









Riverwood Community Centre has been at the heart of our local community for over 40 years. We provide programs for individuals, families and community groups in a caring and inclusive environment.

With a passionate team of skilled staff and more than 100 committed volunteers, we're focused on meeting the needs of our community through our:

- · child, youth and family services
- · aged and disability services
- community programs
- support for voluntary and community groups that work with us on projects and events within our community.

By empowering and supporting our local community, we respect and celebrate our rich cultural diversity, encourage connection and inclusion, and help create a vibrant community where people want to take part.

#### **Acknowledgement of Country**

We acknowledge and thank the Traditional Owners of the land, the Bedigal Tribe of the Dharug Clan, on which we meet, walk, work and live.

We acknowledge the Elders past and present and the care they have given this country.

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#### Chair's message

Time seems to roll by faster each year – and the rapid passing of this year is no doubt a sign of how well things are being managed at Riverwood Community Centre. There have been challenges, but alongside the challenges are the opportunities and rewards that come from being part of this vibrant community. The Centre has again delivered quality community services and events, with a focus on our long-term viability. Through the dedication of management, staff and community members, I'm delighted to report that the Centre continues to thrive.

Our wonderful staff are led by Michelle Newman, who completes her first full year as CEO. Michelle has proven to be a fantastic leader who is extremely capable of handling the diverse challenges of managing a vibrant, responsive and ever-changing community facility.

I would also like to acknowledge everyone
who commits their time, energy,
heart and soul to
contribute

to the success of the Centre. As Chair of the Board, I would like to particularly recognise the volunteers who represent our community on the Committee – thank you for your input to help guide the effective governance and strategic direction of the organisation.

## 'Alongside the challenges are the opportunities and rewards that come from being part of this vibrant community.'

In pursuing our strategic direction, we value our partnerships with key stakeholders. We acknowledge our major funding bodies, the Department of Family and Community Services and the Department of Social Services, for their roles in supporting us to meet the needs of our community. We are also grateful to Canterbury Bankstown City Council and Georges River Council for their ongoing support – without this, our work would not be possible.

Looking ahead, I'm excited that the Board has embarked on a review of the Centre's Constitution, as it is important for us to be an organisation that is relevant and forward-thinking. We are incredibly fortunate to be part of a local network that values community engagement and development, and I look forward to exploring new ways to continue to support and strengthen our community.

Karl Saleh OAM, Chair

## CEO's message

My first year as CEO at Riverwood Community Centre has been extremely busy and very rewarding. I would like to sincerely thank the staff, Board, volunteers, members, partners and community for working with me tirelessly over this past year. We have achieved so much in such a short space of time, and will continue to go from strength to strength through your dedication and commitment.

It's proven a year of considerable challenges, with a significant loss of funding under the Tenant Participation Resource Services and Housing Communities Program. This was the result of changes where one provider was contracted to take on a combined new program for the state. The community rallied behind us with a petition presented to parliament, and through the support of our local members, we met with ministers and government officials to lobby for an improved tendering approach for the future – one that recognises and values local services and the relationships we have with our local communities.

The efforts of all stakeholders in supporting us this past year demonstrated quite clearly that this community **cares**. We respond through a connection that is at the core of this community, and while the Centre has had an internal focus this year – improving governance and operational systems, delivering staff leadership training, and restructuring where necessary – this has not detracted from the strong community focus of all our services, activities and events.

I look forward to the year ahead with a renewed emphasis on our community engagement, external partnerships, new programs and continued expansion of services to shape a thriving, connected community.

Michelle Newman, CEO





#### **Our vision**

All individuals in the areas Riverwood Community Centre services will have the capacity to meet their own needs, and develop a safe community they are happy and proud to live in.



85% of people provided with services in 2018–19 were from CALD (Culturally and Linguistically Diverse) backgrounds.

