



See the possibility, not the disAbility



Annual Report
2022-2023

Vision

A fully inclusive, safe community that enhances the principles of 'Being, Belonging and Becoming' by:

Mission

- Supporting people with all abilities and their parents/carers to realise their full potential, always in a safe environment.
- Supporting people of all abilities to maximize their full potential in the community guided by educated and compassionate support workers.

Values

Transparency

We demonstrate this through our values. We understand the importance of open, honest and respectful communication for all.

Leadership

We lead with integrity, humility, positive influence and accountability.

High Standards

Are our way of life.

Collaboration

We invest in one another, we are on the same team.

*It's a matter of choice
and it's Your Choice that matters at ConnectGV*

ConnectGV acknowledges and pays respect to the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we are located in Shepparton which forms part of the Yorta Yorta Nation. We honor and pay our respect to Elders and leaders, past, present and emerging and we celebrate their continuing culture.



Contents

BOARD DIRECTORS	04
BOARD CHAIR & CEO REPORT	06
PEOPLE, QUALITY & SAFETY REPORT	10
STAFF DEMOGRAPHICS & OVERVIEW	12
SOCIAL ENTERPRISE PARTICIPANT STORIES	14
DAY OPTION PARTICIPANT STORIES	15
RESIDENTIAL STORIES	17
OUTREACH	18
BILLABONG GARDEN COMPLEX SUPPORTED EMPLOYEE STORIES	20
2022 ANNUAL AWARD RECIPIENTS	22
Cameron Gray Memorial Award	22
CEO Award	22
NDIS TEAM	23
FINANCE OVERVIEW	28
DONATE to CONNECTGV	25
CONNECTGV PARTNERS	26

BOARD DIRECTORS

MEETING ATTENDANCE 2023-23

DIRECTORS	POSSIBLE ATTENDANCES	JUL	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	TOTAL ATTENDANCES
Cam MANGIAMELI	3	✓	x	R	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2
Jenny COOK	9	LOA	LOA	✓	x	✓	N/A	✓	✓	x	x	✓	✓	6
Jenny FOOTT	11	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	10
Scott KELLY	11	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	N/A	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	9
Salvatore PENNISI	11	x	✓	✓	✓	x	N/A	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	8
Mellisa PACE	11	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	10
Angela BUXTON	11	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	9
Sadie VALE	6	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓	N/A	LOA	LOA	LOA	LOA	✓	✓	6
Peter EASTAUGH	7	N/A	N/A	N/A	○	✓	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7
CEO	POSSIBLE ATTENDANCES	JUL	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	TOTAL ATTENDANCES
^{CEO} Jacinta RUSSELL	11	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	11
^{EA} Fiona FELDTMANN	7	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	✓	N/A	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	6

✓ - Attended

x - Did Not Attend

○ - Guest Attendee

LOA - Leave of Absence

R - Retired



Scott Kelly
Board Chair



Jenny Foott
Deputy Chair



Salvatore Pennisi
Board Treasurer



Jenny Cook
Board Director



Melissa Pace
Board Director



Angela Buxton
Board Director



Sadie Vale
Board Director



Peter Eastaugh
Board Director



Cam Mangiameli
Deputy Chair
(Retired Nov 2022)



Jacinta Russell
Company Secretary
& CEO

LIFE MEMBERS

Mrs A. Bollinger	Mr G. Carmichael	Mr R. Stephens	Mrs D. Walton
Miss F. Cochran	Mr A. Levett	Mr D. West	Mrs V. Bambrook
Mr B. Kelly	Miss E. Slender	Mr K. Trudgen	Mr J. Douglass
Mrs M. McNabb	Mr M. Darveniza	Mr B. Kruse	Mr. R. Oldfield

LEGAL ADVISOR

Russell Kennedy Lawyers

Cameron's Lawyers

SUB COMMITTEES FOR 2022-2023

FINANCE, AUDIT & INFRASTRUCTURE:

Sal PENNISI (Chair)	Scott KELLY	Jenny COOK	Jenny FOOTT
Cam MANGIAMELI (Jul - Sept 2022)		Jacinta RUSSELL (CEO)	
Mewan DISSAN (Executive Manager – Finance and Corporate Services, to May 2023)			

QUALITY & SAFEGUARDS:

Angela BUXTON (Chair)	Jenny COOK	Melissa PACE	Peter EASTAUGH (Nov 2022)
Jacinta RUSSELL (CEO)	Dean WALTON (Quality Services Manager, Jul 22 – Jan 2023)		
Brant DOYLE (Senior Manager – People, Quality & Safety, from Apr 2023)			

FUNDRAISING:

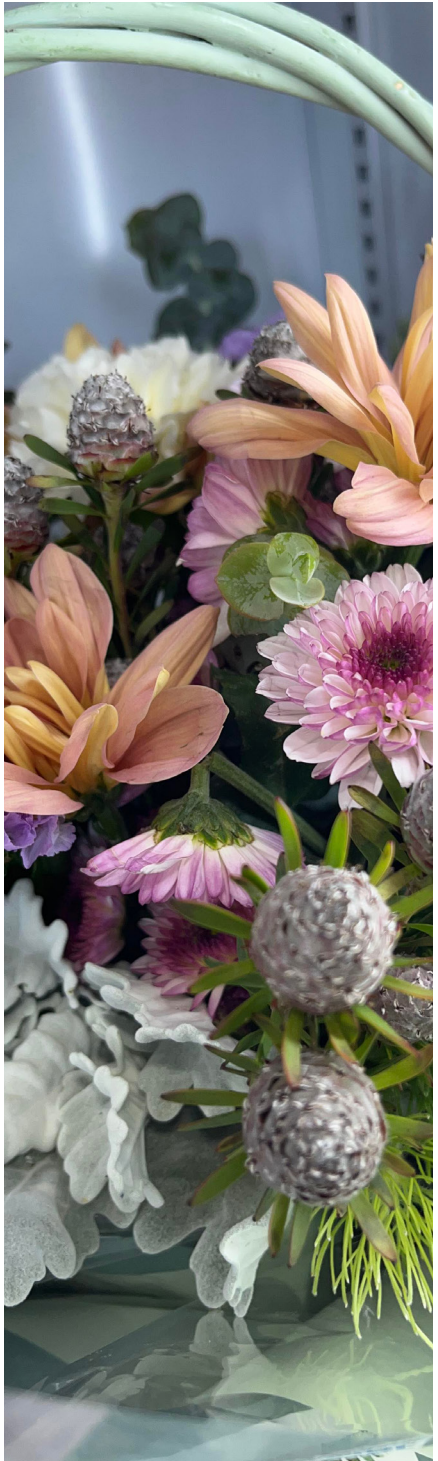
Jenny FOOTT (Chair)	Melissa PACE	Angela BUXTON	Cam MANGIAMELI (Jul - Nov 2022)
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COMMUNITY MEMBERS:

