

Building a strong and connected community

45th ANNUAL REPORT

2021-2022

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

Dundas Area Neighbourhood Centre (DANC) acknowledges that we work on the traditional lands of the Wallamettagul and Burramattagal people of the Darug nation on which our Neighbourhood Centre connects to community.

We pay respect to the strength, capacity and resilience of past and present Aboriginal people in our region.





Building a strong and connected community

OUR VISION

Building a strong and connected community

OUR MISSION

To be a reliable hub of support within our community through the provision of quality services and activities that enable strength, inclusion and respect, while reducing social and financial disadvantage and distress.

OUR PRIORITIES

- Community and services
- Sustainable and diversified funding
- Brand awareness
- Partner network
- Efficient and effective processes and governance

OUR VALUES

Inclusiveness Collaboration Integrity Adaptability



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BOARD REPORT

The 2021-22 Annual Report, our 45th, for Dundas Area Neighbourhood Centre Inc. (DANC) is presented covering activities for the financial year July 2021 to June 2022.

For over 40 years DANC has been a reliable hub of support within our community to promote inclusion, diversity, collaboration and respect whilst reducing social and financial disadvantage. The last year has arguably been one of the most challenging in recent memory as our community grappled with the continuing COVID-19 crisis and numerous lockdowns, extreme weather events, cost of living pressures, increasing economic headwinds and geopolitical turbulence.

Now, more than ever, neighbourhood organisations like DANC are making a critical difference to community members where we are most needed - providing blankets, gloves and scarves during cold weather, providing food parcels, distributing free RAT tests and running school holiday programs to name a few.

We are extremely proud of the DANC team's resilience and tenacity to overcome challenges and build a strong portfolio of partnerships, activities and community engagement. A big thank you to our many fantastic partners who have helped bring light and energy into the Centre. This includes our friends at the Rotary Club of Carlingford volunteering to paint the DANC office, Tzu Chi Foundation providing free lunches for our Friday Connect program and many others selflessly giving their time week after week.

As an organisation, the last year has certainly not been an easy journey. There were significant resourcing challenges for both the Board and Centre team. We are incredibly grateful to Kathryn Hammond, Graham Moon and Ken Bullock for their tireless dedication to maintain operational effectiveness - without their efforts DANC would not be where we are today! The Board has now been refreshed with new members who bring a diverse mix of experience and local knowledge united by a common passion to serve the community. We will continue to build bench strength in the coming year. The Board's extensive work to update the strategic plan will help guide the organisation in the coming years and was made possible through funding from the Social Sector Support Fund initiative.

We acknowledge the wonderful support from local officials including Mayor Donna Davis, Councillor Kellie Darley, Councillor Michelle Garrard and Councillor Pierre Esber who have embraced DANC and generously provided their time and assistance to help us with various initiatives through the year.

We thank the NSW Government and the Department of Communities and Justice for their ongoing assistance both in terms of grants and other support. Their understanding and pragmatism during these challenging times is greatly appreciated.

A lot of hard work was done to rebuild over the last year especially after the difficult lock down periods where physical attendance was not possible. Seeing all the smiling faces and hearing laughter echoing throughout the Centre makes it all worthwhile. The Board looks forward to continuing the momentum in the coming year together with all our fantastic staff, volunteers, partners, community members and supporters.

Steven Lam President

MANAGER REPORT



I commenced my role as Manager at Dundas Area Neighbourhood Centre (DANC) in March 2021, bringing with me a background of over 30 years working with community, including Local Government, peak body and disability specific roles. I was excited to be back 'on the ground' working with community in an organisation that was obviously keen to meet the needs of the community it serves. Unfortunately, after only three months in the role, we went into another Covid-19 lockdown period and all our hard work in starting to build up connection with the community was put on hold.

Our staff team of Tegan, Varuna and Belinda immediately began looking at how we could 'pivot' to a new model of service delivery to enable us to continue to meet our community needs while still following the Stay-at-Home order implemented by Government.

Staff created 'pivot models' for all our existing programs – this included our Creative Kids program, Connect & Play (playgroup), Tea & Talk, Homework Hub and Friday Connect.

For example, Creative kids became online activities for children 5-15 which included dance parties, weaving and art classes, with kits mailed to participants to allow them to participate. Homework Hub became our Lockdown Legends program, because our kids and parents told us they had enough online learning, so it adapted to providing different activities each week to connect kids and provide fun activities. Our Connect & Play playgroup became Story, Song & Wiggle time with parents logging in each week to sing along and dance with their pre-schoolers. One of our challenges during this time was that many of our participants did not have access to devices or the internet. So, our ongoing "Community Connection Calls" became a key part of DANC staying in touch with the community. Many of our clients looked forward to their weekly call, and for some it was the only connection they had with the 'outside world' each week.

