

# 2020



# ANNUAL REPORT





## **THE SPIERS CENTRE**

The Spiers Centre is a not-for-profit community organisation and Neighborhood Centre based in the northern suburbs of Perth, Western Australia. The organisation provides service delivery across the local Government areas of Joondalup, Wanneroo and Stirling along with the wider Perth Metropolitan area.



# CONTENTS

---

Board Members

---

Chairperson's Report

---

CEO's Report

---

Our Services

---

Our People

---

Disaster Resilient Communities

---

Treasurer's Report

---

Financial Results

---

In Appreciation

---

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*The Spiers Centre is proud to be your local community Neighbourhood Centre and recognises, respects and welcomes diversity in all its forms, in the belief that diversity is a source of strength and opportunity. 🇪🇺 🇦🇺*

The Spiers Centre acknowledges that we work on the traditional Country of the Whadjuk Noongar people and we pay respect to Elders past and present. We recognise and respect their cultural heritage, spiritual beliefs and relationship to land and waters. We extend this respect to other Aboriginal Language Groups and other First Nations. 🇲🇵 🇸🇲

## **VISION**

Strong, caring and resilient communities.

## **MISSION**

A centre for support, information and empowerment of individuals, families and communities.

## **SHARED VALUES**

**Integrity** - Honesty and fairness in all we do

**Respect** – Compassion without judgement

**Collaboration** - Connections that add value



# Board Members



**George Cowcher**  
Chairperson



**Amy Mayer**  
Deputy Chair



**Natasha Morgan**  
Treasurer



**Shelley Loermans**  
Secretary



**Mark Crook**  
Director



**Amy Blundell**  
Director



**Melissa Joyce**  
Director

# Chairperson's Report

The past year has been a challenging yet fulfilling one greatly impacted by the coronavirus pandemic. Despite the pandemic, the year could best be summed up by the phrase "looking to the future".

## **Strategic Plan 2021 - 2023**

A key activity of the board during the year was development of a new strategic plan which will guide the organisation over the next three years. The planning day was self-facilitated which proved to be very successful. My thanks to board members and the CEO for their full commitment to the process.

As part of looking to the future, the board engaged new auditors and outsourced payroll and accounting services to an external body. The latter change enabled TSC to undertake a partial realignment with more staff time channeled into direct service provision. The impacted staff reacted positively to the changes.

Mention was made in last year's report of TSC leasing space in Joondalup Lotteries House (JLH). The lease has been extended by two years and the space fitted out. Major ICT infrastructure and upgrades were undertaken at JLH and at our Heathridge site. These changes, in addition to NBN being connected, have already realised benefits in relation to operations at the Centre.

In addition to the above changes funding was obtained to enable the Centre to be painted, security was upgraded and the outside play area is part way through a refurbishment. The improvements have made the building much

more staff-friendly but without compromising service provision.

In addition to changes to the physical space, TSC was successful in obtaining *pro bono* time from Sunburnt Films who helped us produce a short promotional film. The film is on our website and well worth viewing. Note that the website is another area where we have started work with an eye to the future. At the time of writing, the board is finalising a contract with a developer to produce a new, improved website for TSC.

Governance and risk management is always high on the board's agenda. During the year the board carried out a thorough review of the Risk Management Plan and commenced a systematic review of all TSC's policies.

At the beginning of this report I mentioned the coronavirus pandemic. As with most organisations, it had a major impact on TSC. The Centre closed its doors, and in fact all sites, in mid-March. Staff worked from home where they were able to provide some services to clients in addition to holding meetings remotely and undertaking a large amount of professional development. Morale was high and staff were very positive.

The board made a decision that staff would be supported and JobSeeker and JobKeeper was used to ensure staff were not disadvantaged financially. At the time of writing, the intention is that the Centre will reopen to clients in August.



TSC's profile continues to improve under the guidance of our CEO, Gaelle Gouillou. Having previously been seconded to the Linkwest board, Gaelle was officially elected to the board during the year. Additionally, Mel Wright from TSC was elected to Linkwest's Neighbourhood Centre Committee. Congratulations to both.



