moss

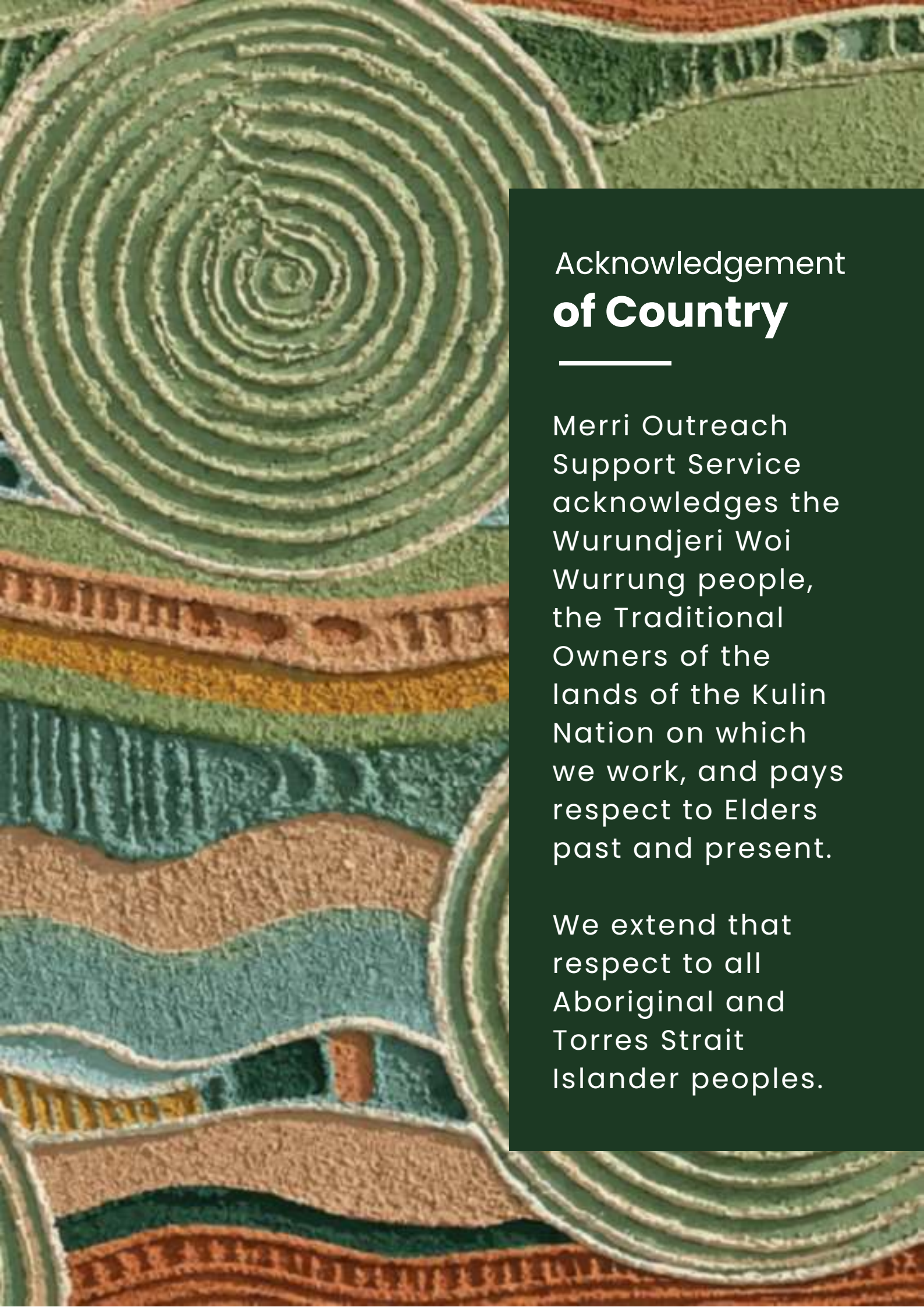
2026 ANNUAL REPORT

Beyond housing,
Building belonging.



merri.org.au
Merri Outreach Support Service

Artwork by Jesse H



Acknowledgement **of Country**

Merri Outreach Support Service acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people, the Traditional Owners of the lands of the Kulin Nation on which we work, and pays respect to Elders past and present.

We extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

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about
MOSS

MOSS exists because a home is more than a roof. It is safety, stability, connection and the freedom to take part in community life.

Since 1988, Moss has worked alongside people across Melbourne's north who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness, meeting them where they are, standing beside them through crisis, and staying with them as they rebuild. This year's theme, "Beyond Housing, Building Belonging", reflects what we see every day.

Securing housing is the beginning, not the end. Lasting change comes when people also feel seen, connected and valued in the communities where they live.

Our Vision

Striving to end homelessness, sustaining housing, strengthening communities.

1 END HOMELESSNESS
2 SUSTAIN HOUSING
3 STRENGTHEN COMMUNITIES

Our Mission

MOSS treats all people equally by ensuring they feel welcomed, connected, involved, secure and supported.

WELCOMED · CONNECTED · INVOLVED · SECURE · SUPPORTED

LEADERSHIP REFLECTIONS

from our chairperson



Stephen Gagen
MOSS Chairperson

Beyond Housing, Building Belonging.

A home provides security. A community gives us somewhere to belong.

This year's theme, Beyond Housing, Building Belonging, resonates deeply with me, not only as Chairperson of MOSS but through my own experience of housing insecurity. I grew up in rental housing in a deprived area of London.

We had no electricity, one cold-water tap, regular flooding and no security of tenure. We had very little materially, but we had something enormously valuable. We had community. Neighbours looked after one another, and despite the hardship, we felt we belonged.