'The efforts of all stakeholders demonstrated quite clearly that this community **cares**.'-Michelle Newman, CEO

#### **Our values**

- Encourage, empower and support community participation
- 2 Enable people to make their own choices
- 3 Prioritise those with the highest level of need and vulnerabilities
- 4 Respect and celebrate diversity and provide services that are inclusive and sensitive
- 5 Deliver accessible, high quality services in caring, safe environments which create a sense of well-being
- 6 Respond and be accountable to our communities and funding bodies
- 7 Manage resources efficiently and effectively
- 8 Value and respect staff and volunteers



135,573

#### **ACCESSED SERVICES**

Community members accessed services and activities approximately 135,573 times through Riverwood Community Centre in 2018–19.

#### **Congratulations!**



Riverwood Community Centre Chair, Karl Saleh received the medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for his service in the community of Canterbury Bankstown from Governor of NSW, Margaret Beazley, at Government House in Sydney.





We believe children and young people deserve the best start in life. Our programs offer support for children, young people and families to ensure they can get the most out of these vital years.

## Child, youth and family services

#### James' story

James\* is a 17-year-old male who first attended Riverwood Community Centre in May 2019. James shared with our Centre's youth team that he was experiencing suicidal ideation, social isolation and feelings of hopelessness. With a history of mental health complexities and trauma, our youth team organised an acute mental health assessment for James, to ensure the most appropriate supports were put in place to meet his needs.

This was the first time James felt safe and comfortable to say he was having trouble overcoming his feelings of hopelessness. The Centre's youth team encouraged James to seek support, and provided ongoing case management and assistance.

'James is now a thriving and vibrant young man who is a key part of the youth service at the Centre.' He has made many new friendships with the young people who attend the youth service, and his communication skills have improved significantly. In addition, James has developed numerous new skills through completion of a course, participates in the weekly Fitness for Wellbeing program at the Centre, and is an encouraging and motivating figure for other young people. James is also currently exploring employment opportunities, including with the Australian Army Reserves.

It has been an honour to watch James flourish, and our youth team continues to support young people just like James to reach their potential.

\*Name changed to protect identity



#### **Child services**

Our children's services are designed with the unique needs of our community in mind, with inclusive programs that recognise the multicultural character of the Riverwood and surrounding community. Families, children and staff celebrate our diversity by learning about difference and encouraging shared language and experiences. The children participate in many activities and cultural events including Chinese New Year, Eid, NAIDOC week, International Women's Day, St Patrick's Day, and many more. Children in our services are part of the Riverwood Community Centre family and benefit from being included in many of our multi-generational community programs such as Cleaner Greener Riverwood, multicultural morning teas, and Neighbourhood Centre Week activities. Our bilingual staff are on hand to help both parents and children make the most of our services.

#### Long day care

Our long day care service offers a home away from home, with hot nutritious meals, unique arts and crafts activities, library visits, and access to local parklands – all within a safe learning environment. The Eora room in the long day care service is our pre-school room for 4- and 5-year-olds, where we offer a school-readiness program to help prepare children for school. Setting up the foundations for lifelong learning is also a focus for the younger children we care for, with our Arilla room for pre-schoolers offering 3- and 4-year-olds learning opportunities in science, literacy and numeracy.

#### Out of school hours care

School-aged children are part of our Centre through our before school, after school, and vacation care programs. We offer breakfast, hot nutritious meals, homework help, and safe access to both indoor and outdoor spaces such as our basketball court, hall, and the parklands nearby. With a transport service that takes children to and from school for our out of school hours service and an exciting and varied vacation care program, we're committed to providing services that meet the needs of children and families in our local community.







### Youth services

Our youth team expanded their programs this year to provide more holistic support for young people.

Through broadening our networks, we've opened up opportunities for our young people to access counsellors, a registered nurse, employment coach and Centrelink officer at our Centre on a regular basis – all free of charge. We are incredibly grateful for the generosity of our community, local sporting clubs and businesses for their ongoing support.

#### **Drop-in centre**

Running three afternoons a week, young people aged 12–20 participate in activities like cooking, arts and craft, sports, cards, PlayStation, pool and music. A light meal and snacks are always provided, with Wednesday's free barbeque particularly popular!

