



ANNUAL REPORT 2020

THE CANOPY INCORPORATED

www.thecanopy.org.au



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Vision and Values



OUR VISION

Safe and Connected Communities

Inspiring Families, Children and Communities to Create Positive Lasting Change

OUR VALUES

COURAGE

Explore ideas, make difficult decisions and embrace change

DETERMINATION

Maintain an energetic interest to achieve the intended purpose

ENTHUSIASM

Approach all that we do in a way that inspires and maintains hope

COLLABORATION

Respectfully connect with others to create shared solutions

INSPIRATION

Empower others to be the best version of themselves

OUR VALUES STATEMENT

We **inspire** families, children and communities to grow to their full potential by being innovative and **collaborative** in our response to their needs.

We have the **courage** to explore bold and imaginative ideas, working with **determination** towards our goals and the goals of those we work with.

We embrace change with **enthusiasm** by using solution focused strategies to strengthen capacity and foster hope in each other and in the communities we serve.

2020 AGM Agenda



The Canopy Incorporated Annual General Meeting AGENDA 17th November 2020

Welcome

Acknowledgement Of Country

Attendance:

Apologies:

Minutes of 2018-2019 Annual General Meeting

Business Arising from Previous Minutes

Reports

- President's Report
- Executive Officer's Report
- Service Reports
 - Family Work Team
 - Community Development
 - Facilities Management
- Auditor's Report

Introduction of the Returning Officer: Kristy Bissaker

Nominations and Election of the Committee

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Public Officer
- Treasurer
- Committee members

General Business

Close

2018-2019 AGM Minutes



MINUTES of the 2018-2019 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Canopy Incorporated

VENUE: Cameron Park Community Centre
107 Northlakes Drive, Cameron Park NSW 2285

Date: 19th November 2019

Meeting Commenced: 1.43pm

WELCOME was extended to all present by: Iain Gardiner

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY:

"Acknowledgement that the meeting was being held on Awabakal land and paid respects to past and present elders".

Attendance: Susan Jenkins, Jai Kumar, Michelle Swift, Iain Gardiner, Paul Procter, Anna Dowley, Sonya McAlister, Lee-Anne Holmes, Keira Dot, Feona Ray, Megan Kirby, Sandra Feltham, Craig Harris, Jessica Frost, Kellie Hackney, Lee Wilton, Marie Incze, Sally Gardner, Michele Kowalski, Kelly Hansen, Rosemary Heppell

Apologies: Sheenah Harvey, Ann Hoyer, Ruth Jordan, Stephan McAlister

1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the 2017-2018 Annual General Meeting were tabled.

Motion: That the minutes be approved as a true and correct record of the meeting.

Moved: Susan Jenkins

Seconded: Rosemary Heppell

BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

There was no business arising from the previous meeting.

2018-2019 AGM Minutes

1. REPORTS

The following reports were tabled, and a general briefing was provided by the following people:

President's Report – Iain Gardiner
Executive Officer – Lee-Anne Holmes
Family Service Leader – Kellie Hackney
Innovation Manager – Anna Dowley
Family Time Project – Jessica Frost
Auditor dfk Crosbie – Michelle Swift

Motion: That the reports as tabled are approved and accepted.

Moved: Susan Jenkins

Seconded: Rosemary Heppell

THE RETURNING OFFICER: Sandra Feltham was introduced and took the Chair.

All positions were declared vacant and nominations for the incoming board were read.

As there were no objections to the nominations and there were sufficient numbers to fill positions, the nominees were declared as being duly elected.

The following people were nominated and accepted as board members:-

Position	Elected	Moved	Seconded
President	Iain Gardner	Kelly Hansen	Rosemary Heppell
Vice President	Rosemary Heppell	Iain Gardner	Kelly Hansen
Treasurer	Kelly Hansen	Rosemary Heppell	Iain Gardiner
Secretary	Rebecca Phillips	Iain Gardiner	Rosemary Heppell
Board Member	Jai Kumar	Iain Gardiner	Rosemary Heppell
Public Officer	Paul Procter	Iain Gardiner	Rosemary Heppell

The Returning Officer handed the meeting over to the incoming President, Iain Gardner.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Thank you to Lee-Anne Holmes – Executive Officer: 2010 to 2019
Highlights of the time to date – Paul Procter – Executive Officer: 2019
Acknowledgement of staff and volunteers hard work in the past 12 months.
Appointment of Auditor

Motion: Kirsty Porteous from dfkCrosbie as the appointed Auditor

Moved: Jai Kumar

Seconded: Kelly Hansen

The meeting was declared closed at: 2.13pm

President Report

Iain Gardiner

It is an honour to be writing the 2019-2020 Annual Report.

As President of the Board of Management of The Canopy, it has been a privilege to serve this wonderful organisation over the past year and I look forward to not only serving The Canopy, but also the Community in this coming year. This organisation has made a significant difference to the families and communities that we serve.

