



# ANNUAL REPORT

2020-2021

**PeelConnect Incorporated**

ABN 64 897 216 442



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## About the association

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### Our work in the Peel Region

PeelConnect Incorporated (PCI) stand with the homeless. We work and contribute to overcome accommodation issues and co-morbid factors of mental health, drug, and alcohol issues.

We stand in solidarity with our people who experience, or are vulnerable to, persistent disadvantage, and are thereby deprived of participating and contributing to the socioeconomics of our community.

We pursue systemic change, to ensure that people who experience, or are at risk of falling into disadvantage or exclusion, enjoy economic security and social inclusion. This means changing our service design and delivery so that people can access:

- Income for basic needs.
- Education, training, and support to attain decent work.
- Care and independence support.

### Our values

- We are fierce advocates for justice.
- We act with compassion and integrity.
- We are innovative and always learning.
- We are accountable, collaborative, respectful and inclusive.

These values guide our behaviour and work practices, and they influence how we interact with government agencies, not-for-profit groups, local charities, relief agencies, crisis care organisations, emergency food and financial services, agencies for children, youth and families, outreach services, foster care agencies, in-home services, program participants, *volunteers*, the homeless and the broader community.

### Our constitutional objects

- Provide *mentoring, advocacy, and counselling* for the disadvantaged, to relieve distress, illness, poverty, and helplessness and improve quality of life.
- Strive to improve accommodation access.
- Support *volunteer night carers* to provide basic social contact and emergency relief to the homeless.
- Collaborate with individuals and agencies to foster and nurture more effective community relationships for all in need.
- Operate as not-for-profit association and everything incidental to achieve the association's objects, with processes of continual planning and service adaptation to meet client needs.

### Our strategic objectives

Our resources, *volunteers*, partnerships, and finances are currently focused on four outcomes. The strategic objectives that each link to an outcome, articulate our choices about how we pursue these outcomes.

1. Services that build inclusive communities.
2. Homeless accommodation and support.
3. Advocating people experiencing poverty and disadvantage.
4. An inclusive, effective, efficient, and agile organisation that focus on continually improved community collaboration, mental wellbeing, and assistance with substance dependence.

Contact: [admin@peelconnect.com.au](mailto:admin@peelconnect.com.au)

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**PCI MC**

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## A word from our chair

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2020 ended with *PCI* gaining recognition through three awards, *Peel Volunteer Award*, *Australia Day Individual Volunteer Award*, and the *Group Community Service Award*.

To top it off, my local community put me up for the *Synergy Local Hero Award* and I received a *Christmas* lights makeover for my house and a bit more. Congratulations to all our *volunteers* on gaining that recognition.

On the *Management Committee (MC)* front, our *secretary* announced his resignation due to personal health issues and study obligations but remains in the role until a suitable replacement is sourced or an alternative arrangement is determined.

Our *treasurer* has been working hard to balance personal commitments that include being a home mother with a *FIFO* partner, running her own financial services business, and relocating to a property further away from *Mandurah*, all whilst managing our finances and accounts.

Our *founder, Reg Lambert*, was taken into care at the *Burt England Lodge* in *Rockingham*. He remains passionate about homelessness and associated issues. His health wavers but he is always happy to see us when we visit, and he listens to our progress reports.

His encouragement remains the same: "*Keep on going and don't give up*". He always prays that the *Lord* will bless us.

We facilitated a fund to assist his family with his care and received an overwhelming response from our community for which we are extremely thankful.

Due to *COVID-19*, our *Work Projects Program (ReWRX)* had to close its workshop and our *Work Projects coordinator* continued to pursue options and opportunities. She was unable to procure *Lotterywest* funding for workshop equipment due to contractual constraints but continued efforts towards establishing the *ReWRX Program*.

We received a very generous donation for a work vehicle and subsequently await delivery of a new lease vehicle as soon as it arrives in *Australia*. We are most humbled and thankful for this wonderful contribution.

After years of work, the *Mandurah Homelessness and Street Present Strategy 2021-2023* was launched in *May*. The nine agencies that formed the core group to develop this are *Anglicare WA*, *Calvary Youth Services*, *City of Mandurah*, *Mandurah Street Chaplains*, *Passages*, *PCI*, *Peel Youth Services*, *Red Cross*, and *West Aus Crisis*. The opportunity to work collaboratively produced great results.

*Mandurah* was selected for the *Common Ground Facility* and fifty places will be made available for those needing shelter and support. There are prospects of another low-cost accommodation facility soon.

Whilst our proposal for the *Assertive Outreach Program* was unsuccessful, the *MACS coordinator* and her team will be working closely with *St Pats* and *RUAH* as they develop this service. We also continue work on the *Zero Project*, *Housing First* and the *By-Name List*. These will produce and strengthen positive outcomes for the vulnerable in our community.

I continued to represent *PCI* at the *Community Gateway*, *Community Link*, *Communi-Tea*, *Church Unite* and *Peel Chamber of Commerce and Industry* events. Collaboration gains us strength and recognition and it is well worth doing. This is also demonstrated with our *Mandurah* agencies.