Operational matters are outside the purview of the board but we are kept abreast of key work by means of the CEO's monthly reports. The 'good news' story is always an uplifting read and shows the importance of the work that we all do as part of the organisation.

Board membership changed slightly during the year with two members leaving and one new one appointed. The board is composed of a number of very dedicated volunteers with specific skills beneficial to the strategic development of TSC. I thank them, old and new, for their support during the year.



As I say every year, I commend all of TSC's employees – and volunteers – for their hard work during the year. Without them, the provision of much needed services to help build strong, caring and resilient communities would not occur. On behalf of all the individuals and families that have been helped this year – "Thank you".



**George Cowcher**  
Chairperson



# CEO's Report

## **I am pleased to present The Spiers Centre's Annual Report 2019–2020**

Against the challenges of the COVID-19 crisis, The Spiers Centre mobilised all services and responded effectively to meet the rapidly changing needs of communities.

The response was driven by clear priorities and concerted efforts to discover and implement solutions that included a highly adaptable and committed team united by a common purpose.

As a result, the organisation is well positioned and prepared to support the increasing number of vulnerable and disadvantaged people who need our help regardless of any escalation to the crisis and associated phase restrictions.

Increasingly, our clients are seeking assistance with multiple and complex financial, social and health issues. Due to our finite resources and insufficient funding, it has been imperative that we increase support for our work while finding innovative ways to serve our clients.

As an organisation, we have prioritised our response to COVID-19 to ensure priority needs presenting in communities were met maintaining an agility to change and adapting swift crisis-response decisions.

We have connected our services to communities through a number of strategies including processes to support virtual and remote support across service areas and collaborations with other service providers to diversify our service offerings.

Above all, we have always prioritised the safety and well-being of our staff while they have supported communities throughout the crisis through effective workplace strategies, training, policies and processes.

### **Strategic Plan 2021–2023**

This year the board participated in a Strategic Planning workshop and developed the new Strategic Plan which sets out clear goals to see us through to 2023.

I congratulate the board and staff on these new and exciting directions for the future.

Against the current Strategic Plan, we met many milestones including the alignment of services to meet the priority needs of the community, enhancement of services, new partnerships and collaborations and development of a highly capable, professional team.

## **Excelling in service delivery**

We were honored to be recognised as semi-finalists in the Carmen Lawrence Award for Community Building at the 2019 Linkwest Awards which celebrated our work in community development practices and contribution to a stronger, healthier and more inclusive community.

We have remained committed to effective, sustainable and inclusive community development and have been very pleased to see grass-roots organisations we have supported grow and develop through self-determination and effective community engagement practices.

## **Working with our partners**

We have entered into several collaborations this year with our partners and continue to build a stronger sector and support the needs of community.

Collaborations with our partners include:

- Cahoots Connects – shopping delivery service to support vulnerable communities
- Emergency Relief and Food Access Service – support service to identify and apply for emergency relief

## **Investing in our people**

In response to COVID-19, the government announced additional funding for the financial counselling sector to meet an anticipated increase in demand for services.

This provided the Financial Counselling Association funding to support paid intern programs across Australia which has allowed us to increase capacity taking on two financial counselling interns.

In growing our capability, we have developed a professional and highly reputable team which has further enhanced our Financial Hardship Services.

The expansion of our financial counselling services provides the capability, skills and expertise to support communities navigate the coronavirus pandemic and future crisis.

## **Special thanks**

I thank our staff, volunteers and our partners for the work they do every day to bring hope amongst the less fortunate and support the ongoing and vital work of The Spiers Centre.

While their work isn't easy and has been particularly challenging this year, it is worthwhile and essential work, improving the lives of our clients and helping to empower and build resilience in communities. I would also like to thank and acknowledge the commitment and work of our Board, particularly our Chair George Cowcher, for all their guidance and support.

We look forward to working with you in the coming year to continue building strong, caring, and resilient communities together.