When I was seven, my family moved into public housing. Electric lights, hot water and an indoor toilet seemed like heaven. But something even more important happened. Our entire neighbourhood moved to the new estate with us.

We gained a better home without losing the community that made us feel at home.

That experience has stayed with me throughout my life. It reminds me that housing is fundamental to dignity and wellbeing, but connection and belonging are equally important.

A growing challenge. A stronger MOSS.

Today, too many Australians face housing insecurity, with an acute shortage of affordable and social housing placing increasing pressure on individuals, families and the services supporting them. The need for greater government investment remains urgent.

Against this challenging backdrop, MOSS has continued to demonstrate its strength, resilience and commitment to the communities we serve. Over the past year, our programs have achieved significant outcomes. Bright Futures delivered one of its strongest years, while our Social Support Groups exceeded their targets and expanded into Darebin and Nillumbik. Our Hume Transitional Outreach team secured urgent housing for highly vulnerable families, supported by significant family violence brokerage.

Our youth, crisis response, older persons and outreach programs continued to provide essential support to people facing some of life's most difficult circumstances. The establishment of our Northern Assertive Outreach Hub at the Old Preston Courthouse has also strengthened collaboration across services, supported by our valued partnership with Darebin City Council. These achievements reflect the expertise and determination of our workforce, often working within a housing system under extraordinary pressure.

Strong governance. Sustainable growth.

For the Board, this has been a year of strengthening MOSS's foundations while positioning the organisation for future opportunities. We have enhanced our governance and risk management frameworks, introduced new organisational policies and maintained a strong focus on workforce wellbeing, leadership and organisational capability.

We have also continued to diversify our partnerships and strengthen our long-term sustainability. The appointment of our Partnerships & Growth Manager, growing corporate relationships, successful fundraising initiatives and progress on our website redevelopment are important steps towards a stronger, more connected organisation. Our relationships with local government, community organisations and corporate supporters remain essential to this work. As a Board, we recognise that sustainable growth must always be supported by sound governance, responsible financial management and a clear commitment to our purpose.

Looking ahead

During the year, we farewelled Director Daniel Jade and welcomed John Yuen as Treasurer. I sincerely thank Daniel for his contribution and welcome the experience and insight John brings to our Board.

I also extend my appreciation to my fellow Directors, our CEO, Executive Team, Program Managers, frontline staff, volunteers and partners. Your dedication, professionalism and compassion are what make MOSS the organisation it is today.

The challenges ahead are considerable, but so too are the opportunities to strengthen our impact. MOSS will continue to advocate for greater housing investment, build meaningful partnerships and support people to move beyond homelessness towards security, connection and independence.

I began this report reflecting on my childhood and the community that supported my family through difficult circumstances. Decades later, that lesson remains as relevant as ever.

A secure home can change someone's circumstances. A caring community can change their future. That is the kind of future MOSS is working to create.

from our CEO



Mark Goodie
MOSS Chief Executive Officer

Beyond Housing, Building Belonging.

Housing provides shelter. Belonging provides dignity, connection and hope.

This simple distinction captures what MOSS has been working towards over the past year and why our role in the community has never been more important. Across Melbourne's northern and western suburbs, homelessness is becoming increasingly visible. More people are sleeping in parks, cars and public spaces, while many others experience homelessness hidden from view.

We are seeing older Australians, women, young people and individuals who, despite their best efforts, can no longer secure or maintain affordable housing.
These are not simply statistics. They are people with histories, families, aspirations and a right to feel safe.
And the challenge confronting us is growing.

Bringing support where It's needed most

Over the past year, MOSS has continued to strengthen its position as a trusted leader in assertive outreach. Our teams work directly with people sleeping rough across Darebin, Merri-bek and Banyule, building relationships, providing practical assistance and creating pathways into housing and essential services.

This work requires patience, persistence and trust. Sometimes the first step towards housing begins with something as simple as a conversation. A significant development has been the establishment of our **Northern Assertive Outreach Hub in Preston**, made possible through our valued partnership with Darebin City Council. It represents a shared commitment to practical, locally driven responses to homelessness.

Our relationships with local government continue to be among MOSS's greatest strengths. We have worked closely with councils, housing providers, Aboriginal organisations and community partners to advocate for stronger, more coordinated responses across Melbourne's north. During this year, MOSS also submitted a major proposal to the Victorian Government to expand assertive outreach services. We welcome the additional investment. However, outreach alone cannot end homelessness without more social and affordable housing.

We can find people. We can build trust. We can provide support. But we must also have somewhere safe for people to call home.

Beyond housing — building belonging

While rough sleeping demands urgent attention, our work extends well beyond the streets. Through our youth refuge, older persons programs, social support groups, food relief, volunteer activities and community engagement, MOSS continues to strengthen the connections that help people remain safe, supported and included.

For a young person experiencing homelessness, belonging may begin with a safe bed and someone who believes in them. For an older person experiencing isolation, it may be a shared meal, a familiar face or a reason to look forward to tomorrow.
For someone moving from rough sleeping into housing, it means more than receiving a key.

It means rebuilding relationships, restoring confidence and becoming part of a community. **Our job does not end when someone receives a key.**

The Challenge ahead

I firmly believe homelessness is not inevitable.
It can be prevented, and it can be ended through sustained investment, stronger housing pathways, early intervention and genuine collaboration. MOSS will continue to advocate, innovate and lead where we can make the greatest difference.
Our ambition is not simply to help people move out of homelessness. It is to help them build lives in which they feel safe, connected, valued and supported. Because **housing changes circumstances. But belonging changes lives.**

Strengthening MOSS For the future

This year has also been one of organisational growth and consolidation. We have strengthened our financial position, invested in our people and leadership, progressed our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan and continued building partnerships that extend our reach and impact.