Our *PCI* programs are not possible without our valued *volunteers*, from the *MC*, *MACS*, *Night Carers* and *ReWRX*, to the gardeners and everyone else who permanently or temporarily form part of our *PCI* family. It is all achieved by *volunteers*.

You can all be very proud of what has been achieved and what will be achieved in the future. You are all setting the example, and a base from which it will all happen.

Thank you one and all, and as *Reg* says: “*Please don’t give up*”.

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*Chair*

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## A word from our *treasurer*

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The surplus for the *2020-2021 financial year* of \$21,115 reflects the continued support of our generous donors, sponsors, and grant funding providers, as well as the countless hours of *volunteering* service provided by our members and supporters. Our net cash position of \$46,758 includes *Income in Advance*, which comprises unspent grant funds on *30 June 2021*, of \$18,513.80. These funds are committed to current programs and expenditure including a vehicle lease that will reflect in next year’s financial statements.

The accounting system was converted midway through the year to upgrade our reporting capabilities. Due to the conversion and the necessary reorganisation of the chart of accounts it is not possible to provide a breakdown of the financial information by programs for this year.

The focus was on better reporting of the spent and unspent grant funds so that the *PCIMC* could be provided with up-to-date figures reflecting what funds were available to be utilised and what funds were earmarked to be spent as per the conditions of each grant. From *1 July 2021* we can track the income and expenses for each program as well as for each grant.

In addition to grants received during the year, we received a very generous donation of \$10,000 to fund a vehicle. *PCI* was successful in securing a one-year lease through *Smart Fleet* and will take delivery of the vehicle on the *29 November 2021*.

*Moroney & Associates* have generously agreed to review our financial records at half the cost, and their review concluded that there was no material misstatement of *Income or Expenses*, and that the financial statements reflect a true and fair position of our organisation.

It has been a great honour to take on the role of *treasurer* this year and I am in awe of the incredible passion and countless hours that the dedicated *volunteers* bring to *PCI*.

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*Treasurer*

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## A word from *MACS*

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### *Mentoring, Advocacy, Counselling and Support (MACS) Program*

*MACS* continues to open two days each week, providing *mentoring* to those experiencing homelessness, and a fee-free *counselling* service to those limited by finances and long wait times.



MACS counsellors and mentors work with disadvantaged people to relieve distress, illness, homelessness, poverty, and helplessness, and to improve quality of life. This daytime service interlinks with the work of our *Night Carers*, who may provide referral or discussion of where MACS would be beneficial.

With another three *volunteer* trainings in the last year, MACS has grown to a team of twenty active *volunteers*, with dedicated *mentors*, *counsellors*, reception staff, and our *MACS coordinator*. Many of the team also function across dual roles, providing flexibility for the people we serve.

Sadly, one of our *mentors* recently passed away, after resigning due to poor health. *Sharon McKell* had become a part of the MACS family and leaves behind a grieving team who miss her presence.

## **Counselling**

The MACS fee-free *counselling* service took 702 bookings over the 2020-2021 period. Despite still only opening for two days a week, this was an increase from the previous year with 440.

Our team of qualified *counsellors* are members of the *Australian Counselling Association* and are supported through individual and group clinical supervision. Additionally, they are encouraged to undertake ongoing professional development, some of which is provided by *PCI*.

Our clients receiving *counselling*, present with various issues, with the top four reported concerns being depression, anxiety, then relationship and family. Most *counselling* sessions are face-to-face sessions facilitated at the MACS offices; however, we also provide sessions via phone and *Skype*, and through *outreach* to client homes or other agreed venues.

Some feedback from our *counselling* clients includes:

***"I feel more positive about my wellbeing,"***

JC

***"I'm more aware of my boundaries with friends, happier within myself, smiling and laughing, and feel more accepting of myself and others. My personality is coming out,"***

KP

***"I've made changes to my lifestyle as I recognise my needs and understand my thoughts,"***

KG

***"I feel happier and more self-aware, noticing if something is wrong,"***

MC

***Changes I've experienced include liking myself, being more open and happier,"***

MH

***"I'm experiencing less panic and more able to cope. It has brought back all the cognitive strategies that I've developed over the years,"***

JK

## **Mentoring**

*Mentoring* clients report that after housing, health issues and uncertainty were the most listed concerns. These were followed by alcohol, sleep, and financial worries.

The significant *support* provided by the *mentoring* team include, amongst many others:

- *Outreach* services, visiting the *Peel Community Kitchen*, and walking around *Mandurah City* centre to engage with people experiencing homelessness and developing trusting relationships. During 2020-2021 *mentors* engaged over 702 people in this manner, with thirty-six of these relationships leading to *mentoring* partnerships to work on various issues.
- *Supporting* four people into secure housing over the last year.
- Responding effectively to situations of potential suicide.