I would firstly like to say a special thank you to the staff of The Canopy. It has been wonderful to see everyone in this amazing organisation pull together during such a difficult time to ensure we were still able to serve the community as we have done in previous years.

If this year has taught me anything, it is that The Canopy is an organic organisation that is ever changing and socially adaptable. It is this adaptability that shows The Canopy has many working parts that are necessary to its day to day operation. Each of those working parts are integral to the success and reputation of The Canopy, and I acknowledge that staff are the public face of this organisation and have no doubt that our excellent reputation in the community is directly due to their diligence, hard work, tenacity and empathetic approach during these trying times.

One lesson to be learnt from 2020 is that our organisation cannot rest on its laurels and to survive we need to diversify our sources of income, being reliant on government funding can be risky. It is great to think that Family Time is gaining traction and will soon be turning an income but as an organisation we need to do more to ensure the financial health of the Canopy.

To my fellow board members, I also give a heartfelt thank you for your guidance and support throughout the year. We make decisions that affect the people in front of us and I understand and know that each and every one of you make these decisions with absolute due diligence and compassion.

The past 12 months have been full of new opportunities and adventures for The Canopy. The Family Work Team have moved from Cardiff to Edgeworth which has been a wonderful opportunity for the Family Teams to apply their skills in a beautiful new environment and to make it home.

It has been a big year for The Canopy, with Paul Procter taking on the role as our Executive Officer. Settling into the role as Executive Officer is one thing, but doing that amidst COVID-19 is a testament to Paul's passion towards the work he does. It has been a pleasure to work with Paul over the last 12 months and I look forward to seeing where Paul leads The Canopy next.

Thank you very much.

Iain Gardiner

Executive Officer Report

Paul Procter

It gives me great pleasure to present my first Annual Report as Executive Officer of 'The Canopy'.

Commencing in my role just over 12 months ago I had a good understanding of the Organisation and a clear sense of what the next 12 months would look like and what I wanted to achieve, but to quote Robert Burns from 1786 *"The best-laid schemes o' mice an' men gang aft a-gley [go often astray]."* No one could have foreseen 12 months ago a global pandemic which has now become a part of our everyday lives. The impacts of COVID-19 have been far reaching and continue to significantly disrupt global economies and all aspects of community life.



As is often the case, the most vulnerable members of our community have accounted for the highest proportion of people adversely impacted. Besides the reported physical health impacts, we've also evidenced increased rates of family and domestic violence, mental illness, financial hardship, social and physical isolation and other indicators of vulnerability.

Over the last 12 months my understanding and knowledge of the Organisation has grown significantly along with my appreciation of who we are, our purpose, our people, and the amazing work that we do. There are many wonderful stories of how members of our Canopy Team have gone well beyond their normal roles to offer help and assistance where needed.

The challenge we faced in maintaining 'essential services' whilst the community was being directed to stay at home with schools, shops and businesses closing, required a step back and rethink anew how we stay engaged with clients during this time when people were staying indoors and disengaging from normal civilian life. Our amazing staff and volunteers have done an outstanding job of overcoming what seemed an impossible hurdle at the time.

To stay engaged with our clients and the community has required resilience, commitment and a high capacity of flexibility and adaptability from all our staff and volunteers. Work practices and service delivery models had to be reviewed and adapted to ensure those most in need and dependent on our essential services continued to be supported. Staff quickly mobilised and formulated ideas, developed new tools and resources required to deliver services differently whilst ensuring the safety and well-being of staff and clients. The shifts we have had to make in adapting to how we work also necessitated the formulation of new forms, policies and procedures, a mammoth task. Throughout this time, staff have embraced and become experts in various online technologies and platforms. These resources have now become a part of our standard toolkit of resources we enlist in undertaking our work.

The ongoing delivery of our services and programs throughout this year, despite the challenges encountered, have continued to see positive community impacts for the families and children who have been supported through our Family Services. Similarly, our Maryland Neighbourhood provision of information, advice, referrals and material aide to the community has made a positive difference to those most in need of help and assistance.

Our Maryland Neighbourhood Centre has been very much on the frontline, being a first point of contact for people in the Maryland and surrounding area to go to if requiring help and assistance. My thanks to Terri and our Centre based volunteers for continuing to build and innovate on the services provided from the Centre.

Executive Officer Report

We have complimented our great team through filling the few vacancies which have occurred with the appointment of really suitable people to these positions. These new staff have added value to the roles and teams their working in through the sharing of their respective skills, experiences and insights, bringing value to the overall Organisation.

I want to thank each of our volunteers for their ongoing dedication and commitment. Our volunteers are a key part of our Canopy team and have displayed great understanding and recognition of the importance of self-care during the temporary leave of absence from volunteering necessitated for many due to COVID-19. It has been pleasing to welcome back many of our volunteers along with the new volunteers who have joined us this year.