Our staff remain our greatest asset. Their compassion, professionalism and commitment are reflected in positive workforce feedback and, more importantly, in the relationships they build with the people we support.
I extend my sincere thanks to our Board, staff, volunteers, funding partners, local governments, corporate supporters and donors. Your contribution makes our work possible.

IMPACT statement

THE CHALLENGE WE FACE

105,000+
Victorians sought homelessness assistance

Housing Crisis

31,890
Vacant homes across Melbourne

Housing Supply

67,000+
Victorians are waiting for social housing

Housing Register

24%
Increase in homelessness in Victoria, nearly five times the national rate

Growing Need

11,000+
Victorians are sleeping rough

Rough Sleeping

WHO IS MOST AFFECTED

People most affected

22,835
young people sought homelessness support.

29%
of Specialist Homelessness Services clients were First Nations.

6,800+
Victorian women aged 55+ sought homelessness support.

35,700+
single parents sought homelessness support in Victoria.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Housing

1 in 5
Australians experience socioeconomic disadvantage.

Food Security

1 in 12
people ran out of money for food last year.

Community

1 in 3
people accessing specialist Homelessness Services are in Victoria.

Safety

262
family incidents are reported to police each week across Melbourne's north.

Sources: ABS, AIHW, Homes Victoria, CHP, Crime Statistics Agency Victoria, and Foodbank Australia's Hunger Report.

impact

AT A GLANCE

MOSS Impact in 2026

44,895 CONTACTS WITH COMMUNITY MEMBERS

13,190 MEALS PROVIDED

529 GROUP PROGRAMS DELIVERED

437 FAMILIES SUPPORTED

$497,524	Invested in client financial assistance	**2,058**	Nights in crisis beds
$25,000	Contribution in social value from volunteers & student services	**714**	People in long term Housing
683	Children & young people supported	**164**	First Nations people supported

Source: MOSS internal program data, 2025–26.

WHERE WE WORK

MOSS delivers outreach, crisis response, case management, aged care and community programs across Melbourne's northern metropolitan region, including Merri-bek, Darebin, Banyule, Hume, Whittlesea and Nillumbik. Several programs operate regionally or statewide.

Supporting people across Melbourne's north — and beyond.



REGIONAL & STATEWIDE

Several programs operate regionally or statewide.

OUR IMPACT PATHWAY

NEED → RESPONSE → OUTCOME → LONG-TERM CHANGE



THE STATE OF HOMELESSNESS

THE ENVIRONMENT WE WORK

112,494
people in Australia were without a home at the 2021 census

30,660
Victorians were without a home — 25% of the national total

96
people turned away by victorian homelessness services on an average day

WHY OUR WORK MATTERS

What Victorians are facing and why they seek help:

< 7%
of people without a home are sleeping rough

46%
financial difficulties

44%
family and domestic violence

34%
housing crisis

25%
young people aged 12 to 24 without a home

Sources: ABS, AIHW, Homes Victoria, CHP, and Crime Statistics Agency Victoria.



Behind the numbers

Homelessness in Melbourne's north is rarely visible. It looks like a family moving between motels, a young person couch surfing, an older woman staying in a tenancy that is no longer safe, or a man living in a squat because there is nowhere else to go.

Demand continues to outstrip supply. Rents and living costs keep rising, social housing waiting lists keep growing, and services across the sector are turning people away every day. For the people we support, that means longer periods in crisis, greater risk, and more time before stability is possible.

MOSS exists to close that gap — by reaching people early, staying with them through the hardest periods, and building the connections that make housing last.

voices of

BELONGING

Voices from our community

QUOTES FROM OUR CLIENTS

> *You let me feel that I am not alone and safe... I feel like I have family I can ask for help."*
>
> *MOSS client*



Housing & Safety

> *I was housed within two weeks in transitional housing and later supported into my beautiful long-term apartment."*

> *MOSS was able to help me reach my goal and get a home of my own to live in and furnish."*

Support & Relationships

> *My case manager treated me with respect and helped me understand my options so I could make the right decisions for myself."*

> *The support was always there for me at my lowest. The staff have been truly amazing, professional and supportive."*

Independence & Empowerment

> *They never gave up trying to help with my situation and looked at every option until my problem was solved."*

> *I feel skilled and confident to manage things on my own now."*

OUR PROGRAMS

safe housing

Crisis Response · Hume Transitional Program · Banyule Housing Support · Transitional Outreach Support Team · Assertive Outreach

WHAT WE ACHIEVED

Across the Crisis Response, Hume, TOST, Assertive Outreach and Banyule programs, teams continued to provide intensive, flexible and client-focused support to people experiencing homelessness, housing instability and rough sleeping across Melbourne's north. Despite an increasingly constrained housing environment and greater complexity of need, programs achieved positive outcomes across crisis and transitional housing, community and public housing, social housing and private rental. Strong advocacy, persistence and creative problem-solving remained central to supporting people facing multiple barriers to safe and sustainable housing. CRP strengthened relationships with housing providers, creating additional opportunities for clients and improving connections to emerging housing developments, while the program's return to Preston strengthened its presence within the local catchment and created further opportunities to connect with clients and local services. The Hume team had a very busy year, supporting more than 400 consumers over the 12 months and continuing to advocate and support people with integrity and creativity. This was evident in many positive outcomes, including more than 30 families moving through transitional housing into long-term sustainable outcomes in social and community housing settings, as well as many private rental outcomes for people not in transitional housing. The team also supported more than 40 families experiencing family violence and continued to respond to people facing poor mental health, financial hardship, substance misuse and other challenges. A highlight for the Hume program remained the annual collection and distribution of Christmas Boxes in partnership with The Life Community, providing practical support and connection to families during the festive season. TOST Programs and Assertive Outreach worked in partnership with Whittlesea Council to deliver a three-month scoping project focused on people sleeping rough across the LGA.