- Providing intensive in-house and *outreach support* to clients experiencing severe mental health concerns.
- Form filling for housing, disability support payments and *NDIS*.
- *Support* to gain adequate *ID*.
- Research, sourcing, and accompaniment to house inspections for private rentals.
- Transport and accompaniment for medical appointments.
- Follow up phone calls and home visits.
- House and yard cleaning.
- Preparation for garage sale.
- Letters of support for housing and court.
- *Support* at court hearings.
- Packing and assistance in moving house.
- Sourcing donations of household goods.
- Accepting household items for a client trapped in *Queensland* due to *COVID-19*.
- Provision of a letter box address to receive mail, and distribution of mail.
- Provision of supplies such as snacks, emergency food, clothing, footwear, hot drinks, blankets, heat packs, rain ponchos, hand sanitiser, feminine hygiene products, torches, food packs, and mobile phones.

Typical of the response from clients, the following testimonials demonstrate appreciation for the *support* provided by *MACS mentors*:

***"I approached PeelConnect with what had become a network of unsolvable problems to me. What I found was quite simply an Amazing Team of truly dedicated people, real people that banded together to help clear the fog and cut the red tape so my problems would fade into workable solutions. My utmost respect, thanks and best wishes go to the team at MACS for being my amazing angels of mercy. Bless you all,"***

**DB 16/02/21**

***"I was recently a client, and still consider myself one through the continuous support from MACS. I was homeless and living in a tent. I attended hospital at least 6 times for suicide before finding myself sitting in a park wondering what I was going to do in life or even if I wanted to continue my struggles when some ladies from MACS found me and offered me blankets, food and coffee. They informed me about counselling, and I turned to them very quickly. Through their help and guidance, I was accepted into a rehabilitation centre, and 3 months later I'm housed, and full time employed. I am grateful for all their support, going above and beyond what I believe their process is, and am most thankful for their great service. Thank you,"***

**DJB 30/09/21**

### **Art Drop-In**

*Rose Cull*, a *MACS volunteer* and *MC member*, facilitated an art activity that was provided at the *Anglican Community Centre* for people experiencing homelessness and disadvantage.

Participants were offered activities that included t-shirt painting, watercolour painting, drawing, colouring in, and collaging. The atmosphere in the building was relaxed and joyful and it is hoped that this will become a regular event with funding needed to support the project.

### **Referrals**

In addition to referrals from the *PCI website* and *Facebook page*, local police, community engagement and word of mouth, clients are referred to our service for counselling and mentoring support from:

- *Anglicare WA.*
- *APM.*
- *Attain Health and Wellness Centre.*
- *AtWork Australia.*
- *Centrelink.*
- *City of Mandurah.*



- *Coodanup College.*
- *Damian West.*
- *Department of Communities.*
- *FinUCAre.*
- *Frank Konecny Community Centre.*
- *GP Down South.*
- *Kwelena.*
- *MatchWorks.*
- *Ovis.*
- *Parenting Connection.*
- *Peel Community Mental Health Service.*
- *Peel Health Campus.*
- *Rainbow Health.*
- *Relationships Australia.*
- *RUAH.*
- *Shalom Medical Centre.*
- *Shire of Murray.*
- *WA Mums Cottage.*
- Various others.

### **Volunteer training**

All *MACS volunteers* are required to undertake a *volunteer* training which includes 25 hours in the classroom, in addition to five hours on-the-job training. The course challenges personal bias and increases cultural awareness, expands listening skills, and discusses case management in a person-centred and strengths-based framework. Additionally, all *volunteers*, including *counsellors*, are trained in delivering the *VI-SPDAT* questionnaire.

A strong and connected team is formed during this time and contributes to the overall strength of the *MACS* team which of course ensures our clients benefit from this approach.

*MACS* delivered three trainings during this last year with twenty-two people completing the training, some of whom were also interested in *volunteering* for the *Night Carer Program*.

### **Housing**

*MACS supported* four people experiencing long term homelessness into stable accommodation through lodging application forms, *supporting* them to complete medical forms and *advocating* for them through the interview process for priority listing. We helped to source donations of furniture, in some instances also arranging delivery.

These clients also receive ongoing *support* through check-ins to ensure they have what they need to maintain their tenancy. We work in collaboration with *Housing* to ensure best outcomes.

*Mentors* provide *support* by helping to complete *Housing* application forms for rental properties, and bond assistance loans. We also provide *Support* to clean a property when the tenant is at risk of losing the tenancy due to hoarding or inadequate housekeeping.

Later in the year, *MACS* observed an influx of people contacting us with requests for accommodation and *advocacy* with increased rents, an inability to pay and the subsequent need for sourcing alternative accommodation. With rental vacancy rates at an all-time low, the availability of affordable properties became non-existent.

Clients and staff alike experienced rental viewings with fifty applicants present, and people would commonly struggle for months to source a suitable home. This uncertainty is debilitating for some, and *MACS* provides *support* in the form of *counselling* and *advocacy* to find housing alternatives. We are aware of clients who have resorted to living in their cars because they were unable to secure housing.



## **24hr Smart Riders**

MACS has been approved to purchase *TransPerth 24hr Travel Cards* for clients and this has become a valuable service.

## **Referrer to Foodbank**

MACS has signed a *Memorandum of Understanding* with *Foodbank* and is now eligible to refer clients in need to shop at *Foodbank*.