The area of The Canopy hit hardest by the impacts of COVID-19 was our Facility Management area, stemming from the Federal Government closure of community centres on 24 March 2020. This impact necessitated the very difficult decision to temporarily reduce staff hours of some of the Facility Management Team. This measure, along with receipt of the Federal Government JobKeeper Assistance Scheme, has greatly helped to mitigate the adverse financial impacts. In recent months our community centres have partially re-opened, governed by the Government's COVID-19 restrictions still in force for community centres.



I want to commend the members of our Facility Management Team on the professionalism they have displayed and continue to display during this difficult time. They have demonstrated great flexibility and adaptability in administering and implementing the suite of ongoing changing restrictions.

We have invested significantly this year in enhancing our Information Technology and support systems. This has included purchasing a new interconnected telephone system, client management system, mobile laptop devices and office equipment and furnishings. This investment will further enhance our customer service, increase our flexibility in delivering our programs, increase capacity to work remotely and provide our staff and volunteers with more comfortable and efficient work spaces.

Some notable achievements this year have included the completion of transitioning of our three State funded 'Targeted Early Intervention Programs' (TEI) culminating in the renewal of our State Government Contracts for these programs for up to 5 years.

I have also been pleased that we have recently announced the commencement of our 'Children's Contact Centre' following the completion of the development of our supervised contact services model. We have informed our identified referral sources that we can now receive referrals for occasions where supervised contact is required.

I want to acknowledge the City of Newcastle and Lake Macquarie City Council for entrusting us with the responsibility to manage a number of their community facilities and halls on their behalf. This is a significant responsibility which we do not assume lightly given the important role these community facilities play in supporting and building community wellbeing.

Collaboration and partnerships continue to be central to how we work and what we do as it is proven to strengthen the impacts and reach of services to the community. I want to express my sincere thanks to all of the businesses, community organisations and church groups who have supported the work of 'The Canopy' this past year with financial donations, in-kind donations of food and material aid to name but a few.

Executive Officer Report

I want to express my thanks to my Leadership Team for their ongoing dedication and commitment to 'The Canopy' and the support provided to myself, our staff and volunteers.

Last but not least I want to thank the members of our Board of Management for their continued service to 'The Canopy' through providing strong governance throughout the year and to the support they have shown me. The Board's representation has experienced some minor changes with long serving Board members Jai Kumar and Rebecca Phillips stepping down to focus on other priority areas competing for their time. I want to express my gratitude and thanks to them for their dedication and service to 'The Canopy'. It has been wonderful to welcome new Board members Janet Lee, David Price and David Betts who joined us this year, each bringing skillsets and expertise complimentary to our existing Board members. This has further strengthened the Governance of 'The Canopy' positioning us well now and into the future.

There are many exciting things in store for 'The Canopy' in the year ahead. This includes enhanced reporting capability for all aspects of the Organisation as we formally roll out our new 'Internal Reporting Framework' in January 2021, complete transition of reporting our 'Targeted Early Intervention Programs' (TEI) onto the 'Data Exchange Portal' (DEX), implement our new 'Annual Staff Contribution and Development Framework' etc.

Thank you to all our dedicated and wonderful Canopy Team of staff, volunteers and Board members.

Executive Officer

Paul Procter



Family Work Team

Kellie Hackney

As I reflect on the year 2019/2020 and the work of the Family Work Team I am reminded of the simple yet powerful quote by Vlada Mars – *“We are all connected by one simple wish, to be visible, to be heard, to know that we matter”*. I think this sums up the theme of the year, both in how we engaged with and supported the families and communities we worked with, and how the Family Work Team engaged and worked with each other.

Our Child and Family Team supported families across the north Lake Macquarie and Blue Gum Hills areas and our Intensive Family Preservation Team supported families throughout the entire Lake Macquarie LGA. Maintaining a healthy family can be a challenge. By addressing each family's unique needs, our staff assist families to be equipped with tools and strategies for child development and family wellbeing both now and into the future. We achieve this through: - Home Visiting, Intake and assessment, providing information and referral, parenting programs, supported playgroups, advocacy, modelling, coaching and partnering with other services, groups and individuals.



When I think about the highlights and challenges we have experienced throughout the year, they have tended to go hand in hand with some of our highlights creating challenges to work through, but more importantly some of our biggest challenges becoming our greatest highlights and opportunities for growth and improvement.

The Family Work Team moved offices from Cardiff to the Life Education Centre in Edgeworth in November. The new office creates a more accommodating space to conduct our work and spaces to work with families if they come to the Centre.

The team transitioned from paper files to working paperless, which has had a positive impact on both efficiency and use of resources. The Child and Family team have also begun using DEX (Data Exchange), the new reporting tool for Department of Communities and Justice's Targeted Early Intervention Programs. In the coming year we will be introducing a client management system which will aid us in our record keeping and time efficiency.