Some of our residents expressed an interest in cooking, so we trialled an online nutrition program Culinary Connections which was very successful with everyone learning some new recipes each week and we connected with a new group of women in our community.

As the lockdown extended, and our area being part of a "Hot Spot" area, it became clear that our community needed more practical support. And, with approval to attend the centre, I started providing food hampers to the community once a week. This grew from 17 hampers a week in August 2021 to giving out 55 Christmas Hampers in December 2021.

These would not have been possible without donations from the following to whom we are extremely grateful.

- Foodbank via Parramatta Council
- Rapid Relief Team
- Oz Harvest
- Zhu Chi Foundation
- Grant from then Deputy Mayor Michelle Garrard
- Personal donations from staff
- Personal donations from community
- Iluka on Baywater (donated 10 hampers)

MANAGER REPORT

One of the downsides during this time was our community workers leaving, each for different reasons, but it meant that I had to juggle the centre reopening in January while recruiting for new staff, I appreciate and thank Anna and our student Mary (Sung Ra) for their assistance at this time. Recruitment took some time, and we finally welcomed Kitty Breen in June as a Community Development Worker. We also had Rita Harden join us to help with the Community Garden, and she later joined us as a Community Development Worker (but more about that next report!)

During this time, I continued my 'cleaning' of the Neighbourhood Centre and removing old items that had built up over the years. With thanks to a grant from Community Building Partnership Program we were able to update our office and create a new computer/meeting room. We didn't have quite enough to finalise the project, but a call out saw the Rotary Club of Carlingford come to our aid and we had a weekend painting bee to freshen the insides of the offices. Other grants enabled us to purchase some new office furnishings and the office is almost unrecognisable from what it was when I started. All other storage areas have been cleared out and the centre is much tidier and hopefully more welcoming to the community and the office is certainly a much better environment for the staff! I'd like to acknowledge my husband Mike, who I recruited as a volunteer to help us with our new computers and to tidy up years of cables and cords in our office as well as set up our new computer room and assist with the painting and odd jobs in the office.

We started back our programs at the beginning of 2022, but the community was slow to come back, the fear of contracting Covid-19 was still strong. We implemented our Covid-safe plan to help keep our participants safe, but we need to acknowledge that we are still in a pandemic and for many of our residents, the risk of catching the virus is too strong.

There was a couple of significant events for DANC in early 2022. I was invited to take part in a story on the ABC on the rising cost of living and issues facing our community. One of our local residents, Annette joined me being interviewed for a story for the ABC, where we talked about the issues and difficulties faced as prices and costs for services rose. From this, I was then invited to be interviewed live by Joe O'Brien from the ABC and got to share more about our community. Very nerve wracking, but great to have the opportunity to share the story of our community and its resilience. We were also approached by the then Prime Minister's office to host an event where the PM would make an announcement regarding funding for a youth project. What this meant for DANC was the opportunity to have the PM in our area and centre, and to hopefully highlight some of our issues. I had the pleasure of talking to his wife who was very interested in the work we did. These events were a great promotional opportunity for DANC.





MANAGER REPORT

We stayed connected with our volunteers during lockdown, but Lisa (So Lau) and Lucine Song did not return after lockdown. But Kitty Chan was keen to come back to her role as welcomer and group assistant, and we have now welcomed Linda Stammer to the volunteer team.

DANC and myself were recognised during this time with nominations for a Zest Award, City of Parramatta Community Group of the year at the Australia Day awards. I was also nominated for a Westfield Local Hero award. While we didn't win any of these, it was awesome to be nominated and our work in the community recognised.

I also need to thank all our partners, without these other services and organisations, DANC would not be able to support our community the way we do. Some of these partners include Hume Housing, Hope Connect, City of Parramatta Council, Tzu Chi Foundation, Telopea Public School – Schools as Community Centres, the YMCA, Dundas Library and more. These stakeholders play an important role with DANC, as they help provide us with the opportunity to better support the community. I am grateful to be able to work with these, and all our partner organisations, who share the same goal, to improve services to local residents. I have worked hard to build these connections and continue to improve connections with our community.

I'd like to thank the Board of DANC for their constant support over this challenging period, and of course my staff team for sharing my vision for a strong and connected community.