**Gaelle Gouillou**  
Chief Executive Officer





# Our Services

The Spiers Centre provides services with a focus on financial hardship, community support, social inclusion and early intervention. We work with children, families, young people and the community from our Neighborhood Centre in Heathridge and offices in Girrawheen and Joondalup. We provide an integrated hub of service delivery enabling clients to access support, obtain information and receive referrals to other agencies that individuals and families can access to enhance their resilience and wellbeing.

## Financial Hardship Services

This year the Financial Hardship Services comprising of Financial Counselling, Financial Capability and Emergency Relief services responded to several disasters including the Yanchep bushfires and COVID-19 pandemic.

As part of the Financial Counselling Network, our staff are connected to a large network of community services committed to reducing impacts of financial hardship, building capacity and improving the quality of services provided.

This year the Centre prioritised resources to respond to the impact of COVID-19 with disability pensioners, international students, migrant workers on temporary visas and New Zealanders amongst those excluded from accessing welfare payments. Vulnerable communities were supported with food relief, bill assistance and information and advocacy to navigate the government's COVID supplements and benefits.



**951 people assisted with Emergency Relief**



**583 people assisted with Financial Counselling**



**1,738 individual Financial Hardship Service sessions**



**117 Community Workshops & Activities**



**99 children attended Playgroup**

## **Strong Communities, Strong Families**

The Spiers Centre is committed to supporting and empowering our clients with a vision to support strong, caring and resilient communities. We aim to work with clients to build their knowledge, confidence and skills through our services and groups.

The programs focus on developing knowledge, confidence and resilience consistent with the Centre's mission to provide a centre for support, information and empowerment of individuals, families and communities.

The Empowering Communities program based at the Neighborhood Centre in Heathridge provides a welcoming, safe place of belonging for communities to access information and referrals, supported playgroups, financial hardship services, parenting programs and early intervention support.



The Centre also provides workshops and evidence-based programs as well a community resource for other service providers to deliver their community support programs.

The Neighborhood Centre was closed from March 26<sup>th</sup> as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, however, the service provided uninterrupted support to our clients and the wider community through different platforms including one-on-one phone and email support, social media and through care packages.

Throughout the pandemic, the Centre provided support to communities around parenting, children's activities, reducing social isolation, connecting with social networks, supporting mental health and well-being and providing access to information and other support services.







Feedback from our financial counselling clients



## WHO RESPONDED?

**45**

Individuals



across 2 service locations



**71%**  
Female

**75%**

were

**30-59**

years

Less than 6 months

**33%**

**56%**

6 months or more

**Time spent**  
experiencing difficulty  
before contact

**85%**



satisfied  
with the service  
they received

**53%**



better  
able to  
manage bills

**65%**



have used  
the skills and  
knowledge learnt

**57%**



felt their  
housing situation  
was more secure

**59%**



more confident  
in managing  
their finances



## REFERRALS

**61%**  
connected  
to additional  
support services



## NET PROMOTER SCORE



## Our financial counsellors helped with

Utilities  
debt

**60%**



Mortgage  
debt

**6%**



Personal  
debt

**22%**



Council  
rates

**13%**



Budgeting

**24%**



Rental  
debt

**6%**



## WHAT OUR CLIENTS SAID



The reassurance that it could  
be sorted out and the  
understanding that I wasn't  
alone.

Yes great service when I was  
suffering financial stress.



The financial counsellor was  
very professional, supportive,  
helpful, patient and open. I  
felt very comfortable in  
sharing my financial  
situation/difficulties.

More funding so they can  
help more people like they  
helped me.



Being able to book an  
appointment time rather  
than having to phone up on  
a particular day.



Find out more about financial counselling at

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

[www.financialcounsellingnetwork.org.au](http://www.financialcounsellingnetwork.org.au)



# Our People

**A SPECIAL MENTION GOES TO OUR DEDICATED STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS WHO WORKED  
TIRELESSLY PROVIDING ESSENTIAL SUPPORT TO OUR VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES  
DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC.**

We would like to thank all our staff and volunteers for their perseverance, dedication and commitment during an extremely challenging year.