Family Work Team

We faced the greatest challenge when the COVID-19 crisis hit in the last quarter of the year. However, it was the responsiveness and creativity of the staff which enabled The Canopy to pivot quickly to continue to provide service and support to meet client's immediate and emerging needs. The team were able to look at how they deliver programs and provide services and adjust and adapt their practice to continue to meet needs and provide an effective service. Some of these practices have been so effective they will continue beyond COVID-19.

It is in partnering with others and through collaboration and working together that we have greater reach and impact. The families we have worked with throughout the year have benefitted from the generosity, kindness and giving of our partnering groups and organisations. I would like to highlight and thank Cameron Park Fellowship for their continued support and practical provisions to families every month. I would also like to thank Macquarie Life Church, Wesley Mission and many individuals for their generous donations that we can pass on to those in the community who need it most.

Finally, I wish to recognise and celebrate the compassion and invaluable expertise that our team bring to work each and every day. The staff's dedication to our clients and their wellbeing, and how they work together to ensure our clients are supported, is inspiring. Together, they are giving children and families a chance at a better tomorrow.



Community Development

Anna Dowley

2019/2020 Highlights

This year has been a time of change for Maryland Neighbourhood Centre. In March we farewelled Michele Kowalski who retired after 6 years as the Hub Coordinator. The Hub has grown tremendously in this time under Michele's guidance and we wish her well for this new time in her life.

This previous work has acted as a solid platform for Terri Carter, current Hub Coordinator, to build on. Terri's determination, ingenuity and dedication has meant that the neighbourhood centre has been able to respond creatively to changing community needs in the complex times that COVID-19 brought following Terri's transition to Hub Coordinator. We also extend our appreciation to Terri for her hard work in ensuring that the centre remained open and continued to provide services to the community despite the challenges posed by COVID-19.

The Maryland Neighbourhood Centre has also been physically transformed, having undergone internal refurbishment and refreshment including the painting of the centre by the City of Newcastle, new furniture, soft furnishings and art work. It now has a fresh, modern and welcoming feel with community feedback being overwhelmingly positive about the new look.



Overview of service provision and activities

Community Connections Snapshot

- Trunk or Treat, which provides safe Halloween activities, is an annual highlight. The 2019 event attracted over 400 community members with the event held at Fletcher Community Centre.
- We received a grant through the City of Newcastle for a Youth Week activity to be held in partnership with Callaghan College, Wallsend Campus, in April 2020. Unfortunately, the emergence of COVID-19 resulted in the event being postponed.
- The Yarn Up lunch ran monthly until April 2020. Yarn Up, run in collaboration with Indigenous service providers, engages with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members and aims to identify and address community aspirations and needs. It will resume in the future when participants indicate desire to resume.
- The Little Free Library continues to be an important part of the centre, with the outside library accessible by community at their convenience and the bookshelf inside during business hours. The Little Library at the front of the centre is particularly busy, receiving up to half a dozen visits per day.
- Maryland Neighbourhood Centre is dedicated to providing inclusive and culturally appropriate services. The centre proudly displays the Aboriginal, Torres Strait Island and Australian flags and a Traditional Acknowledgement to recognise Indigenous community members and welcome their engagement with the centre.

Community Development

Community Centres Snapshot

- The centre averages 30 referrals per month. Information provided, and referral services meet diverse needs with referrals to services including Centrelink, utilities providers, Men's Sheds, supported playgroups, homelessness services, food relief providers and youth services. Information and referrals are generally made either in person or over the phone.
- Maryland Neighbourhood Centre supports community members to connect with others through providing access to community infrastructure including space for hire, photocopying and access to the centre's phone, scanner, fax machine or internet. Access to this infrastructure means that the community can engage with social, support or skills development opportunities at the centre and connect with services.
- The centre is able to refer eligible community members to the No Interest Loan Scheme. This scheme provides access to fair and affordable credit for those on a low income for the purchase of essential goods and services. The scheme is coordinated at the centre by one of the centre's volunteer team.

Community Support Snapshot

- A large and dedicated team of volunteers supports the everyday running of the centre. Our volunteers contribute over 500 hours of time each month and have diverse roles, varying from administrative duties to maintaining the garden and supporting the food distribution program.
- Tech Time runs weekly, providing tutoring to over 50's supporting them to engage with and learn to use computers, laptops, tablets or smart phones. The program is facilitated by a volunteer tutor.
- Tax Help runs annually at the centre and many clients return each year to access the service. Coordinated by the Australian Tax Office, Tax Help provides trained volunteer assistance with completing of returns for those earning up to \$55,000 per annum.
- Healthy Hearts provides social connection and gentle exercise, encouraging older members of the community to keep moving.
- Little Rascals Playgroup is coordinated for the centre by a volunteer and runs weekly during school term.
- The centre supported a community member who was successful in receiving a grant through the City of Newcastle in their Sustainable Maryland project. The project involved development of additional garden infrastructure at the centre and provided opportunities for the community to learn sustainability and gardening skills such as propagation and growing fruit and vegetables.
- Our continued partnership with Wesley Mission supports financial literacy skills through provision of Financial Counselling appointments for community members who are experiencing financial difficulties.