## **Work and Development Program**

MACS is an approved service providing clients with the opportunity to undertake *Volunteer* work, or engage in *counselling*, to work off their debt of court fines through the *Work and Development Program*.

Although they were unable to continue, two people were able to reduce their debt from completing some of the *volunteer* training. Their intention was to continue as *volunteers* with *MACS*, however personal circumstances required them both to withdraw.

## **Return to work**

*Corporeal Health* placed a client with us to complete a return-to-work program after a workplace injury. We are very grateful to this gentleman for very capably maintaining the gardens, atrium, and other minor property maintenance, in addition to purchasing a hedge trimmer for use in ongoing garden maintenance, after the existing one ceased to work.

## **Footpath Library**

*Footpath Library* established a small library of books distributed free of charge. This is in the *MACS* office and utilised regularly.

## **Donations**

Donations are provided by the community and include knitted beanies, sanitary items, clothing, blankets, towels, and toiletries.

We thank *Zonta*, *Share the Dignity*, *K9 Rescue* and *The Shed Op Shop* for their recent help, in addition to *Karlene Bell* with her regular deliveries of supplies that she purchases at discounted prices from retail outlets. We are very grateful for the generosity of the *Mandurah community*.

## **GivIt**

MACS took delivery of *Bonds* clothing items through *GivIt* which included men's, children's and women's socks, bras, underpants, t-shirts, leggings, facemasks, and sheer tights. These were distributed among *MACS* and other agencies including *Peel Community Kitchen*, *Hands Up*, *Ending Homelessness in WA*, *Passages* and *Calvary House*.

The masks were delivered during the first lockdown this year to *Peel Community Kitchen*, *Halo*, *Hands Up*, *Anglicare*, *Calvary*, and *Passages*.

## **MACS during COVID-19**

MACS remained open during two lockdowns with *COVID-19* restrictions. *Outreach* services continued to ensure clients had what they needed, including masks.

Supplies were purchased to be able to provide sandwiches/toasties to those in need however no one requested food. We did however have clients arrive needing clothing which we were able to help with.

During these times we provided telephone *counselling* when appropriate, and rescheduled others.

MACS is now prepared in the event of future lockdowns and is equipped to take measures to safely continue our work in the community. We have the flexibility to switch easily to telephone *counselling* when needed to ensure ongoing *support* for these clients.



## Students on placement

We continue to take students on placement from *Alffie Training, Reach for Training, Train Smart Australia* and *South Metropolitan TAFE* to achieve their qualifications in *Cert III, IV* and *Diploma Community Services, Mental Health and Peer Mental Health*.

It is common for students to continue to *Volunteer* with *MACS* after completing their studies and subsequently the *MACS volunteer* training. We have *supported* sixteen students to gain qualifications through completing their placement hours at *MACS*, and each made positive contributions to our work in the community.

## Collaboration

*MACS* represented *PCI* throughout the year with attendance at collaborative projects to address issues of homelessness, mental health, and drugs and alcohol in *Mandurah* and *Peel Region*.

Working alongside *Anglicare, Calvary, City of Mandurah, Passages, Mandurah Street Chaplains, Peel Youth Services* and *WestAus*, we have been a part of the *Core Project Team* addressing homelessness in *Mandurah*. This group was responsible for producing the *Mandurah Homelessness Strategy 2021-2023*.

With other representatives at *PCI*, we maintained a regular presence at the *Homelessness Networking Group* who meet six times each year. We attended *Safety in the City*, an event hosted by the *City of Mandurah* for local businesses, with a focus on safety.

*MACS* worked alongside *RUAH, Anglicare, Passages*, and other agencies, to produce *Connections Week* in *Mandurah*, an event delivered over one week in *January* to gather information from people sleeping rough. Several team members from *MACS* and the *PCI MC* participated.

All participants were trained in delivering the *VI-SPDAT* questionnaire and *MACS* opened on the *Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday* to enable these interviews. The information gathered through these questionnaires will facilitate focussed *support* for those sleeping rough, through the *By-Name List*, aimed at identifying and meeting the needs of this cohort in our community.

Teams of interviewers walked around designated areas of *Mandurah* in the early hours of the morning, and breakfast was provided each of those mornings as a debrief and thank you for the *volunteers* and participants. Those not wishing to participate in the early morning rounds made themselves available at the *MACS* office during the day to take interviews.

A launch of the data captured was held at *David Gray Sporting Facility*, with attendance by many local agencies, and local, state, and federal government representatives. As a result of these interviews, the *By-Name List* has been established and the *Zero Project* has commenced in *Mandurah*.

The *Zero Project* is aimed at ending chronic homelessness in *Mandurah* by 2025, and *PCI* continue to participate in the development of this project through the *Improvement Team* and *Grassroots Team* meetings.

*MACS* met with the team developing the *Wayfairers Project* to connect retirees wishing to give back to the community.

*MACS* representatives met with the planning department at *City of Mandurah* to discuss the possibility of developing a small-scale tiny homes project, and *K9 Dog Rescue* commenced a collaborative venture to take one of their dogs for socialisation, and to help build connection with those in the community experiencing homelessness and disadvantage.