The project aimed to better understand the number of rough sleepers, identify key locations visible within the community and assess emerging support needs. This work demonstrated the core role of each program and showed how a person entering the homelessness service system can be supported at various stages of their journey through coordinated program responses. Assertive Outreach also contributed to the Walk in Her Shoes forum and panel discussion in Whittlesea, supporting a wider community conversation about homelessness and housing insecurity. The forum followed the Walk in Her Shoes exhibition, an immersive visual installation sharing the journey of three women from different generations as they navigated homelessness and housing instability and brought together keynote speakers and panel representatives including a local MP, a lived-experience advocate, Haven Home Safe and Assertive Outreach. The Banyule Program also achieved a strong and practical housing outcome by securing access to a three-bedroom property through a private owner, who made the home available for people sleeping rough while it awaited renovation. Over five months, the program provided safe, temporary accommodation for four people while staff worked with them to identify long-term housing pathways. All four individuals have since exited into long-term housing with ongoing support, reflecting the team's strong advocacy, practical coordination and commitment to achieving sustainable outcomes. Together, these achievements demonstrate the strength of locally connected, flexible and collaborative responses, and the commitment of staff teams who support each other, work creatively and remain focused on positive outcomes for people.

1122 **number of people supported by these programs.**

OUR PROGRAMS

safe housing

WHAT CHALLENGED US

The shortage of safe, affordable and sustainable housing continues to be the most prevalent challenge for CRP, Hume, TOST, Assertive Outreach and Banyule, and for the people they support. Teams are seeing a huge increase in demand for service, including from people who historically may not have needed to access homelessness services, but who are now being affected by the cost of living and, in particular, the rising cost of rent. People are being evicted from private rentals when landlords choose to sell or redevelop properties and are then unable to find or afford another appropriate rental. Limited crisis and transitional housing, pressure on already stretched social and community housing waitlists, and reduced movement through existing pathways mean that wait times for long-term housing are often many years. Across the sector, programs are often competing for the same limited housing resources, which makes it extremely challenging to achieve timely and sustainable outcomes even when consumers and workers are actively pursuing every available option.

Teams are also supporting people with increasingly complex presentations, including poor mental health, financial hardship, AOD, family violence, rough sleeping and long-term housing instability. As wait times increase, these complex presentations can become even harder to house, particularly when some housing providers are seeking people with lower support needs. Staff are also navigating increased expectations from some consumers who hope to be housed quickly, often in new or modern properties, despite the very limited options available. Alongside these service pressures, staff shortages and short-term funding cycles have created additional challenges for teams on the ground, who are still required to meet annual service targets with fewer resources and, at times, uncertainty about contract extensions. These challenges highlight the ongoing need for greater investment in crisis and long-term housing, stronger pathways between housing and support services, and clearer access to emerging social and affordable housing developments.

GOALS FOR THE COMING YEAR

The year ahead presents exciting opportunities to strengthen pathways into safe, secure and affordable housing. Through strong partnerships, integrated outreach services and innovative advocacy, we will continue connecting people experiencing homelessness with the housing, supports and opportunities they need to build stable futures. Building on our reputation for collaboration and client-centred practice, we will continue working across Melbourne's north to create lasting housing outcomes and ensure people feel connected, supported and empowered on their journey home.

714

people moved into long-term housing

Source: Hume Team annual report submission.

44,895

contacts across MOSS

536

people impacted by family violance

$90,000

secured for family violance grants

SUPPPORTING

children, young people and families

Catchment Youth Refuge · Youth and Family Program · Bright Futures · Bright Start · North and West Regional Children's Resource Program

WHAT WE ACHIEVED

Across MOSS's Youth Services programs, including Catchment Youth Refuge (CYR), Youth & Family (Y&F), Bright Futures and the North and West Homeless Children's Brokerage Program, young people, children and families experiencing homelessness and family violence were supported to achieve greater stability, safety and connection. CYR continued to provide a safe, welcoming and supportive environment for young people and young families experiencing homelessness. Throughout the year, residents achieved significant outcomes across housing, health, education, employment and independent living, transitioning into community and transitional housing, supported accommodation and shared private rental. Importantly, the stability provided by CYR enabled young people to focus on more than housing, including re-engaging with education, commencing training and employment, attending health and counselling appointments, and developing practical living skills such as cooking and budgeting. CYR strengthened its holistic response through partnerships with housing, health, mental health, AOD and material aid services, including regular onsite support from HYDDI, while shared meals, activities, gardening and community donations contributed to a homely and inclusive environment for young people, parents and children. Youth & Family continued to provide flexible, youth-focused support to young people experiencing or at risk of homelessness, with an emphasis on creating stability and preventing homelessness from becoming entrenched. Bright Futures continued to support children and young people affected by homelessness and family violence, with a standout achievement being the successful reinstatement of a child's NDIS plan following extensive advocacy, ensuring access to essential supports. The North and West Homeless Children's Brokerage Program supported 153 children affected by family violence and/or homelessness, helping to improve wellbeing, participation in education and community life, and strengthen engagement between children, families and practitioners. The program also increased awareness and utilisation of brokerage opportunities across the sector and delivered training and workshops that improved practitioner confidence in identifying and responding to children's needs within adult-centric service systems. Together, these programs delivered meaningful outcomes for children, young people and families, including 232 support periods through Bright Futures, well above the annual target, and the continuation of the Safe Steps Emergency Accommodation Art Therapy Group, providing valued therapeutic support for children residing in emergency accommodation as a result of family violence.