Community Development

Community Support Snapshot

- Food hampers are available from the centre three days per week thanks to rescued and donated food from Oz Harvest, SecondBite, Meals on Wheels and Foodbank. Hampers are collected and boxed by centre volunteers and assist with food security for over 400 people per month.
- The centre is annually supported by the Wallsend/Maryland Rotary Club and Glendore Public School, who generously provide Christmas Hampers and toys for local families. Hampers are distributed through the centre's 'Tree of Joy'.
- Emergency Relief, provided in partnership with Wesley Mission, is available through the neighbourhood centre. This provides access to grocery vouchers for individuals experiencing financial stress.

Case study

"I have experienced a lot of tears and gratitude just from people being able to access the bread. One lady was sobbing telling me that I would never know how grateful she was, as her 2 daughters had not had bread in a week as both parents had lost their job due to COVID and the payments they were receiving was only just enough to cover their mortgage. This lady kept saying you don't understand that such a small but generous gesture is helping so many people that are too proud or embarrassed to ask for help." *Terri*

Key Challenges

The emergence of COVID-19, and subsequent lockdowns, have presented the key challenge this year. The Neighbourhood Centre has provided support to families who have found themselves struggling, some for the first time in their lives, due to circumstances beyond anyone's control. Community members have talked about how resulting reduced hours and job losses have caused both financial and mental health issues.

The food relief program has provided a way of engaging with families who may have initially contacted the centre seeking tangible support and have additionally been able to be referred to services, such as unemployment services, relevant to their circumstances. While the engagement with the neighbourhood centre by families who have not previously needed assistance has demonstrated the difficulties that many have faced due to COVID it has also allowed for them to become aware of the many other services that are available to them through the hub.



Community Development

Community Impacts

Shortly after the emergence of COVID-19 the centre received an excess of bread from SecondBite, a food rescue program provided by COLES. The bread was placed on a table in front of Maryland Neighbourhood Centre with signage, clearly visible from the road, indicating that it was free. While hampers are available through the centre the placement of the table signposted the free food to passers-by which then acted as a soft entry point for engagement with the centre, some of whom have indicated that pride has stopped them from asking for assistance in the past.

The centre was inundated with people stopping for the free bread which allowed for conversation with those who'd stopped and asked about the services and activities available through the centre. Many community members weren't aware of the services available through the neighbourhood centre as they had previously been working and not had the opportunity to engage, with some not having noticed that the centre was there.

This has resulted in a significant increase in enquiries and connection with people who had not previously accessed the service, with people sharing tears and gratitude from simply being able to access the bread. The simple gesture of making the bread freely available has helped to break down some barriers throughout trying and uncertain times.



Glimpse of 2020/21

While some of the challenges of COVID-19 continue into 2020-21, the next 12 months look exciting. The centre is welcoming a new supported playgroup being coordinated by KU Children's Services. While there are longstanding partnerships with the two Maryland based primary school, connections are being built also with the new Principal at Minmi Public School. We are excited by this promising partnership.

Funding has been gained through the Good Things Foundation for a macramé workshop in which community members will be taught how to use an online platform and follow a tutorial to make their macramé plant hanger.

Lastly, we are extremely excited to be again hosting Reclaiming My Place, an evidence-based art program for women who have experienced violence. This 8-week program is being facilitated by the University of Newcastle Learning Community Partnership Officer, Felicity Cocuzolli, with the support of The Canopy's Family Work Team and the Maryland Neighbourhood Centre.

Facilities Management

Anna Dowley

2019/2020 Highlights

The diversity and variety of hirers and bookings at the various community centres has continued to increase. Centres are used for varied activity types which range from cultural gatherings to training events, community service provision and private functions such as birthdays or engagements. The engagement with diverse hirers, and ability to assist with the success of their functions through ensuring that their booking meets their needs, continues to bring great satisfaction to the Facilities Management Team.

A snapshot regular hirer satisfaction survey has also indicated that we are meeting our goals of fulfilling hirer expectations. Out of those surveyed 100% indicated that they would recommend The Canopy's Facility Management to friends, family or colleagues seeking a venue for an event and that the service received was friendly and professional. Additionally, all of those surveyed indicated that their booking allowed them to provide a service or activity that responded to a local need, highlighting the importance of community facilities as community assets.

Lastly, the resilience, flexibility and responsiveness shown by Community Facilities staff following the emergence of COVID-19 has been notable. Community nervousness about the virus impacted bookings in the first quarter of the year causing additional workload due to uncertainty. The dedication and work ethic of the team, particularly Craig Harris - Venue Operations Coordinator, Sonya McAlister - Bookings and Administration Officer, and Bill Hitchcock - Facilities Maintenance Officer, further shone through in the team effort responses to navigating centre closures and restrictions.