Kathryn Hammond November 2022





STAFF, STUDENT INTERNS AND VOLUNTEERS

Staff

Thank you to the following staff who were part of the staff team during 2021-2022:

- Kathryn Hammond
- Anna Chevalier
- Belinda Marchesiello
- Tegan Thomas
- Varuna Singh
- Vanessa Donohue
- Angela Martinez
- Kitty Breen

Board Members

The following members served on the DANC Board during 2021-22:

- Ramaprasad Bhar
- Samantha Del Maschio
- · Saj Deshmukh
- Graham Moon
- Sudhakar Ramasamy
- Steven Lam
- Samantha Encarnation
- Harrison Dell
- Maria Mughal

Facilitators

Thank you to the following facilitators who assisted us with program delivery.

- Kelvin Dale
- Naomi Pike
- Rita Harden
- Judy Hamilton
- Liz Hale



Student Interns

Thank you to the students who chose to participate in the work at DANC as part of their studies:

- Sung Ra (Mary)
- Samreen Arshad
- Ruyan Li (Ruth)
- Winona Poon

These students came from various colleges and universities and undertook a range of research projects and assisted staff in program development and implementation. Special thanks to Mary who joined us during lockdown to assist in food distribution to the community.

Volunteers

DANC cannot function without our dedicated volunteers. Thank you Kitty Chan who 'stuck with us' through lockdown and supported DANC from the moment we reopened. Thank you also to Mike Boothroyd who assisted in office renovations. Kris and Greg volunteered to undertake lawn mowing and the community garden and we appreciate their assistance.



FINANCIAL REPORT

The Dundas Area Neighbourhood Centre Inc. Financial Report for the year ending June 2022 will be tabled at the Annual General Meeting. It was audited by chartered accountants C M Pitt & Co. Total revenue for year totalled \$334,161 while total expenses were \$334,048. Current assets amounted to \$178,681 while current liabilities were \$55,767. Employee related expenses amounted to 80% of outgoings.

The Centre is grateful to all who contributed funds or in-kind especially our funding body, Department of Community and Justice and our landlord City of Parramatta Council.

CENTRE ACTIVITIES

DANC receives its main funding from the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) through its Targeted Early Intervention program (TEI). This funding covers three areas:

- Community Connections
- Community Strengthening
- Community Support

All DANC programs are designed to meet these areas and are flexible and change and grow with community needs.

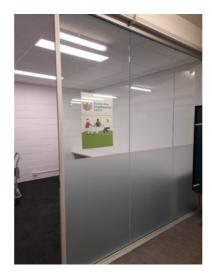
We also receive funding from various grants and donations through the year that allow us to expand on our programming.

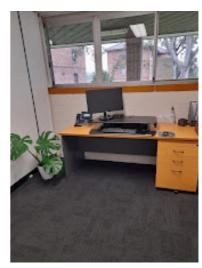
DANC also promotes and hosts self-managed groups at the centre. These activities are run by community members and help promote community connection and community engagement.

Due to a number of grants during the year, DANC was able to update our office area and to create a computer/meeting room at the centre. Lots of clean-ups were undertaken and the centre is looking fantastic and welcoming.

During this period, we worked with NSW Health and offered Covid and flu vaccination clinics.







We started our 2021 reporting year with 'Stay at Home' orders from the Government. This meant that our planned programs and activities needed to change to enable us to still provide programs to our community. We had to adapt and change our programs to suit the online format.

COVID CONTIGENCY PLAN

Due to extension of stay-at-home orders announced on 7th July 2021, this emergency contingency plan has been developed to enable Dundas Area Neighbourhood Centre to provide services to our clients.

Current programs

Creative Kids

After school activity program for 6 – 12 year olds.

Connect & Play

Supported
Playgroup for
0 – 6 year olds

Tea & Talk

Social support and information for local residents

Homework Hub

Support for children 8 – 17 with homework

Friday Connect

Provision of free food, social connect and support

Covid contingency plan

- ♥ Welfare calls to parents.
- ♥ Direct parents to homework hub online session and social media activity posts.
- ♥ Referrals as required.
- ♥ Daily post on social media with link to activity for this age group.

- ♥ Welfare calls to parents.
- ♥ Direct parents to online story time activity.
- ♥ Referrals as required.
- ♥ Online story time activity.
- ♥ Welfare calls to participants, utilising TIS if required.
- ♥ Referrals as required.
- ♥ Regular social media posts providing information on key support agencies.
- ♥ Welfare calls to parents.
- ♥ Direct parents to online session.
- ♥ Referrals as required.
- ♥ Hold zoom session to support home school learning.