WHAT CHALLENGED US

Across MOSS's Youth Services programs, increasing demand and growing complexity continued to present significant challenges. Demand for youth homelessness support continued to exceed the availability of appropriate housing and crisis responses, with limited refuge, emergency, transitional and community housing options leaving many young people experiencing prolonged periods of housing instability. Housing affordability remained a significant barrier, particularly for young people reliant on Youth Allowance or other Centrelink payments, while an increasingly unaffordable private rental market created fewer realistic pathways into

2,058 **nights of crisis accommodation provided at Catchment Youth Refuge**

The majority of all MOSS crisis accommodation nights during 2025–26.

SUPPORTING

children, young people and families

WHAT CHALLENGED US

long-term housing. Both Catchment Youth Refuge and Youth & Family supported young people presenting with increasingly complex and intersecting needs, including family conflict, mental health concerns, alcohol and other drug issues, family violence, disrupted education and financial hardship. These pressures reinforced the importance of strong partnerships across housing, health, mental health, AOD and specialist support services and highlighted the continuing need for greater access to youth-specific crisis accommodation, affordable housing and early intervention supports.

Bright Futures and the Children's Brokerage Program also responded to increasing demand and complexity throughout the year. Ensuring equitable access to support pathways across the Northern and Western regions remained an ongoing challenge, with service demand and referral patterns fluctuating significantly across catchments. Families often faced significant barriers accessing and navigating systems of support, including language barriers, mental health challenges, housing instability, experiences of family violence and the financial cost of obtaining assessments and diagnoses. The Children's Brokerage Program continued to respond to high demand from children and families with complex needs, while also addressing challenges such as low practitioner confidence in engaging meaningfully with children, limited resources for developing and translating materials, workforce turnover and increasing pressures across the community services sector. Together, these challenges highlight the growing complexity of supporting children, young people and familiesexperiencing homelessness and family violence, and the importance of sustained investment in specialist, child-focused and early intervention services.

GOALS FOR THE COMING YEAR

The year ahead presents exciting opportunities to strengthen the support, experiences and pathways available to children, young people and families. Through enhanced refuge spaces, stronger housing partnerships, early intervention initiatives and innovative projects such as the Young Person's Journal Project, we will continue creating opportunities for young people to build confidence, connection and stability. By working collaboratively with schools, community organisations, housing providers and specialist services, we aim to ensure more young people can access the support they need before housing instability becomes entrenched and move towards brighter, more secure futures.

683 children and young people supported

437 families supported

connected

COMMUNITIES

Community Connections · Care Finder · Social Support Groups · Older Persons High Rise Support · Housing Support for the Aged · Volunteer Program

WHAT WE ACHIEVED

Older People's Programs had a strong year, achieving program targets while continuing to support older people to remain independent, connected and engaged within their communities. Social Support Groups delivered more than 32,000 hours of group-based social support and 1,638 hours of individual support, providing flexible individual and group-focused activities that enabled clients to continue living independently at home. Regular oversight of participants' health and wellbeing supported timely interventions, reduced health deterioration and hospital admissions, improved referral pathways, and strengthened clients' ability to remain connected to their communities. One of the program's biggest achievements during the year was the opportunity to grow and expand into a new local government area, Nillumbik. With HACC PYP funding secured for both Nillumbik and Darebin from July 2026, planning has commenced for new groups, networking opportunities and suitable facilities to support the expanded program. This growth has also created new jobs and opportunities within MOSS, while funding has enabled the Holmes Street program in Northcote to expand to five days of service each week. Over the past 12 months, the Support Community Engagement Program (SCEP) has experienced a considerable amount of transition. Despite this, community engagement has remained a significant highlight across both high-rise sites, extending beyond trusted daily support to include ongoing food relief operations, well-attended community BBQs and regular monthly resident meetings. These activities have strengthened engagement between residents, DFFH, Homes Victoria and the broader community, including opportunities for clients to participate through volunteering. In the background, staff across SCEP, HSAP, CCP and Care Finder have demonstrated exceptional commitment in meeting program targets and reporting requirements while adapting to frequent operational changes. Their efforts have ensured that older people continued to receive consistent support, maintain social connections and remain active participants within their communities.

WHAT CHALLENGED US

Like many community services programs, Older People's Programs experienced workforce challenges throughout the year, with staffing vacancies impacting service capacity at various times. While maintaining program targets was sometimes challenging, staff demonstrated a strong commitment to working collaboratively and adapting to changing circumstances to ensure clients continued to receive high-quality support and programs achieved their intended outcomes.

As services continue to grow, particularly through expansion into Nillumbik, ensuring adequate resources remains an ongoing focus. Access to vehicles and other operational resources continues to present challenges when delivering services across multiple locations and supporting an expanding client base. Workforce attraction and retention also remain important considerations, with sector-wide competition for skilled staff affecting recruitment opportunities. Funding limitations can sometimes constrain opportunities for program growth and innovation. However, these challenges have also encouraged greater collaboration across the organisation and a stronger focus on making the best use of available resources. Volunteers continue to play a vital role in strengthening Social Support Groups, enhancing participant experiences and contributing to the program's ongoing success.

900

volunteer hours contributed across MOSS during 2025–26

Including approximately 400 hours beyond the Older Persons High Rise Support Program.

connected

COMMUNITIES

Belonging, participation and connection for older people and isolated community members.

GOALS FOR THE COMING YEAR

Following a successful year of growth and expansion, our focus for the coming year is on embedding this growth and continuing to deliver a high-quality, client-centred program across our communities. Priorities include building strong relationships and new networks, expanding volunteer involvement, and continuing to represent MOSS positively in the communities we support. Volunteers play a vital role in helping the program reach more participants, support individual and group goals, and bring a diverse range of skills, interests and experiences. We also hope to introduce more participant-led activities that encourage people to share their skills, learn from one another, and build confidence, independence and social connection. Across our high-rise and community-based services, we will continue to strengthen food relief initiatives and community engagement opportunities in partnership with local residents and agencies, while enhancing volunteering opportunities and community participation. We will also focus on maintaining a skilled and stable workforce, strengthening staff capacity and reflective practice, improving the consistency of intake and referral processes, and streamlining systems that support service delivery and reporting. In response to resident feedback, we will explore opportunities to re-establish community computer spaces and digital literacy programs to support greater digital inclusion and connection within our communities.