Overview of service provision and activities

Community Usage

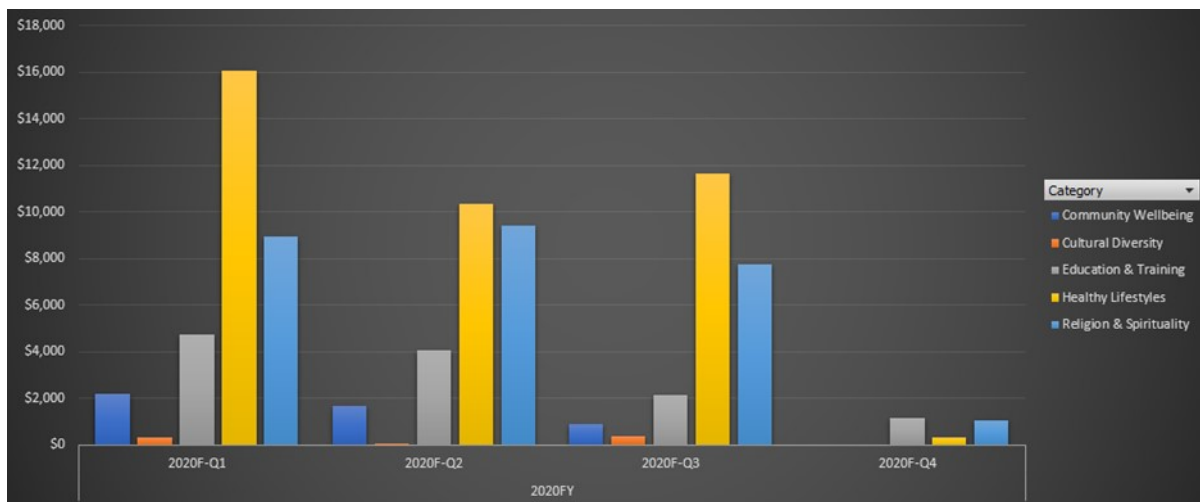
As mentioned above, the activities that run at the various community centres and halls are diverse. Regular booking types are categorised to better understand the types of activities and services available from each centre to the community. Within the City of Newcastle centres categorisation is in line with the City of Newcastle's Social Strategy focus areas of Community Wellbeing, Innovation and Creativity and Healthy Lifestyles. We consider the fifth focus area, Community Infrastructure, to relate broadly to the centres themselves.

Categorisation within Lake Macquarie is similar with some slight adjustments allowing for clearer identification of some of the larger hire types such as religious gatherings. Categories within Lake Macquarie City Council centres include Community Wellbeing, Cultural Diversity, Education & Training, Healthy Lifestyles and Religion & Spirituality. Out of School Hours (OOSH) services are separately categorised due to their large usage potentially skewing data if included in one of the categories listed above.

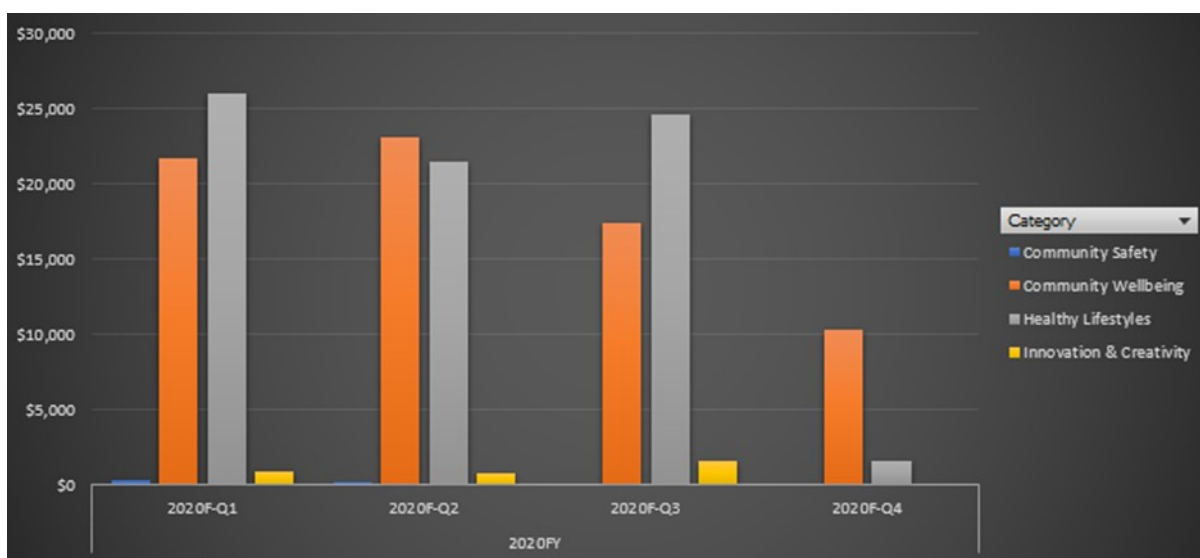
Community Wellbeing and Healthy Lifestyles overwhelmingly represent the majority of hirer usage at both the City of Newcastle and Lake Macquarie City Council based centres. Activities that fall within Community Wellbeing support social participation and inclusion, recreational groups, education and training (within City of Newcastle centres) and provision of economic opportunities. Healthy Lifestyles covers bookings for activities such as personal training, yoga and dance. The City of Newcastle includes spiritual health in their definition of Healthy Lifestyles and so for City of Newcastle centres religious groups are also encompassed within this category.