#### Late night drop-in

Over the past year, an average of 25 young people have taken part in a monthly late-night session on the last Thursday of each month. Young people are supported with a meal and can be involved in recreational and structured

activities such as skateboard art, music workshops and basketball coaching.

#### Case management

Many of the young people accessing our case management supports are experiencing complex issues including domestic violence, school disengagement, drug and alcohol abuse, and mental health problems. That's why providing a holistic service with access to varied support networks is a key priority. To achieve this, we've continued to work closely with wide-ranging organisations including schools, NSW Police, Youth Block, NSW Health, and Canterbury Bulldogs.

## Family support services

Our services aim to respond to the unique needs of individual families, assisting them to build skills, resilience and connections through inclusive activities and programs to help them thrive.

We support families with children's behavioural issues, early intervention and prevention programs, managing stress, healthy eating, general child development, family violence, and parenting skills. We also provide case management, home visits, advocacy and referrals to other services such as Centrelink, housing providers, legal support and health services.

Strong relationships with community partners are vital to our work, and we particularly thank the Community Justice Centre and Healthy Homes and Neighbourhoods for their support over the past year. The staff also regularly participated in local interagency networks to further develop our capacity, including Canterbury Child and Family Interagency, Canterbury Bankstown Domestic Violence Committee, and Women's Interagency Network.

#### **Playgroup**

Playgroup continues to offer a safe and nurturing environment for parents/ carers and their young loved ones to engage, learn and grow. The program is supported by a family worker, an early childhood teacher and children's workers to help build interactions between parents/carers and their children, and strengthen relationships through play. We also connect participating families with other relevant programs based on their individual needs.

#### Parents support group

This social group promotes safe and healthy parenting practices, parents' self-awareness, and women's health. Over the past year, participants have taken part in educational and recreational workshops designed to reflect their needs and interests, covering topics including healthy eating and snacks, cooking with a limited budget, and creative arts.

#### **Parenting programs**

To help strengthen relationships between parents/carers and their children, we offered the 'Circle of Security' program to families attending our services or from local schools. This evidence-based program aimed to help parents understand new ways of thinking about their children's needs, and to improve connections with their children.



31% of survey participants attending youth services were female, with the number of females getting involved progressively increasing.



91% of families participating in family support services reported feeling more confident about parenting.



Our Christmas Toys Appeal helped over 100 families in the community celebrate the spirit of Christmas in December 2018. For 10 years, we've been providing this appeal in partnership with Campsie Police. Its ongoing success is also thanks to long-term local supporters such as Wiley Park Public School, Club Rivers, local MPs, and All Saints Belmore.

## This year's numbers and highlights

For child, youth and family services



Our youth team was again invited to Georges River College Peakhurst to deliver workshops on topics like domestic violence, nutrition, cyber bullying, and healthy and respectful relationships.

#### YOUTH FAVOURITE ACTIVITIES

21% food and drink

20% basketball

15% seeing friends

13% music

13% fitness/gym

12% sport

'Circle of Security made me a better parent and strengthened my relationship with my child.'-Program participant

YOUNG PEOPLE on average attended each drop-in session.



72 CHILDREN ENJOYED OUR VACATION CARE PROGRAMS

Our before school hours program cared for 40 children, after school care program for 55 children, and vacation care program for 72 children, with 55 families supported in 2018–19.

CREATIVE YOUNG WOMEN PER WEEK #GirlCode is a creative space just for young women, open every Tuesday afternoon. It attracts around eight young women each week and activities range from cooking, movies and arts to presentations from local speakers on mental health, budgeting and positive relationships





Our aged and disability services are all about empowering people with greater choice and control. We assist older people and people with a disability to live independently at home and participate in their local community – in ways that suit them

## Aged and disability services

#### Jasmine's story

As a full-time carer for her daughter with multiple sclerosis, Jasmine had become socially isolated. In 2011, Jasmine joined the Riverwood Community Centre's aged services program, and began attending the weekly Arabic-speaking social support group.