Barry KRUSE	Matt INNES-IRONS	Troy JONES
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STAFF MEMBERS:

Jacinta RUSSELL (CEO)	Alex FOSTER	Fiona FELDTMANN from Nov 2022
Alycia BOURNE from Dec 2022		



BOARD CHAIR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT

SCOTT KELLY AND JACINTA RUSSELL

It's an exciting time for the Board of Directors and CEO to be leading ConnectGV, with a focus on embedding high quality services and supports and setting the foundations for further growth to support our community's needs. ConnectGV is a not-for-profit, charitable organisation that has been in existence since 1954. Now in its 69th year, and fifth year delivering National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) funded services, we continue to grow and strengthen the organisation to deliver the highest quality of support and services, whilst ensuring a sustainable position into the future.

2022-23 has been a year of review and reform with the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with a Disability, established in April 2019 and expected to deliver its final report with its final ceremonial sitting to be held on 15 September 2023. Disability Services Minister Bill Shorten also announced a reform of the NDIA and NDIS with a six-point plan to lift staffing, longer term care plans, addressing fraud and reporting, supporting more people with disability to live at home and to purge ineffective providers, with a final report by an independent panel due by October 2023.

On the back of these reviews are NDIS pricing guides and compliance requirements that are stretching most providers sustainability. ConnectGV is well positioned with purpose-built and owned facilities and dedicated staff who lead and understand high quality support to our participants which are person centred and best practice. We continue to review our structure, services and workforce model to put us in the best position with the coming changes.

Board Leadership

In November 2022, we welcomed Dr. Peter Eastaugh to our Board of Directors. Peter is well known to many participants and families as the local consulting physician in Paediatrics for the region for the past 40+ years. Peter retired in 2022 and brings to the Board and Quality & Safeguards Board Sub-Committee his clinical expertise, networks and passion for helping the people with a disability within our community. Peter also brings his lived experience of low vision and provides valuable advice to the Board on ensuring our focus is always on the needs of people living with various disabilities.

At our AGM in November 2022, we bid farewell to Cam Mangiameli, who tirelessly served ConnectGV and the Board for 10 years. Cam gave a significant amount of time as Board Chair, and passionately participated in Finance Sub-Committee, Fundraising Sub-Committee and Infrastructure Sub-Committee with his expertise and passion helping to lead the funding, planning and delivery of our new administration and day programs facilities at 12 Bowenhall Street Shepparton. We are extremely grateful to Cam and his wife Angela for their commitment to improving the lives of people with disabilities in our region and his passion and joie de vivre for everything he participates in.

New Leadership Team

In July 2022, Jacinta Russell started as the new Chief Executive Officer, bringing significant experience from the health and community services sectors with Executive and Non-Executive Director roles. Jacinta's expertise in clinical and corporate governance, person centred care and financial and business acumen has provided an opportunity to review our model of support, services and direction.

In October 2022, a senior leadership review was undertaken with changes to create an executive team and areas of responsibility for each person. This allowed for recognition of Directorates and a more even spread of areas of responsibility, with Finance & Corporate Services and Human Resources directly reporting to the CEO along with the newly created role of Executive Manager – NDIS Services, replacing the Chief Operating Officer role, overseeing all participant and resident service areas.

In April 2023, the new incoming Senior Manager – People, Quality and Safety, Brant Doyle, took on the responsibility of all human resources, quality, safeguards and OH&S, with dedicated human resources and quality officers supporting the role.

In June 2023, Ramesha Jayasuriya was promoted to the role of Financial Controller and Manager of Corporate Services, taking over from Mewan Dissan. Ramesha has been with ConnectGV for over 4 years and the promotion was well deserved for her dedication and understanding of our payroll, accounts payable and accounts receivable processes.

In May 2023, Anthony Putt resigned as the Executive Manager – NDIS Services. We welcomed Stacey Ferrito into the role starting in July 2023.

BOARD CHAIR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT (CONT'D)

Highlights & Significant Events

In September 2022, ConnectGV vacated the 'factory' at 8 New Dookie Road and consolidated services at Billabong Garden Complex. Also, during September, we participated in the R U OK Day, with an organisational wide BBQ and merchandise available for staff and participants. Occupational Violence is generally high within the disability sector, and we have made a concerted effort to educate staff on what Occupational Violence is, how to report it and how to minimise it. Days such as R U OK Day help support our staff by raising awareness and help create an environment of learning, educating, and putting into place mitigation strategies which minimise staff exposure to occupational violence.

During September we also participated in 'The Great Chase Community Event' run by Greyhound Racing Victoria. It is a fabulous day with participants from around the region coming together for lunch and to watch the racing. We are grateful to Greyhound Victoria for the \$800 donation from this event.

In October 2022, we were the recipients of the Living Local Grant from the Victorian State Government, which provided us with \$20,000 to finalise the furnishings, plumbing and kitchenette for our newly built Outdoor Learning Centre. This space is provided for community events, training, and social gatherings and provides our supported employees opportunities for hosting events, setting up rooms, and event management.

In mid-October 2022, our region was subjected to 100-year flood levels causing significant disruption to the community with many people including some staff members losing their houses. We were forced to close our Billabong Garden Complex and Day Programs for several days at the height of the floods, predominantly due to staff being surrounded by flood water. Residential facilities were maintained with staff available. One of our houses was surrounded in flood water and the staff did a terrific job maintaining high quality services, food, and medication provision during this time. It was an amazing team effort that had been well refined from the learnings of the Covid-19 pandemic in emergency management.

On 27 October 2022, we had our first ConnectGV Open Day in the new Bowenhall Street facilities. The day was very well attended, and it was a fabulous opportunity to showcase our services to families and potential new participants. A lot of planning went into the day, and current participants thoroughly enjoyed showing the different programs that are on offer.

In January 2023, we had three staff members seconded to the Goulburn Flood Recovery Service which is a multi-agency response to the October floods in our region. This secondment is expected to last 12 months. ConnectGV is actively participating in this recovery effort which is being led by our Shepparton Community Share partner, FamilyCare.