13,190	**meals provided**
529	**group sessions delivered**
705	**older people supported**



STORIES
of belonging

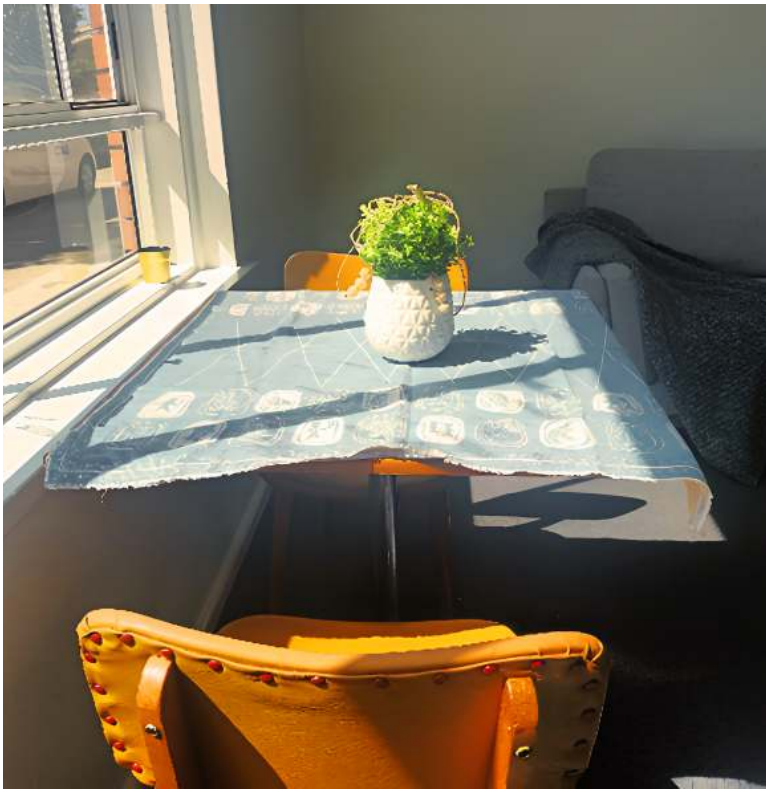
Kat, a mother of two, experienced family violence, housing instability, language barriers and difficulty navigating the legal system.

MOSS's Hume team built trust through culturally safe and persistent support, uncovering that Kat had been misidentified as the person using family violence.

Through coordinated information sharing, advocacy and referrals to specialist services, the team fast-tracked housing support with the Office of Housing and Unison.

Kat and her children were supported to move from crisis and uncertainty towards safety, stability and a more secure future.







STORIES OF BELONGING

Lucy arrived at Catchment Youth Refuge after leaving an unsafe family environment, experiencing the impacts of family violence, disrupted education and employment, and a limited support network.

At CYR, safety and stability gave her space to rebuild confidence and focus on her future. Lucy actively participated in case planning and housing meetings, secured two casual jobs, and completed RSA, bartending and barista training.

She commenced a Certificate IV in Personal Services at Deakin University, received a laptop to support her studies, and began working towards her driver's licence. She also developed budgeting and cooking skills and became a welcoming presence for other young residents.

Housing remained a significant barrier. Despite applying for more than seven THM properties and attending numerous private rental interviews, Lucy was unsuccessful. Her persistence ultimately led to longer-term supported student accommodation, giving her stability to continue studying, maintain employment and build an independent future.



STORIES OF BELONGING

Nancy connected with MOSS while living alone in public housing at Barkly Street, experiencing significant vision impairment, multiple health conditions, social isolation and difficulty managing daily tasks. Limited informal support and challenges attending appointments were also affecting her wellbeing and housing stability.

Recognising her complex needs across housing, health and aged care, the High Rise Support and Advocacy Program (HSAP), Older Persons High Rise Program and Care Finder Program worked together through coordinated, client-centred support. Staff assisted Nancy with public housing transfer and special accommodation requests, transport, GP and hospital appointments, and connections to My Aged Care, Vision Australia, council services, social support and food relief.

Practical assistance included accessing a vision-suitable phone, addressing home safety, pest treatment and essential household items. Through persistence, collaboration and a strengths-based approach respecting choice and consent, Nancy became more connected to supports, strengthening her safety, independence and ability to remain in her community.

Beyond housing means

INCLUSION

OVERVIEW

2026 has been a significant year of progress and achievement for the RAP Working Group focusing on finalising and securing endorsement of our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) while continuing to deliver on our commitments to sharing knowledge, cultural awareness, celebrating First Nations culture, advancing reconciliation and supporting Treaty.

The Working Group continues to bring together staff from across the agency from frontline staff, through finance, to the CEO. Our members are Mark (CEO), Kathryn (Chair), Louise (Co-Chair), Jesse, Natasja, Melanie, Marilla and Lorraine. More importantly, the group continues to be guided by Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation Elders, who have played a significant role in our Innovate RAP and our group's overall work.

As a group, we were deliberate about making sure the development work was not our sole focus. Alongside drafting, consultation, redrafting and design, we kept marking key dates, kept our people learning, and kept MOSS visibly standing alongside First Nations communities - a busy year practising while the Innovate plan was written.