After her daughter passed away, Jasmine fell into a deep depression. With this change in circumstances, Jasmine commenced our individual social support program and received one-on-one support. Through this flexible program, Jasmine could choose different activities that suited her, such as enjoying a home visit, taking a trip to the local shops, or seeing friends in the community.

'Our aged services program has helped Jasmine boost social connections, improve her health, and remain actively involved in her local community.'

Jasmine has overcome many challenges since that time. She currently attends the weekly assisted shopping program where she gets her shopping done, and enjoys a chat and some lunch accompanied by her support worker. By building on Jasmine's strengths and meeting her individual needs, our aged services program has helped Jasmine boost social connections, improve her health, and remain actively involved in her local community.





## Aged and disability support initiatives

#### Social support groups

Our groups give older people the opportunity to regularly meet others who speak the same language, share their cultural background, or have a common interest. In 2018–19 we offered 14 wide-ranging weekly support groups, helping participants strengthen their social networks. We've also continued our highly successful community outings program, and in the past year provided an action-packed itinerary including art gallery visits, pub lunches, beach picnics, hot cross bun cooking classes, a trip to the Dingo Sanctuary and fruit picking.

#### Staying Active program

With the support of grant funding from Vitality Club and a partnership with NSW Health, the Centre this year introduced a dynamic balance and strength exercise program. Designed specifically to improve the physical and psychosocial

needs of individuals aged over 50 years, the classes aim to help sustain independence, increase community participation, and encourage social empowerment. The program has created a fun atmosphere for participants to increase fitness and health at their own pace and style, and cultivate new friendships within the broader community.

### Shopping, individual support and transport services

Our services help people who need some support to maintain their independence. We offer help at a range of levels to meet the specific needs of individuals, so people remain in control but are assisted in daily living tasks.

#### Respect for Elders event

We know that elderly people are particularly vulnerable to abuse, and do not always know where or how to seek support. That's why in June 2019 we partnered with Campsie Police Command to hold a 'Respect for Elders' event, highlighting the serious and increasing issue of elder abuse in an ageing population. The event included guest speakers and information stalls from 15 key providers, including the Elder Abuse hotline, Victim Services,

Department of Justice, and Law Access. Participants were able to become informed about the issues, speak directly with professionals that can provide assistance, and take resources to build their knowledge and confidence.

#### In-home support services

Our support for older people extends to home visiting, domestic assistance and home maintenance services. Through this assistance, we help people live in their own homes for longer, increase their resilience, and improve quality of life. Services are delivered by our staff together with a team of volunteers who bring their own unique skills and experience.

### Individual support and transport services

Our individual support and transport services help older people stay connected to family, friends and their community, and to continue participating in all the things they would like to do. We offer help with shopping, attending medical appointments, banking and a range of social and group activities. Our services are tailored to meet the specific needs of individuals, so people remain in control but are assisted in daily living tasks. The Centre has a fleet of buses and delivers transport across all our aged care services.





66% of aged services clients born overseas.



26,957

**SESSIONS OF SUPPORT** 

provided for aged services clients.

'Being part of a fun and active social group has given me something to live for and look forward to.'-community outings participant



589 OLDER PEOPLE SUPPORTED

through our aged services in 2018-19.

555

#### BRAND NEW COMMERCIAL KITCHEN

to simplify cooking multicultural dishes and feasts for large community events.

## This year's numbers and highlights

For aged and disability services

#### MAIN LANGUAGES SPOKEN BY AGED SERVCES CLIENTS

33% English
14% Vietnamese
12% Greek
10% Cantonese
10% Mandarin
9% Arabic
12% Other

'It's very reassuring to have someone who really understands the needs of my son.'-carer of person with a disability 'I love seeing the garden as neat and tidy as my husband used to keep it, and giving the boys [volunteers] a cup of tea doesn't feel enough of a thank you.'-Home maintenance client

100+ OLDER PEOPLE

participated in our Respect for Elders event.