Staff have undergone significant professional development and training to ensure everyone is prepared, aware and informed in best practices and response measures for identified priorities arising this year including hygiene and infection controls, mental health first aid and child protection.

The commitment of our staff is reflected in our low turnover which provides high levels of skills, experience, knowledge and engagement.

Thank you for your collaboration, expertise and the enthusiasm you bring to our efforts. Together we are more effective and stronger for the people we support in our community.

We would also like to thank all the communities we work with who continue to inspire us and for all those who contribute and support the outcomes we achieve.



*Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.*

Helen Keller







# Disaster Resilient Communities

The Spiers Centre has a proud history of supporting vulnerable communities for 40 years through financial hardship, crisis and disasters. Over the year we have supported communities through extremely challenging disasters during the Yanchep bushfires and the COVID-19 pandemic providing invaluable recovery support and building resilient communities.

## **Responding to priority community needs**

Through our Financial Hardship and Empowering Communities services, we have developed and applied a highly responsive and agile service response to prioritise community needs across the Perth metropolitan area.

As a result, during the Yanchep bushfires last year, the service was able to provide immediate crisis support providing individuals and families with much needed emergency relief, basic essentials and information/advice during a period where many services were short-staffed as a result of the holiday period.

The recent needs of communities as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic has again tested the responsiveness and agility of our services. We continued to focus on the changing needs of communities and adjusting services to respond to those needs while ensuring the safety and well-being of our centre users and staff.

## **Expanding services to remote support**

As part of the development of highly responsive services, all processes were adapted to support remote delivery. This included the provision of accessible and appropriate delivery formats to ensure those with limited access to technology weren't disadvantaged.

Collaborations with other providers including Cahoots Connect and the Emergency Relief and Food Access Services provided additional service options to meet the needs of our vulnerable communities.

Further development work around accessibility of services remains ongoing to ensure a diverse range of service provisions in response to all levels of support across every phase restriction as needed.

## **Building and supporting disaster resilient communities**

As the pandemic unfolds across the globe, the full economic, financial and social impacts on individuals and families will be felt across communities. The Spiers Centre remains steadfast in its vision to create strong, caring and resilient communities against the increasing challenges presented by an ongoing pandemic.

Services delivery models and programs have been adapted to ensure continuing support through any restrictions including full lock-downs if required. Services are focused on supporting communities and building their resilience through the increasing financial and social impacts of the pandemic.



....helping me and my family get back on track by helping our situation and taking financial stress away

Being able to share my troubles with a caring and experienced counsellor with help on a credit card debt and in dealing with my bank



**NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE WEEK**  
8-15 MAY 2020  
Loneliness: the solution is community

# Treasurer's Report

## 2019/20

Dear Members, and Associates

It is a great honour to present the Treasurer's Report for the Spiers Centre (TSC) for the financial year ending June 2020. The Spiers Centre Audited Special Purpose Financial Report for June 30, 2020 is listed on the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) website.

### **TREASURER'S DECLARATION**

I confirm that the TSC Special Purpose Financial Statements were professionally audited by Nexia Perth Audit Services Pty Ltd. This financial year is the first year the accounts have been audited by Nexia. The TSC financial reports have been verified with an unqualified auditor's opinion.

### **SUMMARY**

In a challenging financial environment TSC have performed well for the 2020 financial year and regained a strong positive result after a deficit in the prior financial year. Revenue was supported by an increase in grant income and unbudgeted Covid-19 funding, being JobKeeper and Cashflow boost income. Total Revenue for the year was \$1,326,915.

Expenses decreased circa \$50,000 on last financial year. This is attributable mainly to lower employment costs and lower emergency relief expense. Emergency Relief funding of \$93,057 had been carried over into the following financial year to allow for expected community need as result of the negative impact of Covid-19. Total Expense for the year was \$1,030,443.

Operating Surplus for the financial year was \$296,472. This result is credited to the astute and dedicated work of the CEO Gaelle Gouillou. The balance sheet strength is confirmed with a net asset position of \$568,064. This is supported by a liquid current position of \$516,917 underpinned by cash at bank. The introduction of AASB 16 – Lease has seen the recognition of prior classified operating leases in both assets and liabilities.