MACS collaborated with other services such as *Anglicare, At Work Australia, Avivo, Department Communities (Housing), FinUCAre, Neami, Passages, Peel Community Legal Service, Peel Community Mental Health Service, Peel Health Campus, psychologists, Rainbow Health, and West Aus*, to facilitate the best outcomes possible for our mutual clients.

MACS continues to build a presence in the community, demonstrated through meetings and communication with others such as *Kristie Tonkin* from *Peel Development Commission, Linda Webber*, a social worker at *Peel Health Campus*, staff at *Mimidi Park* in *Rockingham, FinUCAre Pinjarra*, and *APM* in *Mandurah*.

## Risk management

MACS has on two occasions encountered a person with anti-social or abusive behaviours. Both incidents were managed well by the staff present and reported accordingly, with no harm to anyone involved. Both incidents appear to be the result of substance use or mental health issues.

*Mentors* and *counsellors* attending outreach appointments wear duress alarms that send a link to identify their geographical location before dialling numbers to enlist emergency assistance. We continue to source additional training in responding appropriately and effectively to high-risk situations.

## Funding

We extend sincere thanks to the following organisations who have granted funds to assist in our work:

### *Lotterywest*

This grant was secured in *2019* for the development of software for all *PCI* programs. The name chosen for the system, *PACS*, also describes the purpose and function. It is an acronym of sorts and describes:

**P** = *PCI*, a system for use by all areas of *PCI* as the system continues to be refined. At this stage *PACS* is mostly utilised by *MACS*, and to a lesser degree, the *Night Carer Program*.

**A** = Administration, facilitating ease of use for storing and manipulating client data in addition to *volunteer* information.

**C** = Community and our contribution to refining services, and identifying gaps in services, through the data that we can provide from statistical collection.

**S** = Safe and secure storage of client data.

This system is now functioning with most problems resolved. We continue to receive assistance from the developer, *InternalIT* as this system is finalised and refined.

*Alcoa* funded the initial two years of the *MACS Program* with money to partially cover our operational expenses. We are sincerely grateful for a further three years of funding to take us through to the end of *2023*.

*Bendigo Bank* receives our thanks for the funding to purchase new chairs in the *counselling* rooms.

*Volunteering WA / Lotterywest* provided funds to host a *volunteer* acknowledgement event during *National Volunteer Week*, at *The Stage Door*, for all *PCI* *volunteers*.

*Rotary Wishing Well Grant* allowed us to purchase a new banner for *MACS* to display at the front of our premises, enabling clients to find our offices more easily. We can purchase supplies for clients such as non-perishable food items, toiletries, and phones for people experiencing homelessness, to ensure they stay connected to friends and family, in addition to being able to be contacted by services providing *support*.



## **Mineral Resources and Sarah's Circle**

generously provided funds for *PCI* to host the *2020 Christmas* evening barbeque on the *Mandurah* foreshore for people sleeping rough and doing it tough. This was attended by around thirty people who enjoyed the food, companionship, and raffle prizes of vouchers to supermarkets, various events, and restaurants in *Mandurah*.

*City of Mandurah* funded *PCI* for three years through the *Community Partnership Grant* and part of this money was budgeted for *volunteer* training.

## **Professional development and training**

As previously mentioned, *MACS counsellors* are encouraged and supported in their ongoing professional development, and some engaged in training in specific *counselling* skills including:

- *Dialectical Behaviour Therapy.*
- *Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs.*

*PCI* hosted several trainings, made available to all our *volunteers*, in addition to other agencies:

- *Trauma Informed Practice.*
- *Mental Health First Aid training.*
- *Mental Health First Aid for the Suicidal Person.*

With thanks to programs hosted by *Calvary*, the *City of Mandurah*, *Peel Volunteer Resource Centre*, and *Peel Community Legal Services*, our *volunteers* also attended:

- *Non-Violent Crisis Intervention* training.
- *Writing Volunteer Management Plans.*
- *E-Safety Webinar.*

The *MACS Coordinator* participated in the online *Mental Health Service (MHS)* conference and delivered a session entitled *A Mental Health Trifecta* which discussed the concept of *MACS* and the *Win-Win-Win Approach* for *counsellors* gaining experience, clients having access to affordable *counselling*, and a community benefitting from better social outcomes.

## **Community recognition**

*Peel Volunteer Awards* took place at a breakfast on *Saturday 5 December* with *Doreen Jones*, *Jennifer Marcinkus* and *Candy Rose* attending for *PCI*. *Reg Lambert* attended and was awarded the *Volunteer of the Year Award* for his work with *PCI*.

*PCI* won the *Community Group Volunteer of the Year Award*, sponsored by *Alcoa* and the *Shire of Waroona*. We showcased the trophy at the end of year gathering of *PCI MC* members and *program coordinators*, and later in the *MACS* offices.