Over the past year, the Centre successfully achieved NDIS certification in five registration groups. Our disability service is underpinned by outstanding employees, supportive communities and sustained partnerships – and is ready for expansion in 2020. We provide support that is personalised, helping individuals to achieve their short- and long-term goals



We believe that communities thrive when people are connected and involved. Our community programs focus on establishing a vibrant, healthy neighbourhood where people feel safe, connected and proud to live in our community.

## Community programs

#### Zorka's story

When I first moved to Riverwood in 1997 I found out there was a community centre so I came along. I was worried at first because my English was so poor, but I received a very warm welcome, and I saw there were people from many nationalities here. I'm so proud of all the staff here – every one of them is respectful and warm. It means a lot as a resident and a single mother.

When I first came to Australia it was with my husband and then we separated, so I had no family here except for my young daughter. I took English classes here at the Centre and as my English improved my self-confidence grew and I made a new family for myself – now I have many 'brothers' and 'sisters' here sharing and caring for each other.

I have volunteered at many different places in Riverwood, like here at the Centre, at the school, and with the choir. My life changed when I got a plot in the Riverwood Community Garden – I was a farmer in Macedonia and I nearly cried when I saw people in the garden growing similar herbs and vegetables to what I had back home. It is one family in the garden – a lot of good people living life in harmony.

Last year when the Centre asked for Board nominations, people asked why I didn't put in a nomination. I said my English was not very good and I only had a primary education, but people said we respect you and would love you to be on the Board. I nearly cried when so many people supported me and I was elected. There are many lovely people with fine hearts on the Board so I try to listen quietly to their advice as we work together.

I think everyone should come to the Centre – don't stay at home being sick or depressed.

'Come to the Centre and soon you'll be a different person.'

## Initiatives and programs to strengthen our community

#### Information and referral service

This program provides an 'open door' opportunity for anyone in the community to seek information and referrals to the services they need.

While some information requests may be simple and quick to resolve (such as directions or information about events), others are more complex and may require focused assistance from a staff member. Examples of this type of support include completing forms for Housing Assistance or referrals to other services for more targeted assistance.

During 2018–19 we responded to approximately 3000 requests by telephone, in person, or by email, of which an estimated 450 requests required focused one-on-one support.

#### Social inclusion programs

In 2018–19, we ran four programs through our 'Mother's Hub' initiative to help mothers expand their skills for work and volunteering, grow their local connections, and strengthen their support networks. These programs included boosting knowledge of community culture and services, and TAFE courses in working in diverse communities, floristry, and make-up and beauty. With support through grants from Canterbury Bankstown City Council, a total of 80 women were able to participate in the programs and build their skills. We also provided child care for the participants' children, which made it possible for many of the women to be involved.

We've delivered a range of other social inclusion initiatives at our Punchbowl and Riverwood Centres, designed to help people be active and involved participants in their community. The Centre helped make our local environment a better place through various Cleaner Greener Riverwood events, and successfully applied for funding to conduct a clean-up program next year. Other ways we've fostered social inclusion in our community include our multicultural morning teas, which provided an opportunity to showcase different aspects of our diverse community and bring people together.

#### **Overview**





#### Riverwood Community Garden

As one of the largest community gardens in NSW, the garden is a place for people of all ages to meet and share in the benefits of growing fresh, local and organic produce. We regularly run harvest days and working bees to bring all gardeners together. Gardeners also have the opportunity to take part in workshops delivered through the Royal Botanic Gardens and Canterbury Bankstown City Council.

To keep the garden at its best, a major reorganisation was undertaken in 2018. This initiative was supported by a grant of \$12,000 from Family and Community Services, and involved installing lattice fencing to help separate and make it easy to identify gardeners' plots.

#### Riverwood Men's Shed

With membership open to all local residents, the Men's Shed gives volunteers the chance to work together on projects that benefit the local community. Major achievements for 2018–19 included reinstalling a cubby house for Hannans Road Public School, creating custom-made easels for a local art group, and repairing a table-

tennis table for our youth service. Men's Shed members are also encouraged to repair their own items and use the shed's facilities, giving participants the opportunity to complete projects and share the company of others with similar interests.