- ♥ Welfare calls to
- ♥ Referrals as required.

participants.

♥ Regular social media posts providing information on key support agencies.

Ongoing support by direct phone calls to continue.



COMMUNITY CONNECTION CALLS

One of our key concerns during the stay-athome orders was the issue that we knew many of our clients did not have devices, or had to share with children who were learning at home. And/or they did not have access to data. So our way to connect was with our regular community connection calls. These calls were made by staff each week and we did referrals and provided information. Many commented on how much they enjoyed receiving our calls.

HOMEWORK HUB / LOCKDOWN LEGENDS

Homework Hub offered homework help to students in years 4-10 and supported their parents and carers who may not have had the skills to assist their children in homework or school projects. DANC intended to offer this program in a similar way online. But feedback from parents and children told us that they had 'had enough' of online learning. So the program became an afternoon of fun and games and connection.





CREATIVE KIDS

Creative Kids was an after-school activity program for children aged 6-11. For our pivot program, we ran a variety of online activities. These included online dance parties, weaving and art programs.

These were well loved by the children attending and their parents and we had a lot of fun. With thanks to Liz Hale for facilitating the art activities for us.













CONNECT & PLAY / STORY SONG & WIGGLE TIME / STAY & PLAY

Connect and Play was our supported playgroup. Child and Family Worker Tegan had done an amazing job in building the numbers for this group prior to lockdown. We wanted to stay connected with our families so offered an online program called Story, Song and Wiggle time that enabled our families to stay connected. At the end of lockdown, we were able to have an end of year catch up in the park and this also became a farewell for Tegan.

Once the centre re opened, we trialled some Stay and Play sessions for parents and used these sessions to consult with families about their needs for this age group. After these consultations it was decided not to continue running our playgroup.



YOUTH ACTIVITIES

As part of our partnership with the LDAT (local drug and alcohol team), CDAT (community drug and alcohol team) and the YMCA were able to host two sessions in Youth Week. This gave the young people of Telopea an amazing opportunity to relax, unwind and spend some quality time with Youth Workers and services. The energy of the group was amazing, and everyone present was happy to have the opportunity to connect.

From this, DANC partnered with the YMCA to run an ongoing weekly program for young people.

Stay and Play Playgroup sessions

Story time, sing along and creative play for children aged

0-6 and their parents



At these two sessions, we will discuss what other types of sessions you would like for yourself and your child. Please come along and have your say as we plan our playgroup sessions.

Please let us know if you are attending by calling or emailing.

Please note - all staff are part time, so leave a message and we will return your call as soon as possible

21 Sturt Street Telopea

info@danc.org.au

9684 4250





Communities & Justice





PROVISION OF FOOD PACKAGES

During lockdown, from information gained through our community connection calls, we realised many in our community were struggling. Centre Manager Kathryn received approval to attend the centre once a week to distribute food packages to the community. In the height of the pandemic, these packages were placed outside the centre for people to collect after a notifying phone call. As things settled, we began having a collection day. The City of Parramatta Council provided us with fresh hampers every week with food from Oz Harvest. Along with this, Council also provided us with Food Bank Hampers, and then Deputy Mayor, Clr Michelle Garrard gave us a donation to purchase specialised hampers for people with special needs such as nappies, formula and other items. We also received assistance from the Rapid Relief Team, Iluka on Baywater and generous donations from Community and Staff members. We had assumed that the distribution of hampers would reduce as life went back to normal after the lockdowns, but instead, the rising costs of living has seen this program expand rather than cease. I'd like to especially thank Council worker Ellen Ross who helped us so much during this time.



Christmas Hamper Collection

Join us on 21st December to collect your Christmas hamper FREE LUNCH and entertainment 11.30 - 1.30

You must register to receive a hamper Call Kathryn 9684 4250 (leave a message)



FRIDAY CONNECT

Friday Connect provided a regular weekly opportunity for local community members to meet and connect. DANC partnered with the Tzu Chi Foundation who generously provided meals for the program and volunteers to connect with the community members who attended. This program could not run during lockdown. But during lockdown Tzu Chi provided us with items for food hampers. We were able to provide hampers to our community for Christmas, and Tzu Chi provided lunch. While we couldn't sit down and have a Christmas meal together, the community enjoyed the lunch provided as 'take away'.