*Citizen of the Year Award* was held in *January* at the *Australia Day* ceremony and *MACS* was one of two recipients in the *Community Group Category*. *Julie Bywaters* and *Doreen Jones* received this wonderful acknowledgement of the amazing work of a team of generous *volunteers*.

Sincere thanks and accolades to all *MACS volunteers*, for their exemplary care and *support* for those experiencing homelessness or disadvantage. Our credibility in the community is growing, made possible by our *volunteers*.

## **Volunteer acknowledgement**

*MACS* and the *Night Carers* combined *2020 End-of-Year* celebrations to acknowledge *volunteers* from both programs for their hard work.

Gifts were purchased and a meal provided with an almost full attendance. Certificates of acknowledgement for all *volunteers* were presented, as distributed by the *Department of Communities* for *International Volunteer Day (5 December 2020)*.

*MACS* would not exist but for the commitment and caring of the entire team. *MACS* is extremely blessed and privileged to have people providing their time and dedication to help clients in any way that we are able.

After successfully securing a grant from *Volunteering WA* and *Lotterywest* for *Volunteer Week (17-22 May 2021)*, an event was hosted at *The Stage Door* restaurant on *Friday 21 May 2021* with all active *PCI volunteers* invited.



PCI also received an invitation from *Friends of Performing Arts Centre* for five of our *volunteers* to attend a lunch event at *MANPAC* on *Monday 17 May 2021*, also as a part of *Volunteer Week*. Names were drawn out of a hat and those who attended included: *Rose Cull, Julie Bywaters, Pam Bungate, Diane Ryan, and Tracey Honey*.

Informal acknowledgement of our *volunteers* takes place daily, in addition to *MACS* meetings where we take the opportunity to thank each person on the team for their ongoing commitment.

Our heartfelt thanks go to everyone in this amazing team of *volunteers* whose time and generosity makes a huge contribution in our community. Many of our team go above and beyond what is asked of them, and the camaraderie within the office is a joy to be around.

### **The future of MACS**

Sadly, *PCI* was unsuccessful in winning the tender for the *City of Mandurah Assertive Outreach Service*. We had hoped to utilise this money to open the *MACS* office five days a week, with paid positions for our *MACS coordinator* and two assertive outreach workers.

We continue to work towards opening for another weekday and hope this takes place in the coming months. *MACS* now has more *counsellors* than rooms available and an expansion of our service is urgently needed.

Our quest to secure funds continues and we are committed to a continued collaboration with other services in our community, working together for the benefit of others sleeping rough or doing it tough. Remember that ***'together, anything is possible'***.

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***MACS coordinator***

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## **A word from *Night Carers***

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This year due to weather conditions and the health of the *volunteers* and their family members, we did not go out *night caring* as much as we would have liked to. However, when we did go out there seemed to be less clients around.

This might have been due to the weather and the fact that the soup kitchen moved to a different location. We did manage to help a few people out with blankets, beanies, socks and non-perishable food and tea, coffee, and soup.

We started *2021* off with about five *volunteers*, and after the training information sessions, run by the *MACS coordinator*, we did gain a few more and this helped us grow to nine *volunteers* and so we were able to add an extra night.

Unfortunately, due to other commitments our numbers dwindled back to five. Donations also fell so that the *volunteers* were bringing in mainly food and related items and occasionally blankets. One of our past *volunteers* brought in some hand knitted beanies (that her father knitted) for our clients.

Contact: [nightcarers@peelconnect.com.au](mailto:nightcarers@peelconnect.com.au)

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***Night Carers coordinator***

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## A word from ReWRX

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### Work projects during COVID-19

Whilst our workshop was closed for over a year due to COVID-19, much has happened. It was heart-warming to still receive requests to help people through their difficult times.

### Community engagements

We have been mentoring a girl who was in prison at one of our visits and she shared that she was pregnant. We were blessed to come across all the baby furniture she would need for \$100. Since her release, we have spoken to her often and she visited me at home one night with her child who had fallen and grazed his head.

We transported them to Peel Hospital where they checked and thankfully found that the baby was okay. She is struggling to find housing and we have been working and remaining hopeful to find her a home soon. She is a good candidate for the Common Ground Project, and we are in the process of having her placed on their list.

Another lady who has two children currently imprisoned, contacted us and we discussed what the prison system offered people when released. Her previous experience with one son was that there is generally a lack of helpful information or accessible services for them. We visited one of her boys the Rockingham Hospital Mental Health Unit before his recent prison sentence. They intended to release him to the streets, and we phoned the family to provide an update on his mental welfare as he was at risk of self-harm. Despite their attempts to help, without external assistance he was simply imprisoned.

We contacted the Police about a homeless man living on the riverbank in Pinjarra, whom we attempted to visit daily, and advised that he was deteriorating rapidly. They assisted him to the Rockingham Hospital Mental Health Unit, but left his belongings behind, which we then collected for safekeeping, cleaning at a laundromat or discarding those which were unsalvageable.

Vinnies in Pinjarra made up a suitcase with clean clothes, which we delivered to him at the hospital. He had the biggest smile on his face when he saw his possessions. We had also included some toiletries, pens and paper and some confections.