#### Social housing support

The past year has been particularly challenging in the delivery of support for social housing support for our community. In mid-2018, the Department of Family and Community Services announced that a single organisation would deliver social housing tenant support programs in NSW from November 2018, replacing the 15 community-based organisations that had previously provided housing services and support.

This news was a significant blow given the strong history and legacy associated with social housing and Riverwood Community Centre: public housing tenants first established the Centre in the 1970s, many tenants are members of the Centre, and the Centre has always supported and advocated strongly for social housing tenants. The importance of the Centre's role in social housing was highlighted by our community's

response, with a petition from hundreds of locals presented to parliament by local member Jihad Dib, MP. In spite of the changes, we're continuing to deliver initiatives that support social housing tenants to be part of a thriving community.

#### **Community events**

Creating opportunities to bring people together is a key part of what we do at Riverwood Community Centre. In 2018–19, we held a wide range of events designed to help people grow their local networks, celebrate the diversity of the area, and foster a sense of community. These included the Moon Festival, Lunar New Year, Harmony Day, Neighbourhood Centre Week, Dragon Boat Festival, a Men's Health Expo and a Mental Health Expo. Each of these events attracted between 80 and 200 people who actively participated.

'It has been very inspiring for me – I feel empowered, wanted and cared for through the structured activities'-Eman, Mother's Hub floristry course participant





50% of people requiring focused support through our information and referral service required an interpreter. Most people were Arabic, Mandarin or Cantonese speakers.



90% of women participating in our Mother's Hub programs told us they had developed new skills, extended their friendship network, and were more likely to participate in community activities.

## \$114,100

**IN GRANTS** 

Social Housing Community Improvement Fund (SHCIF) grants meant we could undertake and complete a range of projects in 2018–19 to improve facilities and surroundings for tenants. Projects included landscaping and gazebo installation, upgrading the community garden and facilities, and refurbishing a community room.

## This year's numbers and highlights

#### For community programs

FIRST LANGUAGES SPOKEN BY COMMUNITY GARDEN MEMBERS



OVER 200

joined with their community for the Moon Festival.

'The program opened the door for me to look at other opportunities in life to explore and

learn.'-Eman, Mother's Hub floristry course participant

### OUR INFORMATION AND REFERRAL SERVICE CLIENTS NEEDED FOCUSED SUPPORT FOR:



\*such as employment, electoral, health and individual

16

MEMBERS
BECOMING
MASTER
GARDENERS

In May 2019, 16 members of our community garden started a Master Gardener's course supported by a grant from the Canterbury Bankstown City Council. Conducted by the Royal Botanic Gardens in both English and Mandarin, the course opened up opportunities for people from different language backgrounds to take part and hone their expert gardening skills

#### Our team

The dedication, skills and experience of each person all play a vital role in helping us shape a thriving, resilient and vibrant community.

#### **Board members**



**KARL SALEH**Chairperson since 2017



MANAL ARBAB
Director since 2017



**KADIJE ARJA**Director since 2012



**HELEN GIALOURIS**Director since 2012



MOHAMMAD HUDA
Director since 2015



**ZORKA PETROVSKA**Director since 2018



VICKY WONG
Director since 2015



**PAULINE GALLAGHER**Director since ??

#### **Management staff**



MICHELLE NEWMAN CEO



DONNA LEWINGTON Aged and Disability Services Manager



NADIA SALEH Child, Youth and Family Services Manager



JOANNE ROBERTSON Corporate Services Manager



### Celebrating our volunteers

Volunteers are the backbone of many of our services and the lifeblood of our community.

Without their critical contribution, we would not be able to support our community in all the ways we do.

## Highlights and key achievements



services in 2018–19.

140 VOLUNTEERS

helped shape a better community in 2018–19.