The figures below show the types of usage over time dependent on whether centres are based in the City of Newcastle or Lake Macquarie City Council. These figures are not inclusive of OOSH services due to their heavy usage skewing the data.

Facilities Management



Usage of Community Centres and Halls within Lake Macquarie by Activity Type and Quarter in 2019-20

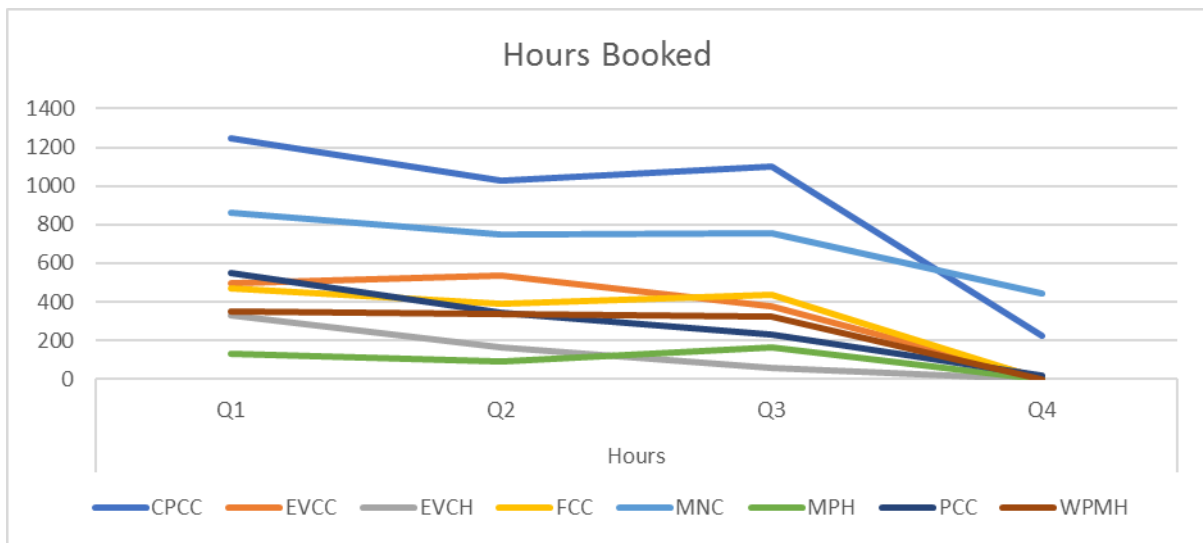


Usage of Community Centres and Halls within the City of Newcastle by Activity Type and Quarter in 2019-20

Key Challenges

Those challenges faced in the initial half of 2019-20 pale in comparison to challenges posed by managing the community facilities through COVID-19. The week of March 22nd, 2020 was particularly interesting, with the decree on March 22nd of the closure of church services and personal training as of midday on March 23rd and subsequent announcement on March 24th that community centres would be required to close indefinitely as of midnight March 25th. The figure below shows the impact of restrictions on bookings in the fourth quarter of 2019-20. As a side note, it is usual to see reduced bookings in the second quarter, due to activities ceasing over the Christmas/New Year period. Cancellations impacted quarter three bookings due to lower hirer confidence due to the emergence of the virus in Australia.