This was the first visit where he was relaxed and happy to talk to us. We were advised that if he was left on the riverbank, it was unlikely he would have survived for much longer. We have since taken bags of clothes, tracksuits, and other items to the hospital as they indicated that is what they need most.

During one of our visits to the hospital, I was advised that my friend had been placed in supported accommodation, for which we are very grateful. We included in a letter to him, a self-addressed envelope, including a PCI card so that he would know that PCI care about his wellbeing.

### The future of ReWRX

We are currently working on a project idea to support prisoners and patients being released. Two years ago, we welcomed a young girl struggling with domestic violence at the workshop. Through support and encouragement in a supervisor role she blossomed and found full time work. And more recently we also received email correspondence from her.

We are also pursuing a project to establish a register for vulnerable people in our region, whereby they could provide PCI with their personal and family details and contact preferences. In the event of serious injury or fatality, we would then be able to contact their loved ones as appropriate.



We have been assisting an elderly lady with health issues who require urgent surgery and offered to *advocate* on her behalf. She now has an appointment with a specialist and her mental health is improving as she is more hopeful.

*MatchWorks* advised that the workshop facility that closed at the onset of *COVID-19*, is again available and offered it to *PCI*. I look forward to returning to the venue where we have had many successes of guiding people with various issues through their struggles towards positive outcomes such as improved behaviours, gainful employment, and constructive life circumstances.

We plan to have *ReWRX* include various projects and options at the workshop as the program develops, which could include some of the following:

- Providing washers and dryers at our facility.
- A sleeping bag and tent drive before winter.
- Free hairdressing.
- Free basic accounting services.
- Legal and health aid.
- Monthly *Strong Feet* attendance.
- Family reunification incentive.
- *Mother's Day, Father's Day, Easter, Christmas* and *Birthday* celebration initiatives.

Contact: [workprojects@peelconnect.com.au](mailto:workprojects@peelconnect.com.au)

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***ReWRX coordinator***

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## A word from our *secretary*

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### ***PCI governance***

*PCI* is made up of an eight-member *MC*, responsible for setting the strategic direction, development of policies, and management of the performance of the organisation. It is responsible for monitoring the performance of the *PCI* activities and overseeing its financial state. It is also responsible for ensuring that risks are adequately managed. The *MC* meets monthly.

As *secretary*, I am primarily responsible for advising the *MC* to ensure that *PCI* will comply with our *Rules of Association (Constitution)* and meet our legislative and regulatory obligations. For the *2020-2021* period, I have not identified any conflict of interest, breach of *constitutional* obligations or significant uncontrolled incidents or risks.

### ***Management challenges***

The main challenges during this period constituted a chronic shortage of suitable *volunteers*, significant *MC* membership turnover, difficulties in setting up *MC* meetings due to *COVID-19*, minimal *MC* member availability and ineffective communications with and amongst various *MC* and association members. The *MC* clearly require more member hours and our strategy going forward will be focussed on restructuring and incorporating suitable systems to accommodate this as a key objective.



## Membership

On 30 June 2021, there were seventy fully paid association members listed in the *Membership Register* and twenty-five previously listed members were shown as having membership fees overdue. The *treasurer* will be sending out membership invoices to all members listed in the register and any payments received by the 2021 *Annual General Meeting (AGM)* will be renewed and marked as fully paid. All memberships not renewed by that time will be marked as expired.

The *PCI MC* membership at the time is reflected in the following summary table.

<b>MC Members 30 June 2021</b>	
<i>Chair</i>	<i>Ron Withnell</i>
<i>Deputy Chair</i>	<i>July Bywaters</i>
<i>Treasurer</i>	<i>Fiona Ford</i>
<i>Secretary</i>	<i>Jacques Boonzaaier</i>
<i>General Member &amp; Cofounder</i>	<i>Dale Mulvey</i>
<i>General Member</i>	<i>Helen Buckle</i>
<i>General Member</i>	<i>Liz Sheridan</i>
<i>General Member</i>	<i>Rose Cull</i>

## PCI MC remuneration

Our *MC* members *volunteer* their time and skills to *PCI* and receive no remuneration. Other *PCI volunteering* staff may receive remuneration as determined on a case-by-case basis from time to time.

## Risk assessment

The *MC* is responsible to identify, measure and assess business, legal, financial, and other risks in *PCI* activities. Currently risk assessments are conducted on an as-needed basis. The *MC* plans to improve its risk management system in the coming 2021-2022 period.

## Adopting of reports

The *MC* receive and adopt the *treasurer* reports and those of the auditors, the annual financial statements, and agree to the payment of the auditors, as well as transacting any other business at general meetings.

## Audits and accounts

Whilst it is not an explicit external legal requirement, our *Constitution* requires that we keep financial records that correctly record and explain the transactions and financial position and performance of *PCI* through the year. It enables true and fair financial statements comprising a *Statement of Income & Expenditure* for the year and a *Balance Sheet*.

## Performance indicators

The *MC* monitors organisational performance, from implementation of the mission statement and strategic plan through to performance against operating plans and financial budgets.