BOARD CHAIR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT (CONT'D)

Over January we installed 65kW of solar panels onto the roof of our Bowenhall Street facility. As part of our green sustainability strategy to reduce our carbon emissions and environmental impact, as well as reducing ongoing costs where we can.



Over the summer months, we did a full review of our cyber security maturity and risks. We were very pleased with the results obtained and have implemented the suggestions which have come from the review.

On the 15 February 2023, a long-standing supported employee Stephen Laffan unfortunately passed away unexpectedly during a routine medical procedure. All staff and supported employees were deeply saddened by Stephen's death. Together, we all worked to uphold the memories of Stephen's fun and jovial personality and his banter about football, food or not working hard enough. It was great that all staff and supported employees were given the opportunity to attend Stephen's funeral and participate in the service. We thank Stephen's family very much for being so inclusive during their time of grief, as it meant a lot to all of us who worked closely with Stephen.

For most of the year, we have been focused on the upcoming mid-term NDIS Quality and Safeguards audit, as part of our accreditation and continual improvement. A lot of work went into reviewing our systems and processes including updating many of our

procedures and reporting tools such as incident reports, feedback & complaint reporting and internal audits. The focus was to embed quality systems into all that we do. The auditors were complimentary on the significant work undertaken and we look forward to continuing this quality driven person centred care pathway.

On the 23 March 2023, we suffered another severe weather event with Shepparton, and the region being hit by a short but fierce supercell thunderstorm, resulting in significant rain and large hail. Our Billabong Garden Complex was right in the path of this supercell causing significant damage to the facilities with flood water and hail damage. We thank the staff for their considerable care and support offered to our customers on the day and the major clean-up which occurred post event.

In May, we undertook our mid-term audit for the NDIS. The auditors commented on the many things we were doing well, including the welcome, transparency and willingness of staff to assist the auditors. They commented on the positive relationships that we have with each other, and our participants; stating it was obvious and something to be very proud of. We are proud of the achievement and recognition that our services are high quality and safe.

In May we were also the grateful recipients of a \$3,000 donation from the Rotary Club of Shepparton's Annual Golf Day. We thank all of the Rotary Club members for this terrific donation that supports our participants whilst at the centre. The Annual Golf Day is a terrific event that is so well organised, friendly, with a lot of community spirit and we cannot thank you enough for the impact this has for us and our participants.

Our Future

Looking forward, the Board of Directors and CEO are excited to start the next cycle of Strategic Planning with our current plan due to expire in mid-2024. With a new leadership team and strategy, we will be focusing on expanding services and continuing to be the provider and employee of choice within the wider Goulburn Valley region.

As we enter our 70th year of operation we reflect on the welcomed support and advocacy from our community, our politicians and our key partners, families, and stakeholders; without their support we couldn't do what we do. We are privileged to lead an organisation that has so much passion, excitement, and personal rewards for everyone associated with it, and for which we are eternally grateful.



Scott Kelly - Board Chair



Jacinta Russell - CEO

PEOPLE, QUALITY & SAFETY REPORT

WORKFORCE

Staff Engagement Survey & Initiatives

In late 2022 early 2023, ConnectGV conducted its inaugural Staff Engagement Survey, with 53% participation and responses to 72 questions, offering insights into staff sentiments about their work environment over the past year. A subsequent action plan was devised to address areas for enhancement.

The survey unveiled that staff meetings and training foster positivity, supporting teamwork. The current feedback along with steps for further enhancement, is divided into three categories; Culture, Engagement and Wellbeing. Our robust community reputation is upheld by quality services and dedication. Policies, fairness, and recent improvements bolster professionalism and optimism. Our culture prioritises kindness, trust, and client care, igniting passion. Amid challenges, staff adaptation remains positive.

The below illustrates the key themes and identified opportunities.

The current feedback along with steps for further enhancement, is divided into three categories;

Culture, Engagement and Wellbeing.

"ConnectGV provides a safe work environment."

"ConnectGV staff treat clients with respect and provides quality services."

"ConnectGV is a wonderfully kind workplace which places trust in employee's autonomy to perform their roles, encouraging and supporting employees to get their job done."

"We provide great opportunities to our clients."

"It's a supportive and positive environment for staff to work in."

CULTURE	ENGAGEMENT	WELLBEING
Culture of Growth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive Environment: Staff meetings, training, and a strong community reputation contribute to a positive culture. Emphasis on kindness, trust, autonomy, and client care reflects the organisational culture's values. Emphasis on Communication and Unity: The focus on communication, and unity underscores a culture of commitment to clients and progress. Learning from Mistakes: The acknowledgment of incident handling appropriateness and learning from mistakes promotes a culture of continuous improvement. 	Collaborative Resilience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Connection: High levels of staff engagement and understanding of role expectations demonstrate strong alignment. Effective Team Dynamics: Strong managerial relationships, manager integrity, and learning from mistakes contribute to engagement and collaboration. Adapting to Change: Effective adaptation from staff to changes in leadership, pandemic response, and unforeseen events highlights their engagement in navigating challenges. 	Fulfillment & Balance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfaction and Well-being: Positive satisfaction and contentment with roles contribute to the overall well-being of staff. Work-life Balance and Job Happiness: Work-life balance, career growth, and job happiness responses are indicators of well-being. Addressing Work-related Worries: The prevalence of work-related worries underscores the importance of addressing stressors to enhance staff's well-being.
Fostering a System of Further Growth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creating a culture of continuous learning through enhanced training methods and educational opportunities. Promoting a culture of respect and accountability by addressing poor behaviour and misconduct. Nurturing a psychologically safe environment that encourages open feedback and learning. 	Elevating Staff Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaging staff through improved orientation, role induction, and ongoing education. Fostering engagement by providing career development opportunities for emerging and senior leaders. Enhancing engagement by eliminating bullying, harassment, and unacceptable conduct. 	Empowering Holistic Wellbeing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhancing wellbeing by providing clear role expectations and career progression paths. Supporting wellbeing through mentoring, coaching, and safe leadership environments. Prioritising wellbeing by improving incident management, timely resolution, and learning from incidents.

PEOPLE, QUALITY & SAFETY REPORT^(CONT'D)

WORKFORCE



Human Resources

Our small dedicated human resources team has been working across the organisation to ensure that our onboarding and induction of new staff is efficient and effective, our policies and procedures meet requirements, and that our training is up to date and opportunities are provided to staff.