SCHOOL HOLIDAY PROGRAMS

DANC held school holiday programs in April and while our numbers were lower than expected those in attendance had a great time. The kids in attendance had so much fun with the craft and games activities, we changed the program to expand that over two days. Part of the craft activities was to paint our new Street Library. The kids really enjoyed this activity including one young participant painting warratahs on it after researching 'Telopea' and its connection to this flower, and it looks amazing.

The library is now installed at the front of the Neighbourhood Centre.



Holiday Activities

For children aged 5 - 12

Crafts & Games - Wednesday 20th April Line Dancing - Thursday 21st April 10.30am - 12.00pm

BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL



Please call (leave a message) or email. We will contact you to complete a registration form for your child. You will receive confirmation if they have gained a space in the program.

You MUST have this confirmation to ensure your place.

Please note - all staff are part time, so leave a message and we will return your call as soon as possible

21 Sturt Street Telopea

info@danc.org.au

9684 4250





Communities



STEPPING CONFIDENTLY INTO 2022

A great group of women explored their confidence as part of a program to support women in returning to the workforce. This fourweek program was facilitated by Judy Hamilton from Hamilton Coaching.



CULINARY CREATIONS

During our community connection calls some carers noted that the lockdown had put even greater strain on women. Many women reported feeling isolated. Through providing connections community program attempted to make the unavoidable domestic life of many women stuck at home something that was less isolating. Each week worker Tegan prepared an healthy recipe for the group to try and cook along. Sometimes participants just watched and cooked later and all shared photos of their creations. DANC provided the kev ingredients participants picked up from the centre.



NOURISHING NUTRITION

From our online cooking program, we realised that the community was keen to know more about healthy eating and food preparation. Naomi Pike from Joyful Nourishment facilitated these sessions and participants expressed how they had learnt many new things through the program and took these home implement with their families.





INFORMATION & REFERRAL, ADVOCACY & SUPPORT

As part of the services DANC offers, we provide information and referrals to our community on a range of topics. This can be as simple as providing a phone number for another service, to more complicated advocacy and referrals where we help clients access appropriate services specific to their needs.

TELOPEA COMMUNITY GARDEN

After lockdown, DANC was keen to bring our community garden back to life. We were successful in obtaining a grant to make the garden accessible. Rita Harden came on board and connected with all our gardeners, worked out who had which plots, had morning teas and created new rules all in preparation for the upgrade which will happen by March 2023.

SELF MANAGED GROUPS

Self managed groups (SMG's) are an important part of DANC's programming. These groups connect our community through various activities. They are managed by volunteer group leaders. We are always keen to hear from community members who may have an idea for a group, so please contact the Centre Manager for more details. Obviously having the Centre closed through lockdown impacted on our SMG's but most joined us again in early 2022.

Art Class

Volunteer artist and tutor Florence Ilacqua, member of the Parramatta Art Society, continues to lead this enthusiastic and appreciative adult group of students. Classes are held at the Centre, however, the group visits Art Gallery exhibitions and demonstration workshops from various artists to further develop skills. Florence has been volunteering with the art group for 10 years, and today we celebrate her dedication and support to DANC.

Table Tennis

Group leader Hanki Tokyo runs a table tennis group each week at the centre. He tells us: "All the players in the group enjoyed very much the games as well as the venue provided. We sincerely thank you for letting us use the facilities". We were able to provide a new table for the group to use.

Dundance

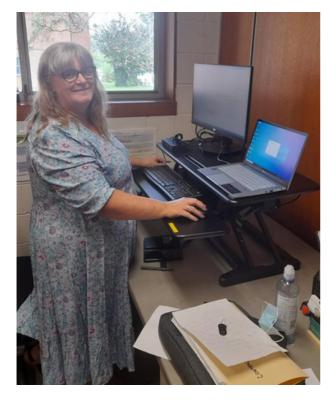
Dundance are an amazing group of dancers that use the centre each week to practice for performances. Thank you to Linda Ho for always being keen to support DANC and perform for us.



DANC PHOTO ALBUM

Some pictures from our busy year





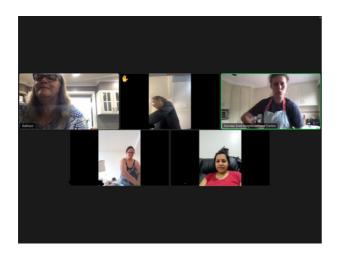


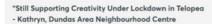




DANC PHOTO ALBUM









Dundas Area Neighbourhood Centre has been supporting the community through this extended lockdown period. We've been providing food packages to those who need a bit of support in these tough times, and we've also held a number of programs online, including craft activities for the community.