LANGUAGES SPOKEN BY VOLUNTEERS:

VIETNAMESE
ARABIC
GREEK
MANDARIN
CANTONESE
PERSIAN
TONGAN
INDONESIAN/BAHASA
NEPALI

'My world was black and white for a long time. Since I started volunteering my world is in colour.'-Riverwood community Centre volunteer

#### National Volunteer Week

The theme for this year's National Volunteer Week was 'Making a world of difference', which all our volunteers certainly do. To say thank you, we held a volunteer acknowledgement dinner to recognise the outstanding contribution our volunteers make to our community.

#### Local volunteers honoured

Three of our volunteers were this year recognised by Hon Tony Burke MP and Hon David Coleman MP for their achievements and significant community work. These volunteers were Peter Vasiliades, a volunteer with Riverwood Community Centre for 16 years and an active member of our home maintenance gardening program; Myra Fitzgerald, who has been volunteering for 7 years by supporting aged clients unable to do their own shopping; and Yan Min Miao, who has volunteered across multiple groups and activities at the Centre including the Twilight Rouge Dance Group and Mandarin-speaking Support Group. We are incredibly proud of the achievements of these volunteers and grateful for their ongoing support.

#### Aziz's story

Volunteering at Riverwood Community Centre has been a good experience with a wonderful and welcoming team. We have people from various cultural backgrounds and I enjoy working with them. It's always good to work with the community to improve the wellbeing of the residents and make a valuable contribution to the community.

Helping others with the smallest of tasks makes a big difference in the lives of people, and this gives me a huge sense of accomplishment. Dedicating my time as a volunteer at the Centre has helped me boost my social skills, and has truly been a growth experience for me.



#### **Partners and funders**

Building strong relationships and networks with other individuals and organisations is key to helping us create a safe, friendly and involved community.

We know that by sharing resources and working together, we can achieve more for our community than we could alone.

#### Some of the partners, funders and donators that have supported us in 2018–19 include:

- Australian Government, Department of Social Services
- · Australian Government, Department of Health
- NSW Family and Community Services
- NSW Department of Education
- Multicultural NSW
- Canterbury Bankstown City Council
- Georges River Council
- Club Rivers
- Lantern Club
- St George Community Housing
- Vitality Club
- Commonwealth Bank
- Kogarah Rotary Club
- Mr Jonathan Hunt
- Sydney Electrical Company
- . Hospitality Fitout Specialists Pty Ltd.

We gratefully acknowledge the support of all our partners, funders and donators and look forward to building on these relationships in the years ahead.

### Updated kitchen to better serve our community

The Centre's highly utilised community kitchen was this year refurbished completely to make it fully compliant with the requirements of a commercial kitchen. Floors, ceilings, cupboards, bench tops and equipment were all updated, and we now have a fabulous contemporary, functional kitchen for all of the community to use. This project was made possible through the support of the NSW Community Building Partnership through the NSW Government, Canterbury Bankstown City Council and Hospitality Fitout Specialists Pty Ltd.



'We have been thrilled with the kitchen renovation, especially the dishwasher which has made life a lot easier'-Emma, One Meal Makes a Difference



#### One Meal Makes a Difference

One of our continuing partnership projects throughout 2018–19 has been working with One Meal Makes a Difference. Through this partnership, we've supported the One Meal team to provide free meals one night a week at Riverwood Community Centre. Volunteers cook and serve mains, salads, fresh vegetables, desserts and fruit to between 60 to 80 people from our community. As well as the delicious food, people enjoy the community spirit and the pleasure of sharing a meal with others.

'It has been a privilege to establish One Meal Riverwood and we are most grateful of the support and encouragement we receive from the Centre.'

-Emma. One Meal Makes a Difference

#### **OzHarvest**

Since 2017, Riverwood Community
Centre has supported people in need
through weekly food deliveries from
OzHarvest – a food rescue organisation
that collects quality excess food from
commercial outlets and delivers directly
to organisations such as our Centre.