Training & Development

In early 2023, ConnectGV developed and implemented a Training and Development Framework. The well-structured training and development framework provides a foundation for learning within ConnectGV. This framework not only enriches skills and knowledge, but will also support with elevating service excellence, ensuring regulatory adherence, tailoring participant support, empowering our workforce, and fostering an innovative approach to care provision. It streamlines onboarding processes, prioritises participant safety, and establishes the foundation for long-term sustainability. With a highly trained workforce, ConnectGV is well-equipped to navigate our operational landscape and adapt to the ever-evolving needs of our participants.

Recruitment

ConnectGV continues to recruit within a tight talent market. A range of initiatives are being planned to continue the attraction and retention of high calibre employees, who are aligned to the unique demands, values and passion for our sector. Some of these strategies include further collaboration with education and training providers, developing talent pipelines, using social media and more contemporary attraction methods, career progression pathways, flexibility with part time and flexible roles, recognition and reward opportunities, and a comprehensive training and development framework.

Focus on Future

A focus for the next year will be the embedding of the HR information system (HR Dynamics), a system which will monitor and report on ConnectGV workforce. Workforce planning will be a key item on the HR agenda, along with improving our attraction and recruitment strategies and processes, leadership development, and automating and streamlining processes.

The Executive and Senior Leadership Teams will continue to work through the staff engagement survey action plan to enhance and continue to improve the culture, engagement and wellbeing.



PEOPLE, QUALITY & SAFETY REPORT^(CONT'D)

QUALITY & SAFETY

The delivery of quality and safe services continued to be a strong focus for ConnectGV. We have made significant advancements in enhancing the quality, risk management, continuous improvement, and safety capabilities during the year. The organisation has undertaken both ongoing and new initiatives aimed at integrated industry best practices through the entire organisation.

The Executive and Senior Leadership Teams have facilitated a broad range of operational activities and continues to support continuous improvement, risk management and safety functions organisation-wide.

A redeveloped People, Quality & Safety function was established in early 2023 with a vision to improve upon the current systems, processes and services, ensuring the safety of staff and participants, continuous improvement, managing emerging risks and ensuring compliance.

Occupational Health & Safety

In early 2023, we began the process of enhancing the OHS system, with a holistic focus on participant and employee safety, health and wellbeing. We did this by ensuring that policies and procedures were reviewed and implemented to address specific needs and potential risks, minimise risk of injuries and to promote a safe environment. Risk assessments were also highlighted as vital processes to identify potential hazards, evaluated and implemented effective control measures, looking at both participant specific risks and general workplace hazards. Training was a major focus of the OHS system, supporting the development of the ConnectGV Training and Development Framework. Other focus areas included safe work practices, emergency management, regulatory compliance and continuous improvement.

Continuous Improvement

Dedicated to ongoing enhancement, ConnectGV's quality focus in early 2023 centered on the currency and efficacy of policies and systems, prioritising safety for all clients and staff. The ConnectGV continuous and preventive action process facilitates refined service delivery, producing improved participant outcomes by meeting needs more effectively, averting potential issues, and surpassing requirements to mitigate compliance risks. Encouraging innovative solutions and addressing concerns, ConnectGV fosters a culture of care innovation, positioning itself as a proactive leader in providing high-quality, participant-centered services while adapting to evolving disability support landscapes.

Future Focus

Our focus remains on vital quality safeguarding aspects, including sustaining operational standards through our internal quality auditing program. Furthermore, we are dedicated to enhancing our Health and Safety system by addressing psychosocial risks and bolstering staff wellbeing. Prioritising risk management is key as we proactively identify and mitigate potential risks. Simultaneously, we aim to advance our clinical governance framework for participant safety and quality care delivery. Our ongoing refinement of risk management practices strengthens our ability to prevent incidents and ensure minimal risk exposure. This collective effort highlights our commitment to delivering sustainable, high-quality services to our participants, while fostering an atmosphere of excellence.



WORKFORCE DEMOGRAPHIC

52%

staff with over three years of service.

5.2

years average length of service.

72%

female employees.

43

years is the average age of employees.

16

supported employees

73

employees with less than 3 years

Length of Service

Less than 1 year	36
1 to 2 years	37
3 to 5 years	25
6 to 10 years	26
11 to 15 years	13
16 to 19 years	9
20 plus years	5

Employment Status

Full Time	34
Part Time	97
Casuals	20

Employment Age Profile

18 to 24	12
25 to 34	36
35 to 44	33
45 to 54	38
55 to 64	23
65 plus	9

151 Employed as of
June 30th 2023



OUR IMPACT



see the possibility, not the disability

Categories of support



- Individual Support
 - Day Options – Programs of Support
 - Community Participation
 - Home Living support
- Supported Independent Living (SIL)
- Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA)
- Supported Employment (Social Enterprise)
 - Billabong Garden Complex
 - Ruby Saltbush Café
 - Flower Power
 - GV Ragz
 - ConnectGV Services
- Transport (including activity based transport for group support)
- Support Coordination (Level 2 – Coordination of Supports)
- Plan Management (CB Choice and Control)



9 sites

Operating from sites across Greater Shepparton, plus outreach and home visits

- Bowenhall Street Campus
- Billabong Garden Complex
- 'The Factory' New Dookie Road
- 6 residential houses
- Community access

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE PARTICIPANT STORIES



ANTONIO (TONY) CONTI - GVRAGZ

I am 56 years of age. I grew up on a vineyard in Shepparton. As a teenager I worked on the family vineyard., I helped my brother in his pizza shop. I worked at Shepparton pavers and bricks and then SPC for 15 seasons. I have four children; twins aged 28, a daughter aged 15 and a son aged 8. In 2016 my support worker helped me approach Connect GV to find work. I have worked in packaging, lawn mowing and rags. I now work in GVRagz.

Working at Connect GV has helped me to communicate with others better and improved my skills, I am more confident in doing my work. I work in a team but can work well independently also. I can help in other areas at the Nursery. Everyone I work with makes me feel like I belong in this family. I feel supported and listened to by the staff also. I have been a volunteer with Kiwanis since 2018 and I have helped at the Faith church. In the future I would like to have full time work.

LAETITIA NASH - FLOWER POWER

I am from Wunghnu; I went to Wunghnu primary school and Verney Rd to continue my high school. I attended another service provider and then in July 2012 I wanted to work so I went to Connect GV. I worked in Sweets and Treats and then Flower Power. I have learnt how to make posies of flowers to put in the vases, doing deliveries has help to build my confidence in the community, and I have learnt about handling money and doing the banking.