One activity for young people was a class on creating a portrait out of nature. It was great to see such creativity in our young people and everyone having such a fun time.

Usually not keen to share, one person even gave us feedback it was the BEST FUN EVER!!!









COLLABORATIONS, NETWORKING AND PARTNERSHIPS

Throughout the year, DANC has worked alongside other organisations to provide services to our community. These networks, partnerships and collaborations are a great way for organisations to be able to support each other and the community we work with.

During lockdown I was involved with a number of regular meetings to ensure safety within our community and to stay on top of current information. This included regular meetings with DCJ and Health.

Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ)

Our major funding source. DANC management engage regularly with DCJ to ensure our services meet the contracted arrangements.

City of Parramatta Council

DANC leases its premises in Telopea from Council and works closely with its staff. Special mention to Ellen Ross and Rodrigo Gutierrez from the Community Capacity Building team who not only provide support to the organisation as a whole, but to individual staff members of DANC. And, as mentioned earlier, provided us with amazing support for food parcels for our community during lockdown. Ramani Regis replaced Ellen as our link person and is a great link to Council. Councils Community Capacity Building Team also have provided us with a number of training opportunities through the year.

Tzu Chi Foundation Australia

Tzu Chi Foundation has been helping our community by providing lunch for our Friday Connect program. As well as providing items for our emergency food hampers. Tzu Chi volunteers interact and connect and provide support to those attending the session. During lockdown, the volunteers from Tzu Chi stayed in contact and regularly dropped off food hampers for us to distribute.

YMCA

City of Parramatta Council worked with the YMCA and provided funds to offer outreach Youth services in Telopea. DANC provided the venue and staff to work with the Y to run activites in the centre. Thanks to Mim Wasley and her team who worked hard to connect with the young people in our area

Rotary Club of Carlingford

As mentioned previously, the Rotary Club of Carlingford answered our call for volunteers to paint our office. From this a great partnership has been growing. They assisted us with purchasing a new vacuum cleaner and also did some odd jobs, including the repair of our food pantry when the door fell off!!

Hume Community Housing

Hume Housing is a local community housing provider. We work with the Community Cohesion officer as part of Telopea Connections as wells as sharing information and working on joint programs for the community. Thanks to Ben and Stella for their support.

COLLABORATIONS, NETWORKING AND PARTNERSHIPS

Dundas Library

The library adjoins the centre and provides the opportunity for networking and referrals. The library is also part of Telopea Connections. We share the promotion of each other's programs and we are working towards more coordination of services.

Telopea Connections

Telopea Connections is a group of service providers who meet regularly to support and collaborate on issues for the community. This group also includes the CDAT (Community Drug Action Team) and LDAT (Local Drug and Alcohol Team) meetings.

CDAT strives to make the local community safer, healthier, and stronger by working to prevent and reduce the harm associated with the use of alcohol and other drugs. They aim to promote awareness of alcohol and other drug related harm and strategies for minimising harm and to work together on locally relevant prevention strategies. The LDAT program supports community organisations to reduce harms from alcohol and other drugs in their local area.

NSW Health

We worked with NSW Health to offer a number of Covid 19 vaccination clinics and then flu clinics at the neighbourhood centre.

Other Connections & Partnerships

Oz Harvest

TAFE NSW

CDAT

LDAT

Rapid Relief Team

University of Western Sydney

Western Sydney Community Forum

Carlingford Dundas Lions Club

Telopea Schools as Community Centres

Communiteer

AtWork Australia

Good 360

Mobile Minders

OfficeWorks West Ryde

RecLink

Funding, Grants and Donations

We recieved a number of grants during this period on top of our core DCJ funding. We also received donations that supported our work. We are grateful for the following:

- DCJ Social Sector Transformation Funds
- DCJ Social Sector Support Funds
- Aust Govt. Volunteer Grant
- Community Building Partnership Program
- City of Parramatta Pandemic Support Funds
- Western Sydney Community Forum, John Holland and Work Ventures - donation of laptops
- Sydney Young Nak Church
- City of Parramatta Clr Michelle Garrard (for specialist food hampers during lockdown)



Building a strong and connected community

21 STURT STREET TELOPEA NSW 2117
PO BOX 3059, TELOPEA NSW 2117
(02) 9684 4250
INFO@DANC.ORG.AU
WWW.DANC.ORG.AU