Performance indicators are reported at *MC* meetings and enable us to monitor our performance in four main areas: *Strategic Priorities, Governance, Organisational Capacity* and the *Impact of our Work*.

Contact: [admin@peelconnect.com.au](mailto:admin@peelconnect.com.au)

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**Secretary**

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## Appreciating your support

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### Thanking you

We say, "Thank You" to the generosity and support of those who share our values and vision; creating a unified community where all people experience hope, pride, wellbeing, and connection.

Through this *PCI* can achieve so much and make a real impact in people's lives. We are grateful to all who join us through financial support, as *volunteers*, and as partners in our mission to work for a better community.

### Donors

Your financial contributions help us to help others. It is this support that enables us to continue improving and extending our work with individuals, families and communities who face disadvantage and who require *counselling* and *mentoring*.

Donations allow us to support the social and economic challenges that persistent homelessness presents in *Mandurah and Peel Region*. We recognise the kindness of people who give regularly, who give in response to our appeals and who might consider us in their wills.

Thank you for your commitment to work toward a better society and a better tomorrow.

### Volunteers

Thank you for all your efforts and goodwill. As participants in every part of the association, you share our concerns, develop public awareness, and motivate others to get involved.

*Volunteers* undertake a wide range of work, which includes visiting our community kitchens, attending community meetings on behalf of *PCI*, *supporting* jobseekers, connecting with the homeless, and offering *mentoring* and *counselling*. The invaluable contribution you make means we can continue to provide more *support*, to more people.

### Partner organisations

During the *2020-2021* period, the *COVID-19* pandemic affected our community and many of the usual *PCI* activities could not continue as normal.

We were challenged to find alternative solutions and options for some of our work, and one of the most significant impacts was the cancellation of our *PCI Dinner* which is part of *Celebrating Community Connection (CCC)*. As an alternative, we issued our allies and previous attendees with certificates of appreciation, which was well-received.

Our reach and impact in the community would not be possible without collaboration. The partnerships we have with agencies, local government, community groups, local companies and the *City of Mandurah* make *PCI* flexible and strong.

Partnerships amplify our community impact, allowing us to drive positive social change, investigate causes of disadvantage, inform policy development, extend networks, strengthen our programs, and develop models to improve our services. As we work to overcome homelessness, we thank you for working alongside us.

Contact: [admin@peelconnect.com.au](mailto:admin@peelconnect.com.au)

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**PCI MC**

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## You can change lives

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### Donate

Proceeds from all donations support the work we do. We accept donations of fabric, sewing machines and other items used to support *ReWRX* where participants sew shopping bags and aprons for resale. In the coming months we will be exploring further options and possible expansions of our work projects.

We can arrange for items to be collected anywhere in *Mandurah*.

Contact: [workprojects@peelconnect.com.au](mailto:workprojects@peelconnect.com.au)

*PCI* is generously supported by many individuals, organisations, and community groups. You can help us to help others by making a financial contribution.

We follow strict guidelines for *Incorporated Organisations*, *Not-for-profits* and *Charities*, and our *Constitution* place a significant responsibility and accountability on us to ensure finances are legally obtained and applied for the purposes of the association as defined by our *Constitution*.

Contact: [accounts@peelconnect.com.au](mailto:accounts@peelconnect.com.au)

### Volunteer

We believe the best way to a non-discriminatory, better society is to engage everyone in looking after each other. This means *volunteers* are central to what we do and without them we would simply not exist.

If you would like to be part of our efforts to reduce disadvantage by offering your time and expertise to participate in or strengthen our services and events, find a *volunteer* opportunity by visiting our website.

Contact: [deputychair@peelconnect.com.au](mailto:deputychair@peelconnect.com.au)

### A gift in your Will

If you appreciate the work, we do at *PCI* and want to help us create a better future for the next generation, please consider including a gift to *PCI* in your *Will*.

To discuss how to do this, please feel welcome to contact the *treasurer* via email: [accounts@peelconnect.com.au](mailto:accounts@peelconnect.com.au)

### Corporate partnerships

We rely heavily on the business community and community and government organisations for their collaboration, funding, and help.

If you have an enquiry about partnering with *PCI*, please contact any of the following office holders via email:

*Deputy chair*: [deputychair@peelconnect.com.au](mailto:deputychair@peelconnect.com.au)

*Treasurer*: [accounts@peelconnect.com.au](mailto:accounts@peelconnect.com.au)

*Secretary*: [admin@peelconnect.com.au](mailto:admin@peelconnect.com.au)

### Learn more

To understand more about our work and about important social matters, view our website:

[www.peelconnect.com.au](http://www.peelconnect.com.au)

or join us on *Facebook*:

[www.facebook.com/PeelConnect/](http://www.facebook.com/PeelConnect/)

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**PCI MC**

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## Gallery

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### Accepting donations



### 2020 Christmas barbeque



### Volunteer expo



Bondie gets the keys the keys to his home with help from MACS



Volunteer of the year 2020



Rest in peace Sharon McKell  
...we will miss you...



*Courtesy MACS coordinator*

## Sponsors