Because my confidence has grown, I now travel on the town bus, and I have started bowling with my friends. I have learned to speak up for myself because I am encouraged at work and respected. Connect GV have helped my confidence and I feel like I would like to increase my independence to living independently in the future.



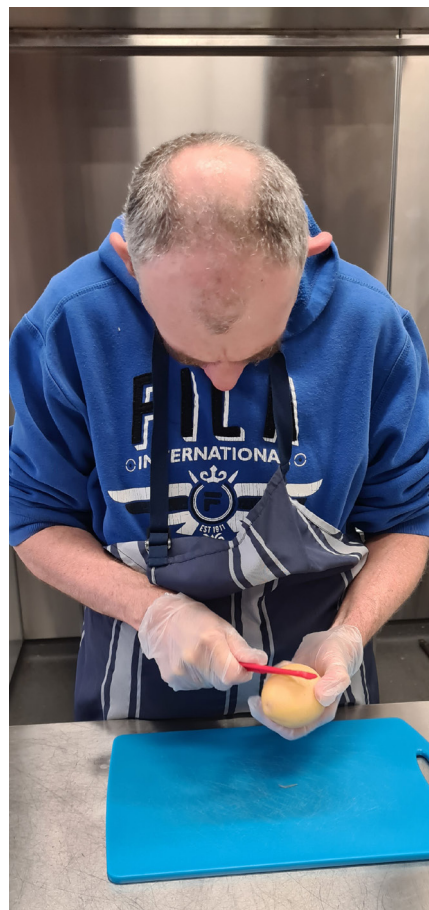
THOMAS WOLTER - CGV SERVICES

I attended Verney Road school where I successfully did Year 12. After finishing Year 12, I then attended ACE college for over a year, before obtaining work. My first job was at Bunnings as a Trolley Monitor. Starting work at Billabong Nursery in 2012, I worked 2 days a week and at Bunnings on the weekends. I changed to Billabong sweets and help out in packaging and rags. I made new friends.

I have been working at Partswise for Connect GV and now I am in the process of changing to open employment with Partswise. I am currently working in the lawns area until this is finalised.

DAY OPTIONS PARTICIPANT STORIES

GLENN HURST'S STORY



Glenn has a set routine when it comes to working in the ConnectGV kitchen. From the moment he enters the kitchen he means business, it's off with the jacket and beanie, sleeves up, hands washed and apron on. Then it's time to glove up. Glenn does attempt to put his gloves on himself, sometimes he needs a hand getting them on.

Staff use picture cards to help assist Glenn with steps to take in the kitchen. Staff use the hand over hand method with peeling cutting most of the time. This means, whilst Glenn has a hand on the kitchen tool, be it knife, peeler

or other implement, the support staff also have their hand on the implement to help control the action. As you see in these photos, Glenn is starting to develop many skills and is now able to do some things on his own, such as peeling. Sometimes Glenn needs to be reminded to turn the veggie. Overall Glenn has greatly improved his skills from when he first started cooking till now.

Glenn also resides in one of our residential houses, and his cooking skills greatly assist when he is at home helping to prepare meals.

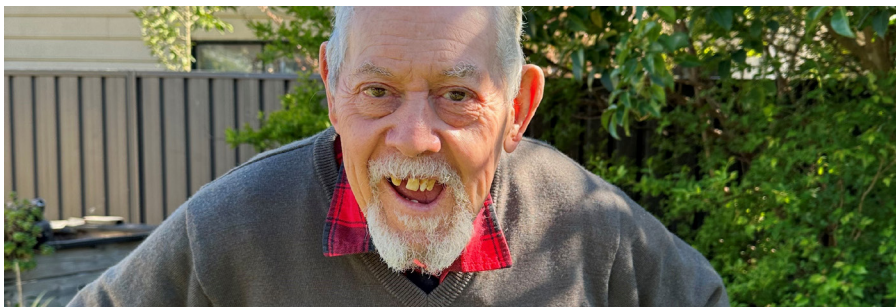


DAY OPTIONS



RESIDENTIAL / ACCOMMODATION

RAY PATTERSON'S STORY



Name, age & how long have you been with ConnectGV?

My name is Ray Patterson, I am 73 years old, and I have been with ConnectGV since 1966. I moved into supported accommodation in Middleton Street in 2003 and then moved to Chertsey Road where I have been living for about 15 Years.

I am now retired from Day Options, and I am supported by staff at my home. I like to spend my days completing my tasks around the house, watching old cowboy movies, going for walks around my neighbourhood and going to the shops to have a coffee.

What do you like about living in supported accommodation?

I like my housemates and the staff. I've got my own room, with all my things, and a big tv too. I like to watch the cowboys and the Scotchies play the bagpipes.

What activities do you participate in around your home & out in the community?

Emptying the dishwasher is my favourite job to do. I used to help in the garden a lot, but now I'm getting older my back gets sore sometimes. On nice evenings, I sit outside and have my dinner and watch the birds and our pet cats play in the garden.

When I go for a walk around my neighbourhood I like to stop and have a chat with my neighbours and watch all the pets. We used to have chicken's that lived nearby, and I liked to go feed them and say hello. I go for a walk to get the newspaper some days or go to the shops for a coffee or hot chocolate. Sometimes on the weekend I do the house groceries with staff or go visit a new town and get fish and chips for lunch and have a beer or two.

How do staff support you to improve or maintain your living skills?

I help cook the sausages for tea sometimes, although, I prefer chops on the BBQ. I like to help get the cuppa's ready and fill up the teabags when the jar gets empty. I make my bed every morning and put my clothes in the wash. I'm good at putting away the dishes, it's my favourite thing to do. I helped sweep the floors yesterday as they were messy after cooking.

HEATH VALE'S STORY

Name, age & how long have you been with ConnectGV?

My name is Heath Vale. I am 21 years old I have been with ConnectGV since 2022.

I live in one of the ConnectGV supported living houses after leaving my family home in Colbinabbin. I currently attend day programs with another provider and attend SLES (School leavers Employment Services) Programs. NBA Basketball is my world, I absolutely love LeBron James. In my spare time I play my PlayStation 5 or watch videos on my iPad.



What activities do you participate in around your home and out in the community?

I love to learn new skills like cleaning my room independently and sometimes I ask staff for support. I currently play local basketball on Monday evenings at the Shepparton stadium.

I love cooking dinner for my housemates on a weekly basis and for myself on Fridays during my 1.1 living skills day. I also love to play jokes on staff and have fun.