Our partnership with OzHarvest expanded this year to include referring young people from our community to OzHarvest's Nourish program. In April 2019, the Centre's family support team also partnered with OzHarvest to deliver Nutrition Education and Skills Training (NEST). This six-week program aimed to improve food and dietary behaviours, and reduce the risk of chronic health conditions for our local community. Next year, OzHarvest and Riverwood Community Centre will further extend our relationship by trialling the use of the OzHarvest food truck to provide meals one night a fortnight to local community members.

# 'It [the NEST program] was very helpful, particularly for young parents. The girl showed not only how to cook healthy food, but also to save money. Always check what you need before shopping, so not to waste food. The food recipes were very good.' -Kelly, NEST participant

### Key projects

#### delivered in partnership in 2018-19



Up to 80 people fed weekly with One Meal Makes a Difference.



NEST HELPS
PARTICIPANTS WITH:

NUTRITIOUS HEALTHY EATING CHOICES
LOW COST MEAL PLANNING
BUDGETING
READING FOOD LABELS
CORRECT FOOD STORAGE
SHOPPING AND COOKING TIPS
MINIMISING FOOD WASTE



## Our support for community and voluntary groups

We recognise the **important work** of other community and voluntary groups in making a difference in the local area. That's why we're proud to be able to provide facilities and support to assist many of these groups to carry out initiatives, projects and events that benefit our broader community.

We **appreciate and acknowledge** the achievements of each of these diverse groups. Here are **key highlights** for just some of the groups we've worked with over the past year.

#### Twilight Rouge Dance Group

More than 200 members from across the Chinese community take part in activities like ballroom dancing, table tennis, chess, Chinese painting, games and karaoke. The group organises specialist teachers, social and dancing parties, and other opportunities for people to come together and have fun.

#### Canterbury Bankstown Harmony Group

This group supports community harmony and cohesion by organising major community events to celebrate the diversity of our local area. In 2018, the group organised an Interfaith Dinner and in 2019 its Harmony Day event attracted 500 people from the community.

#### Australian Chinese Seniors Club

Run solely by volunteers at our Punchbowl Community Centre, up to 100 people are regularly involved in activities including a choir, dancing and art classes. Achievements in 2018–19 included raising over \$1,200 for drought relief, and performances at the Lunar New Year, Moon Festival and a charity lunch raising funds for diabetes research.

#### The Riverwood Australian Arabic Association

Established in 1996, the association holds monthly meetings and morning teas to discuss strategies that address the needs of the Arabic-speaking community. It also conducts a range of activities designed to support greater participation of Arabic-speaking people in the broader community.

#### Canterbury Riverwood Senior Badminton and Lifestyle Group

With more than 90 members, the group offers weekly badminton and tai chi sessions for seniors and retirees. It provides an opportunity for people to increase their physical activity, learn more about healthy lifestyles, and reduce social isolation.

#### Chinese Family Group

The group provides activities each Friday for up to 45 Chinese-speaking local social housing residents. Many of the participants are elderly and without any other family in Australia, making the relationships established through this group particularly important.

#### Australian Arabic Family Cohesiveness Association

Members can find out more about community services, health-related concerns and cultural issues. There are also opportunities to participate in social outings, helping members develop an appreciation of Australian culture, history and the natural environment. The association is particularly targeted at people of Arabic-speaking background who are financially disadvantaged, elderly, women with young children, refugees or have a disability.

### Bringing in other services to support our community

During the year, the Centre brought in a range of services to improve access and participation. These included Tax Help to prepare tax returns for low-income residents, Free Help with Energy Bills to help residents understand their energy bills and take action to reduce them, and Centrelink Outreach to assist local residents in their dealings with the organisation.



We helped more than 14 diverse groups benefit our community in 2018-19.

#### Other community groups we've supported in 2018-19

- **Punchbowl Friendship Club**
- **Riverwood Leisure Learning** Group
- Riverwood Italian Group
- **Riverwood Walkers**
- **Narcotics Anonymous**
- **Riverwood Diabetes Network**
- Basketball opportunities for people with disability
- **Residents Organisation at** Riverwood



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