164 First Nations people supported by MOSS during 2025–26









RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

working group report

CHALLENGES AND LEARNINGS

One of the challenges this year was balance: getting the Innovate RAP endorsed without letting the development process absorb everything else.
Our commitment to substituting the 26 January public holiday has not yet translated into policy, remaining an ongoing challenge. The intent is settled; what is taking time is getting the detail right for employment conditions and the operational needs.

Sourcing the right design agency and artist for the Innovate RAP artwork took longer than planned. Cost ruled out the agency we had used previously, going back to market required relationship-building and assessing fit — a reminder that the right partnerships can't be rushed. Saretta Art & Design proved to be exactly the right match.

Tarra Terrick facilitated an onsite First Nations weaving workshop providing meaningful learnings about the importance of culture, connection, storytelling and community. The workshop encouraged respectful conversations, reflection on the incredible skill required and recognition of the importance of listening. It highlighted how shared experiences and cultural practices can help build understanding, respect and stronger relationships.

ACHIEVEMENTS

The year concluded with the official endorsement of MOSS's Innovate RAP **(MOSS Innovate RAP)** marking an important milestone in our reconciliation journey. The Woi Wurrung Cultural Advisory Group provided an essential voice throughout the development of our RAP and we look forward to continuing to strengthen the relationship over the next two years. The RAP Working Group continued to build awareness and engagement across the agency by recognising and sharing key dates of celebration and significance with staff. The group invited staff to join them at the National Reconciliation breakfast in May - the second-year MOSS has supported the event, providing staff with the valuable opportunity to hear lived-experience stories and deepen their understanding of reconciliation.

During NAIDOC Week, the Working Group joined with the Social Support Group to organise a range of activities, including damper making, rock painting and a short video recognising 50 years of Deadly. The ANTAR Sea of Hands activity was also a great success, with staff and residents coming together to show their support.

A Cultural Learning Strategy was developed and endorsed during the year, with Red Dust Training made available to all staff - demonstrating MOSS's commitment to prioritising Cultural Learning and embedding it across the organisation. Cultural learning is increasingly being incorporated into team planning, and staff have also participated in community events, including National Sorry Day events hosted by Hume and Darebin Councils and the WT Onus Aboriginal Hostel Community Stakeholder Lunch.

Overall, the RAP Working Group has continued to strengthen MOSS's commitment to reconciliation - building cultural awareness, creating opportunities for staff and residents to engage, and developing partnerships that support meaningful and ongoing action.

THE YEAR AHEAD

MOSS's Treaty Pledge is with Gellung Warl for final approval. Once endorsed, the pledge will enable MOSS to publicly demonstrate its support for the Traditional Owners representing and making decisions on behalf of First Nations Peoples across Victoria.

The MOSS Working Group is also progressing with opportunities to work with VACSAL to provide student placements, supporting further connection, learning and development opportunities.

MOSS Working Group will continue to meet fortnightly working through the actions of the Innovate RAP alongside information sharing across the organisation, event planning, collaboration with external stakeholders and continuing to build on the good work and positive impact towards reconciliation and the First Nations consumers we support.









RAINBOW TICK
LGBTIQA+ inclusion

Rainbow Tick Accreditation

The LGBTIQA+ Inclusive Practice Working Group focused on advancing MOSS toward Rainbow Tick accreditation and recognising days of significance. Staff completed the Rainbow Health Australia How2 Program, while a student placement is supporting updates to documents, forms and processes.

Days of Significance

Wear It Purple Day: Creative handprint canvases promoted visible support for Rainbow young people and the broader LGBTIQA+ community.

Trans Day of Visibility: Staff completed a survey to identify knowledge gaps, and video resources were shared at the Agency Meeting to enhance understanding.

IDAHOBIT: A capacity-building email was shared with staff, highlighting the history and significance of IDAHOBIT Day.







Caring for our people

WELLBEING COMMITTEE

The Wellbeing Committee strengthened staff wellbeing, connection and belonging through inclusive initiatives supporting mental, physical and social health across MOSS.

Delivery

Promoted wellbeing, self-care, inclusive events, staff connection, recognition, resources and accessible activities.

Outcomes

Strengthened staff connection, wellbeing awareness, participation and positive workplace culture.

Learnings

Simple, varied and accessible initiatives best support diverse teams, workloads and availability.

Membership

Representatives across MOSS contributed ideas, feedback, coordination and communication.

Staff Engagement

Created opportunities to connect, share openly, contribute ideas and provide feedback.

Psychological Safety

Supported a culture of care, respect and inclusion where wellbeing could be discussed openly.

Workforce Support

Focus areas include regular communication, inclusive activities, stronger feedback, staff recognition and sustainable wellbeing processes.

a year of

HIGHLIGHTS AND CHALLENGES

WHAT WE'RE PROUD OF

A Night at Hayes Park

A warm community evening celebrating connection, belonging and shared celebration.

Winter Solstice Gala

Around 90 guests gathered for client stories, live entertainment and support for MOSS's work.

Rainbow Tick Progress

How2 training and student placement support are strengthening inclusive practice.

Growth into Nillumbik

New HACC PYP funding opened opportunities for connection and participation in another LGA.

Endorsement of Innovate RAP

Assertive Outreach Hub in Preston

OUR CHALLENGES

Housing Shortages

Demand continues to exceed supply, extending time in crisis.

Funding Pressures

Inconsistent funding and short-term contracts create uncertainty for teams.

Rising Costs

Operating costs and living costs place pressure on services and households.