On weekends I like to go to a basketball court and practice my basketball skills or sometimes a game of 1.1 with staff and my PlayStation games. I have learnt a lot of skills while living in my Connect GV house.

How do Support Staff support you to improve or maintain your living skills?

I love cooking dinner for my housemates on a weekly basis and for myself on Fridays during my 1.1 living skills day. On this day I clean my room, wash my linen, cook my own lunch and do my personal shopping. I look after my own room and keep it clean, empty my rubbish and wash my laundry.

My favorite food to cook is homemade pizza. I know all the steps to make the dough and roll it out and add the toppings. Living in my ConnectGV house has helped me be independent and learn new skills.

OUTREACH



The ConnectGV Outreach Program supports a variety of participants, from as young as 18 to 65+. Our participants represent our community and are from diverse ethnic backgrounds, any and all genders and live either independently in shared houses or with family members. Each individual is supported, both in their home environment and within the community, in a dignified and respectful manner. This allows us to apply strategies enabling participants to cope successfully with a variety of different situations that they may encounter in their day to day life.

The Outreach Program assists participants with completing daily living tasks, such as cooking, shopping, cleaning the house, attending appointments, and community participation and also provides support for participants needing help

with drug and alcohol addiction, assistance in judicial matters, parental guidance, mental health issues and social inclusion. This is achieved by networking and accessing appropriate community support services.

There are many different challenges and situations that staff may be confronted with. This means staff must be flexible in their approach to all circumstances. They must be able to manage the different emotional, psychological and cultural needs of the diverse personalities and disabilities of such a variety of individuals, each with their own specific needs. It is also imperative that the participants feel comfortable with the support for personal goals to be reached. It has been obvious by the success of the program that this has been, and continues to be achieved.

To contribute to individual and community wellbeing, by increasing opportunities for alienated people to positively engage the community by reducing the impact of any social disadvantage they may face, makes the role of Outreach extremely rewarding. Striving to find new ways and opportunities which effectively meet the needs of our clients, and to provide support to them where other services cannot is the ultimate outcome. We must continually adapt and strive to achieve positive outcomes in assisting clients in reaching their desired goals.



OUTREACH

JAYSON SMITH'S STORY

Jayson accesses ConnectGV's Outreach services. In 2018 Jayson had a brain aneurysm which saw him hospitalised for some time, including 2 weeks in a coma. Prior to this, Jayson had a background of drug and alcohol misuse. Jayson has managed to abstain from this lifestyle since the stroke, to the present day. Jayson underwent many months of rehabilitation, supported by ConnectGV support staff. In Jayson's own words; 'this was a turning point in my life, that reformed my lifestyle and enabled me to reconnect with my family, including gaining full custody of my son'.

Jayson is highly motivated to be the best father and has expressed to staff, with their support, he would like to access both formal and informal support to increase his capacity with his parenting skills and allow him to work towards his NDIS goals of being able to improve caring for his son.

Staff assist Jayson in daily tasks such as community access, gym, appointments and social engagement in all ability's sports. In 2020 Jayson participated in specialised driver training and was assessed to not meet the standards to hold an open licence. With staff assistance, working through the theory component and taking him to appointments, Jayson achieved his goal and was granted a restricted licence of wearing prescription glasses.

Together with his Support Coordinator, staff are working to help Jayson engage with a Physiotherapist to develop to specialised exercise program designed to assist him to build strength, coordination, and endurance.

Staff also supported Jayson on his first holiday with his son to Queensland. This was a major milestone which saw Jayson tick off many goals. With assistance Jayson was able to complete tasks which he struggles with such as getting on public transport, managing money to do activities and flying on a plane.

Overall Jayson's desire to turn his life around and engage in ConnectGV supports, has been an amazing improvement from the life he previously led. Connect GV staff are very proud of his determination to improve his lifestyle and life experiences.



BRAD MACGILLIVRAY'S STORY

Brad is a very active 42year-old with a hearing impairment from Shepparton, who has made significant changes in the last year. He has lost a considerable amount of weight by participating in park runs and has increased his cooking skills by cooking independently. Additionally, he has been attending community-based sports like football, soccer, cricket and engaging with other participants with disabilities.

Brad's journey to better health began when he decided to participate in park runs every Saturday morning. Staff would either pick Brad up or meet at the lake where the park run starts. Park runs are free, weekly, 5km timed runs that take place all around the world. Brad has been participating in these runs for the last year and has lost over 30 kilograms since he started.

In addition to losing weight, Brad has also been working on his cooking skills. Staff have been helping with Brad and giving him some tips and tricks alongside encouraging healthy choices.

Brad is an active member of his community and enjoys participating in community-based sports like football. He is also involved in a local disability support group where he engages with other participants and shares his experiences.

Bradley has part-time employment where he works Monday to Friday with Woolworths where he has been working collecting trolleys for 15 years.

Overall, Brad's dedication to improving his health and well-being is commendable. His story is an inspiration to others who may be struggling with their weight or looking to improve their health and wellbeing by increasing their skills in making good life choices, healthy eating and cooking skills.



BILLABONG

TANIKA HEADLAND'S STORY



I was born with a low hairline, which severely affected the growth of my right ear. At the age of 15 I underwent my first surgery to reconstruct my ear. Which resulted in my ear being blocked, subsequently affecting my hearing. If I hadn't had this surgery my hair would have grown from, and out of my ear resulting in hearing loss. I also suffer from a mild learning difficulty.

I attended Wunghnu, Congupna and Bouchier Street Primary schools. I experienced significant bullying in my primary years enduring very unkind name calling which affected my self-confidence. I then moved to Verney Road school where I completed my education in 2018. My most memorable moment whilst at Verney Road was my debutante ball. I'll never forget the dancing and dressing up like a "princess" on the day of my ball.

After graduating from school, I went on to work in hospitality for a short while as a waitress at the Wunghnu Hotel. During my time there I learnt how to make their many desserts and slices working alongside their "famous chief". My proudest moment was making a strawberry white chocolate slice by myself!!

I started the pathway program at ConnectGV March 2022. On Monday I participate in horticulture with the propagation team, building my skills in a team environment and learning to propagate plants ready for sale in the nursery.

"I have learnt so many names to different plants, I had no idea how many plants there really are"

On Thursday's I work in the Flower Power room with Jenny, a floristry based social enterprise at Billabong Garden Complex. Here, I make up fresh and dried flower arrangements which are then sold in the nursery and to local businesses. I thoroughly love this work. I've even learnt a little tip for everyone to keep flowers alive and healthier for longer, which is to sit them in a mixture of caster sugar, hot water, vinegar, bleach and hey presto...long lasting floral arrangements!