As a result of the operating surplus, TSC reserves have been increased by \$100,000 to allow for future use and provide further strength in the balance sheet of the organisation.

### **ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

Our CEO Gaelle Gouillou has created a foundation of solid performance following a year of deficit results in a challenging pandemic world. I acknowledge the drive and passion that Gaelle brings to TSC, to ensure we are able to continue to support those in need now more than ever. Secondly, to our Chair George and my fellow board members for their support and commitment to TSC over the year.

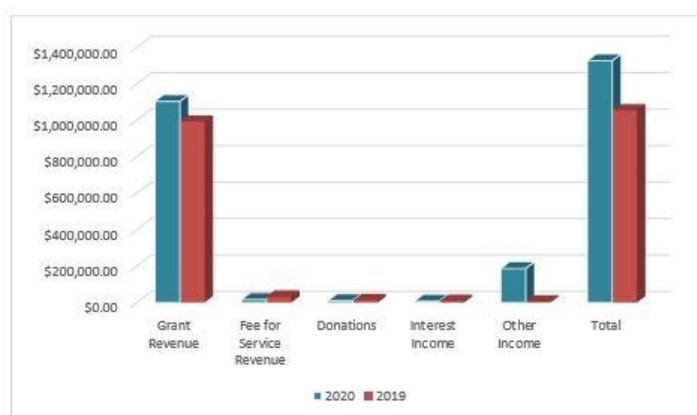
**NATASHA MORGAN**

**Treasurer**



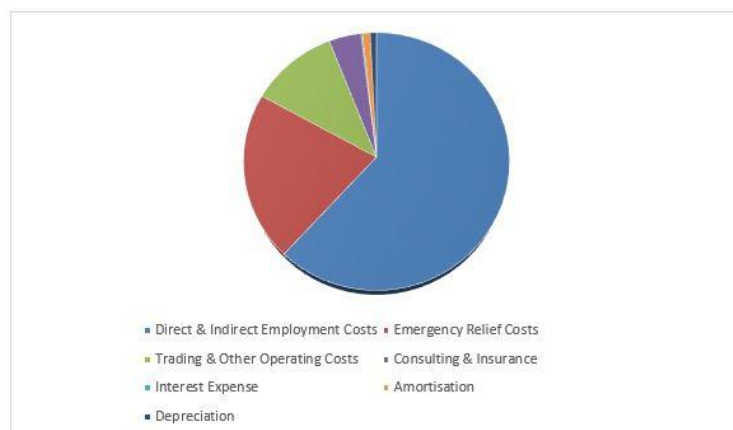
# Financial Results 2019/20

## TOTAL INCOME 2019/20 COMPARED TO PREVIOUS YEAR



INCOME	2019/20	2018/19
Grant Revenue	\$ 1,104,306	\$ 993,193
Fee for Service Revenue	\$ 16,912	\$ 32,467
Donations	\$ 11,165	\$ 13,273
Interest Income	\$ 2,790	\$ 6,381
Other Income	\$ 184,152	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 1,326,915</b>	<b>\$ 1,054,743</b>

## EXPENSES 2019/20



EXPENSE	2019/20
Direct/Indirect Employee Costs	\$ 637,520
Emergency Relief Costs	\$ 217,645
Trading & Other Operating Costs	\$ 113,732
Consulting and Insurance	\$ 41,449
Interest Expense	\$ 1,917
Amortisation	\$ 10,091
Depreciation	\$ 8,089
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 1,030,443</b>



Further information of The Spiers Centre's financials can be obtained from the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) website: <https://www.acnc.gov.au/charity>

# In Appreciation

With sincere thanks to all our funding bodies, donors and partners

A heart-shaped wreath made of various colorful fabric scraps, including floral, geometric, and abstract patterns, arranged in a heart shape on a dark background. The wreath is composed of many small, folded pieces of fabric, some with ties, creating a textured and vibrant border.

THANK YOU FOR ALL  
YOUR SUPPORT!