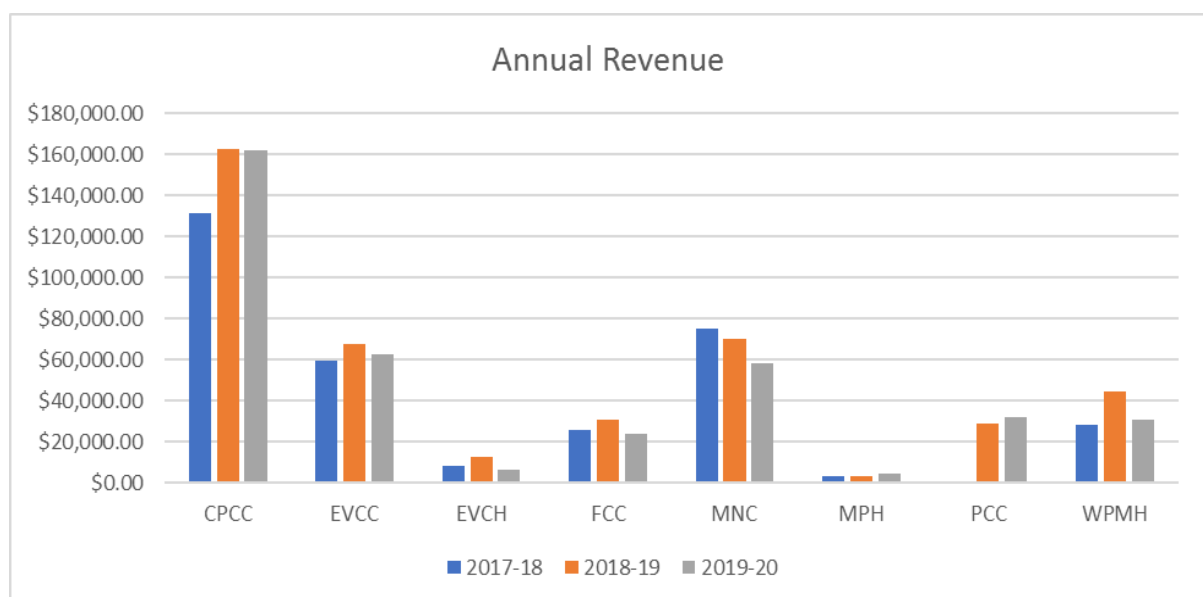
Facilities Management



Hours Booked at Community Centres and Halls in 2019-20 by Quarter

The NSW Government subsequently permitted community centres to reopen on June 13th, 2020 and approval to do so at Cameron Park Community Centre and Pasterfield Community Centre was granted shortly afterwards by Lake Macquarie City Council. Permissions for reopening the centres in the City of Newcastle was received a little later July 1st, 2020. Reopening was conditional on complying with restrictions applied by the state government and City of Newcastle.

The good rapport and relationship with hirers that has been built over the last few years helped greatly in working through the new requirements with returning hires. We were able to provide clear information on what was and wasn't permitted under the current restrictions. The team also provided support to hirers who were wishing to return, but needed assistance with the process, through answering their questions quickly and helping complete COVID-19 Safety Plans. As a result, many hirers recommenced within weeks of centres reopening. While the period of closure had a negative impact on revenue the figure at right shows that prior to closure the centres were tracking towards growth in 2019-20 compared to previous years.



Revenue at Community Centres and Halls by Centre and Financial Year

Facilities Management

Community Impacts

As reported above, regular hirers have indicated that their ability to use space at the various community centres and halls allows them to provide activities and services that respond to community aspirations and needs. Additionally, the multipurpose design of many of the centres and halls facilitates the varied activities and services that are represented in the categorisations above as the spaces are flexible.

Regular hirers have also indicated that when their needs change, such as increased numbers meaning that additional space was required or needing access for a kitchen, The Canopy has been able to accommodate their new needs. 100% of regular hirers have also indicated that the space that they use within their venue is either sufficient or more than sufficient for their needs.

A Glimpse of 2020/21

We approach 2020-21 with optimism. Government restrictions have eased, allowing the return of many regular hirer groups to the centres. Continuing news from the NSW Government of allowed easing of restrictions suggests that as time progresses, that over time hirer activities will be able to move back towards their previous structure.

We are also seeing the commencement of new regular hirers in 2020-21 in addition to the return of prior bookings. These have included the Newcastle Philatelic Society at Pasterfield Community Centre, KU Playgroup at Maryland Neighbourhood Centre and Alcoholics Anonymous at Wallsend Pioneers Memorial Hall. We are excited to welcome these new groups and services to these communities.



Canopy Board and Staff



BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

President: Iain Gardiner

Vice President: Rosemary Heppell

Treasurer: Kelly Hansen

Secretary: Rebecca Phillips

Board Members:

David Price

Janet Lee

David Betts

Jai Kumar

Libby Haydon

Public Officer: Paul Procter

STAFF

Executive Officer:

Paul Procter

Lee-Anne Holmes

Finance and Administration Manager:

Lisa Standen

Community Innovation Manager:

Anna Dowley

Venue Operations Coordinator:

Craig Harris

Bookings and Administration Officer:

Sonya McAlister

Administration Assistant:

Cheryl King

Family Services Leader:

Kellie Hackney

Family Services Team Members

Marie Incze - Senior Worker

Lee Wilton

Samantha Bollard

Sally Gardner

Feona Ray - Senior Worker

Sherrie Mace

Jade Tapper

Julie McQuire

Jessica Frost

Megan Kirby

Maryland Neighbourhood Centre Coordinator:

Michele Kowalski

Terri Carter

Facilities Maintenance:

Bill Hitchcock

Rebecca Callan