Friday is my day @ Ruby Saltbush Café, a cafe that is located in the heart of Billabong Garden Complex. I have a set routine in the morning that has helped me to build my confidence. When I started at Ruby Saltbush Cafe, I had a few goals I wanted to achieve. I was able to achieve these within the first six months of working at the cafe. I now know, with very little assistance, how to use the coffee machine and prepare different foods for the customers. I have also gained my food handler's certificate with help from my support worker, Annie and my coordinator, Sandra. I know they, and my whole team, are very proud of me and that helps me be very proud of myself; "Billabong and Ruby Saltbush are my happy & safe place!"

Overall, I absolutely love being a part of the ConnectGV family and appreciate everything and everyone! It's definitely changed my life".

BILLABONG

DAPHNE CROCKER'S STORY

I work at Billabong Nursery Complex in Shepparton on Numurkah Road, in the propagation section. I grow plants from start to finish. I do cuttings, which go into the hothouse to grow roots. I then pick them out and put them into 55mm tubes to go into the igloo. We wait until they grow more roots and grow stronger; then I plant them into 140mm pots to go out on the bays to grow for sale for customers. Some of our customers are other nurseries, landscapers and we also put some of the plants out into our own retail nursery to sell to customers.

I have worked at Billabong for 17 years. I didn't know how to do any nursery work when I came. I thought the plants were beautiful and I wanted to be a plant grower. Now I know how to do cuttings, potting on, weeding, staking, pruning, dividing and how to prepare stock for orders. The staff here at Billabong have supported and taught me lots.

What I like most about working at Billabong is working with plants because I like to learn all different things about them and I make lots of

new friends. One day I would like to work as a gardener because I like to make beautiful gardens. I ended up in the nursery industry as I love plants and being outdoors and I was able to come to Billabong Nursery as a supported employee.

A typical day for me starts at 6am when I get out of bed to get ready for work. I catch the bus at 6.30am to come to Shepparton, it takes me about 1 hour and 15 minutes. I have a cuppa at work with my friends and staff before starting work at 9am. I look at my tasks on the whiteboard and then do all kinds of nursery work until 4pm. A taxi picks me up from work to go to the train station to go home. I get home at 7pm. I have a Certificate 1 and 2 Horticulture which I got by studying and attending classes at GO TAFE William Orr Campus, Shepparton. I also won the CEO Award at Connect GV in 2021 which was a big surprise and it made me feel really happy and pleased with what I have done. When I'm not at work I look after my garden at home and I enjoy cooking, watch movies and I love to go shopping. I love my job, it's good. I couldn't be any happier than being here at Billabong Nursery Propagation.



ANNUAL AWARDS

CAMERON GRAY MEMORIAL AWARD

At our annual Christmas function, held at the GV Hotel, the 2022 Cameron Gray Memorial Award was presented to **Julie Oldfield**.

The Cameron Gray Memorial Award is presented annually to recognise effort and achievement over the year of a member of the ConnectGV community. It is in memory of Cameron Gray who was a participant of ConnectGV (known then as the GV Centre) for many years, and despite having a disability was an active member of the community.

Julie meets challenges facing her with a brighter than bright smile. Speaking up when she sees something good or bad, giving encouragement to others and having a go.

Julie recently received 2 first prizes for her long stitch entered in the Shepparton show, Julie has also had her artwork displayed at SAM. Julie enjoys being involved in the community, Bowling, participating at Ruby Saltbush Café and doing FlowerPower deliveries are the perfect place for Julie to shine with her great attitude.

Julie stepped up through Covid to re-join FlowerPower following all precautions and brightening the days with flowers and smiling even through the mask. Julie is always pleasant and considerate of others and willing to help where she can. This year marks 25 years of attendance at ConnectGV for Julie.



CEO AWARD

The 2022 ConnectGV CEO Achievement Award was presented to Billabong Garden Complex supported employee **Jade Charles**.

Over the past 12 months, Jade has continued to increase his horticultural knowledge and tried exceptionally hard to improve his ability in cutting propagation. He has willingly pushed himself to learn different propagation methods and has grown in confidence. Jade's confidence in completing his tasks has improved considerably over the last 12 months. He listens to instructions and carries them out to the best of his ability, and is not frightened to ask questions when unsure.

The quality and strike rate of Jade's cuttings has gone from below average 2 years ago to now being one of our best cutting propagators. His strike rate overall is very good and he now propagates a large percentage of what is in the hothouse. Jade is demonstrating pride in his work at all times.

Jade gets on well with those around him and is a valued member of the Billabong team. He works a full day of 9am to 4pm and travels independently by public transport. He tries very hard to improve himself each week and we are extremely proud of his achievements. Congratulations Jade.



NDIS TEAM

The NDIS Team at ConnectGV is often the first point of contact for new and existing participants and families. Our welcoming team provides many answers to questions regarding what supports we can offer to participants for programs, community access, residing in our residences or options to attend or be employed within our social enterprise businesses.

Support Coordination is also offered at ConnectGV providing support to any NDIS funded clients. Our Support Coordinators provide Level 2 support to many people and is separate from the programs offered by ConnectGV. They independently work for the clients and seek services and supports anywhere within the region or beyond. You do not have to attend or participate in any ConnectGV services to utilise the Support Coordination services.

Plan Management is another service offered by ConnectGV and ensures the spending of funds is tracked, monitored and paid on time. Our Plan Managers work for the clients to ensure the services have been conducted before payment from their NDIS funding is authorised. You do not have to attend or participate in any ConnectGV services or supports to utilise the Plan Management services.



