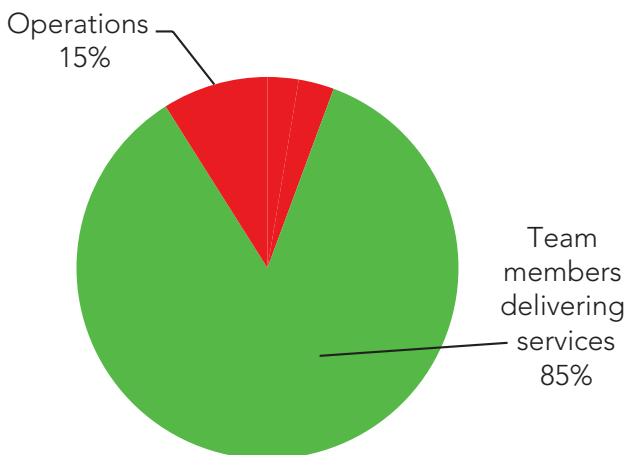
# FINANCIALS

The following graphs, extracted from our audited results, show our sources of income and the way the money was spent in the year ended 30 June 2016 and the three year trends.

## OPERATING INCOME



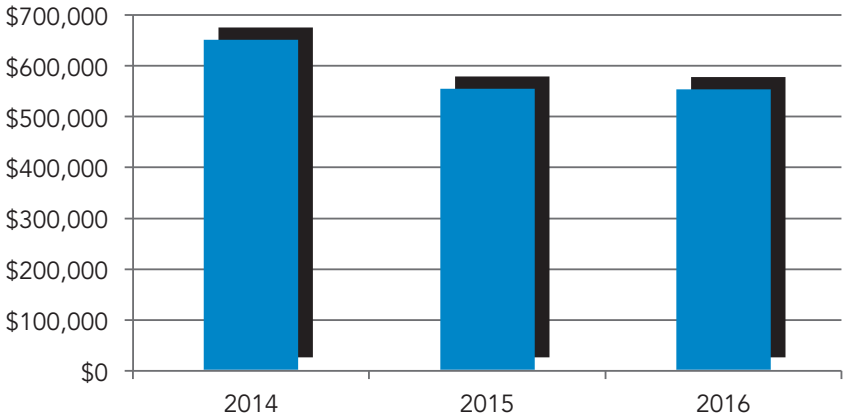
## OPERATING EXPENSES



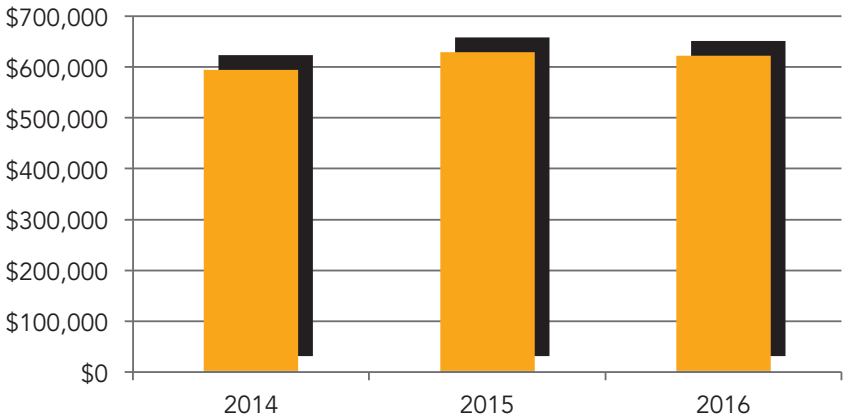
## FINANCIALS

Whereas our revenue comes from multiple sources the bulk of our expenses are the salaries and related costs of our team providing programs and services.

### OPERATING REVENUE



### OPERATING EXPENSES



## Financial, In-Kind and Prayer Supporters

We are extremely grateful for the many generous financial donations and the provision of pro bono services received in support of the work of Open House. In expressing our thanks, we do not list individual personal donations for reasons of both space and anonymity.

### Churches and Affiliated Groups

Fairfield Trust – The Properties Corporation of the Churches of Christ  
 Gresswell UC – E & R Chalmers Bequest  
 St James' Ivanhoe  
 St Johns' Diamond Creek  
 St Michael's Yarrambat  
 St. Katherine's St. Helena  
 Anglican Men's Society - Bill Brady Organisation  
 City Life Manningham  
 Planet Shakers North East  
 Diamond Valley, Uniting Church  
 Gresswell Bundoora/Kingsbury/Watsonia  
 Heidelberg/East Ivanhoe – The Sycamore Tree Coffee Shop  
 Rosanna – Arden Crescent  
 Rosanna – Arden Crescent Concert Committee

### Philanthropic Organisations

First Arthur and Laura Sandland Memorial Foundation  
 Gospel Resource  
 Iris & Ken Baldwin Foundation  
 Lynch Family Trust  
 Mona Georgina Harris Perpetual Charitable Trust  
 William Angliss (Vic) Charitable Fund  
 Sisters of Mercy  
 Lord Mayor's Fund  
 The Collie Trust

### Business Houses

ARM – architectural services  
 Bendigo Bank Community Enterprise Foundation  
 Bendigo Bank Heidelberg/East Ivanhoe Community Bank Branches  
 Danahers Mitre 10  
 Dr Marcus Ford - dentist  
 Eaglemont Meats  
 Macleod Village Traders (Little Free Libraries)  
 McCracken & McCracken – legal services  
 Miles Real Estate – Ivanhoe and Rosanna  
 Morrison Kleeman Real Estate - Eltham  
 Redlec Electrical Services  
 Rock Self Storage  
 Seward Dawson – auditors

### Service Clubs and Community Groups

Rotary Club of Heidelberg  
 Rotary Club of Ivanhoe  
 Rotary Club of Rosanna  
 Royal Society of St George Women's Group  
 Soroptimist International of Deakin  
 The Royal Society of St. George

## DONATION

## DIRECT MY DONATION

- ☐ for general purposes
- ☐ towards the Youth Programs
- ☐ towards the Programs for Grown Ups
- ☐ to this specific use:

## Donor Information

First name: .....

Surname: .....

Telephone: .....

Mobile: .....

Email: .....

Address: .....

.....

.....

## DONATION DETAILS

☐ \$10 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$200☐ \$500 ☐ \$ .....☐ One off ☐ Weekly ☐ Monthly ☐ Annually

## Method of Payment

☐ Credit card: ☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard:

Card Number: .....

Expiry Date: .....

Cardholder Name: .....

Signature: .....

☐ Cheque Payable to "Open House CIC"☐ Bank Transfer

Account Name: Open House CIC

BSB: 633000

Account Number: 155054588

☐ Direct Debit (please send me forms)

For more information about donations or bequests, please contact us at:

## Open House Christian Involvement Centres

67-71 Strathallan Road • PO Box 906 • Macleod Victoria 3085

Telephone (03) 9450 7600 (24 hours)

E-mail office@openhousecic.org.au

Website [www.openhousecic.org.au](http://www.openhousecic.org.au)

All donations over \$2.00 are tax deductible.

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