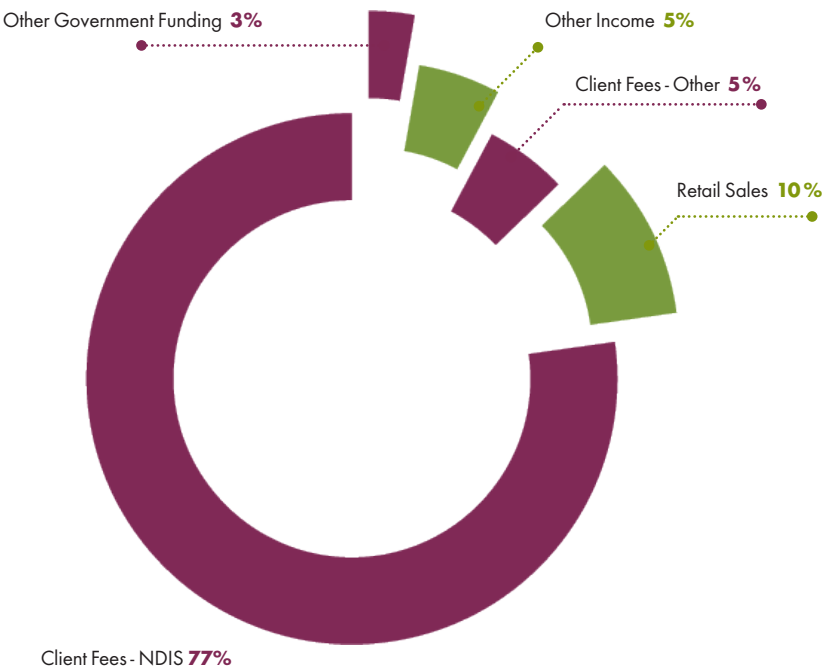
FINANCE

During the 2022/2023 financial year ConnectGV recorded a net surplus. The total revenue increased as a result of increased clients and use of services and programs. Operational and employee expenses increased in line with the additional supports and services needed for growth.

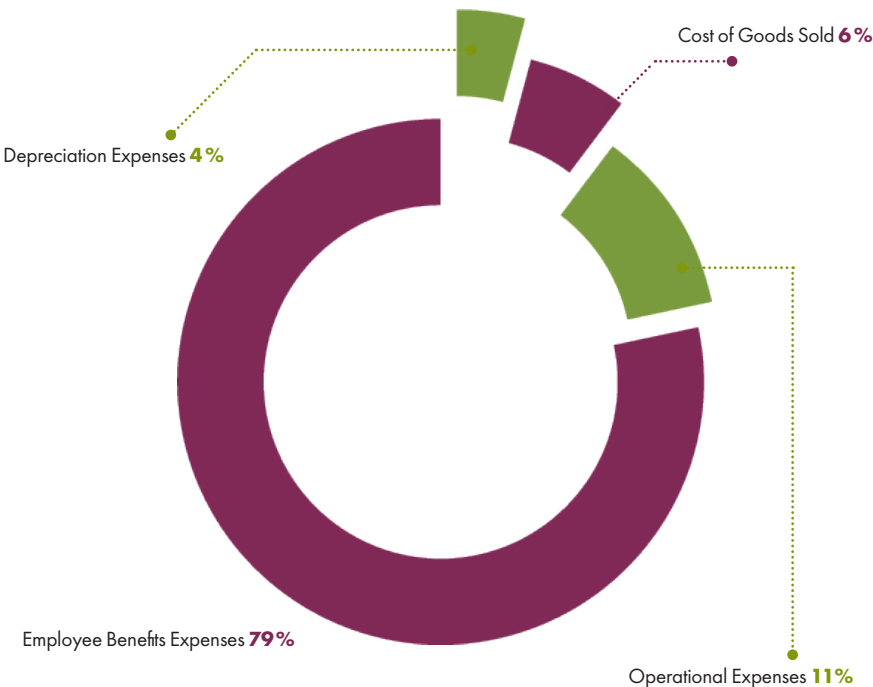
During the year, ConnectGV received \$20,000 through the Living Local Regional Grants Program to provide a kitchenette and furnishings for the outdoor learning centre at Billabong Garden Complex. This has benefited community groups and businesses from around the Goulburn Valley to use the space for meetings and presentations.

The factory at 8 New Dookie Road was leased out during the year with the Social Enterprise units, which previously operated at the New Dookie Road facility, being moved to Billabong Garden Complex on Numurkah Road. The move helped ConnectGV to better utilise space at Billabong Garden Complex, whilst generating a rental income from the facility on New Dookie Road.

Income by Source



Expenditure by Type



DONATE TO CONNECTGV



Assist a local person with a disability to achieve their goals and realise their dreams.

With a vision of an inclusive community, ConnectGV has grown and evolved over six decades to meet individual need. It has done so due to forward thinking and with the generosity of the local community.

ConnectGV remains committed to building on what matters. Your tax-deductible donation will assist to create a lasting legacy and provide quality services and options for local people with a disability.

CONTACT DETAILS

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____ Date of Birth (optional): _____ / _____ / _____

Telephone: _____ Mobile: _____

Email: _____

YOUR DONATION

Choose your donation amount: \$ _____

Do you wish to give this amount once or monthly? ☐ Give Once ☐ Give Monthly (please tick)

PAYMENT INFORMATION

Credit Card

Card holder name: _____

CardType: _____ CardNumber: _____

Card Expiry Date: _____ / _____ CVC Number (3-digit number on the back of the card): _____

Direct Debit – Periodical Payment Authority

I/We of _____

Postcode: _____

Request you, until further notice in writing, debit my/our bank account in the amount of (in words)

Select when you would like the donation debited: ☐ 1st of the month or ☐ 15th of the month (please tick)

Your bank: _____

BSB number: _____ Account number: _____

And Credit To: ConnectGV, Bendigo Bank Account, BSB No: 633 000 Account No: 107 237 273

Signed authority to process: _____ Date: _____ / _____ / _____

Donations over \$2.00 are tax-deductible.

Please send this form to:

Please make cheques payable to ConnectGV.

The Chief Executive Officer

ConnectGV
PO Box 1666
SHEPPARTON VIC 3632

ConnectGV is independently audited and complies with all Australian Charities and Not for Profit Commission (ACNC) obligations.



CONNECTGV PARTNERS

Thank you to these generous businesses and community organisations that have partnered with ConnectGV to provide opportunities for local people with a disability.

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PARTNERS

These local businesses provide employment for a person with a disability. By employing a person with a disability, be it for a couple of hours, a day or several days per week, you can make a difference! ConnectGV will work with you to match a person to your business to ensure a successful outcome and provide ongoing support.



MEDIA AND PRINTING PARTNERS

The following media agencies work with ConnectGV to raise the profile of the issues facing people with a disability and support it to communicate service offerings and participant and agency achievements.



COMMUNITY PARTNERS

The following businesses, community and sporting organisations have partnered with ConnectGV to provide support, activities and options for local people with a disability within the community.



GRANTS OBTAINED



See the possibility,



not the disAbility



ConnectGV

See the possibility, not the disAbility



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