Demand Growth

More people are presenting more often, with increasingly complex needs.









our funding

PARTNERS

MOSS reaches people earlier, stabilises tenancies and connects older people, families and young people with the right care because of the commitment of our **partners and supporters.**

THE HALL FOUNDATION

INNER NORTH COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Merri-bek City Council

Nelson Alexander

STREETSMART ACTION AGAINST HOMELESSNESS

phn NORTH WESTERN MELBOURNE An Australian Government Initiative

Banyule City Council

Australian Government

Uniting

VICTORIA State Government | Families, Fairness and Housing

Australia Post

City of DAREBIN

phn EASTERN MELBOURNE An Australian Government Initiative

HUME CITY COUNCIL

myagedcare

DONORS, SPONSORS
and supporters

WITH THANKS — PARTNERS WHO GO FURTHER

Corporate Donors

- Nelson Alexander — Fitzroy
- ERH Refrigerated Transport
- Sunrise Eggs
- Jellis Craig North Side Property
- Impactora
- Australia Post
- St Remio Coffee
- Otto IT

Individual Donors

- Anthony Cianflone MP
- Robert Pease
- Alice Walter
- Laura Mason
- Andrea Tsiolis
- Oscar Panameno
- Angela Potter
- Jon Patrikakos
- Pam Jenkins
- David Papadopoulos
- Peter Sagar
- Milan Rajkovic
- Andrew Oates
- Adam Grieve
- Christopher Ragkeb
- Con Tsioukis
- Simon Errington
- Alison Champion
- Mark Goodie
- Carl Mccambridge
- Wani Sak
- Richard Agar
- Liz Irvin
- Louise Caldone
- Marzia Osellame
- Tom Howarth
- Matthew Sheen
- Anthony Panagiotou
- Geoff Crouch
- Theo Pappas
- Jordan Papadopoulos
- Justin McKenzie
- James Greer
- Harriet McHugh-Dillon
- Roy Kazamias
- Karun Gupta
- Mary Houlihan
- Mary Lisa
- Donny Potoi
- Nicolas Spokes
- Clifford Tranter
- Debra Herovat
- Jon Hyde
- Ted Baynes
- Conor Burns
- Menusha Warnakulasuriya
- Katherine Shirtcliffe
- Lorraine Walker
- Sene Potoi
- Lydia Suizu
- Pirelli BG

Event Sponsors and Supporters

- Holy Trinity Cricket Club
- Jellis Craig North Side Property
- Impactora
- Otto IT
- St Remio Coffee
- Sunrise Eggs
- Big Swing Golf Preston
- Ms Frankie Carlton
- Carlton Football Club
- Melbourne Football Club
- Essendon Football Club
- North Melbourne Football Club
- July Luggage
- One of Us

Supporters Who Give Back

- KG & Co Consulting
- Shape
- Department of Justice
- NAB
- Interleasing
- Tea Drop
- NMPS
- Telstra
- FoodBank

Our Volunteers Matter

We thank our volunteers for their valued support and commitment to our community.

FINANCIAL
report

FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

Financial year ended 30 June 2026

$8,95m
total income

▲ 5.3% on 2025

$8,83m
total expenditure

▲ 5.6% on 2025

$115,383
net surplus

2nd consecutive surplus

$1.32m
cash and deposits

▲ 16.7% on 2025

$1.58m
total equity

▲ 7.9% to a 5-year high

$497,524
invested in direct client support

A STRONG, STEADY YEAR

Merri Outreach Support Service closed the year with a net surplus of $115,383 — our second consecutive surplus — in total, income of $8.95 million, up 5.3% on last year. Growth came from: government funding rose 3.6% to $7.69 million as existing contracts were indexed and renewed, and new agreements with 2 local Councils in addition to renewed contracts with East Melbourne and North West Melbourne Care Finders. And amazing community support resulting in donations lifting to $27,459 and a first full year of events and fundraising adding $45,072.

We continued to invest in the people who deliver our services. Employment costs of $7.36 million (up 6.6%) remain our largest commitment at 83.3% of total expenditure, alongside $497,525 in direct client support. Careful management held the remaining costs steady: telephone costs fell 42%, computer costs eased 1.9%, and occupancy rose just 2.6% despite inflation. Overall expenditure grew 5.6% — broadly in step with income — so the surplus was protected while frontline capacity grew.

The balance sheet strengthened again. Total equity increased 7.9% to $1.58 million, the highest in five years and a $298,000 improvement over three years. Cash and term deposits rose 16.7% to $1.32 million, current assets cover current liabilities 1.25 times (2025: 1.20), and liabilities sit at a conservative 0.75 of equity. MOSS enters 2026–27 financially stable, well provisioned for employee entitlements, and able to keep investing in the programs the community relies on.

the year IN NUMBERS

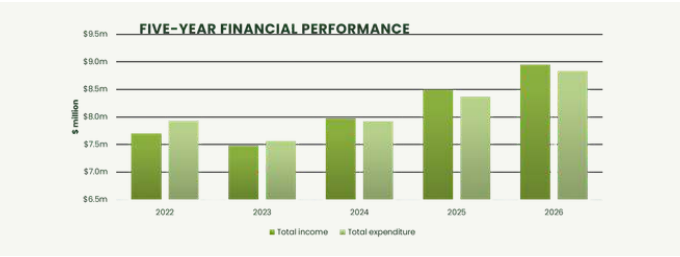
$1.25m

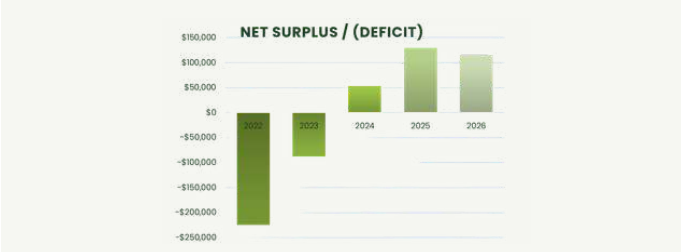
income growth since 2022

THE RESULT IN CONTEXT

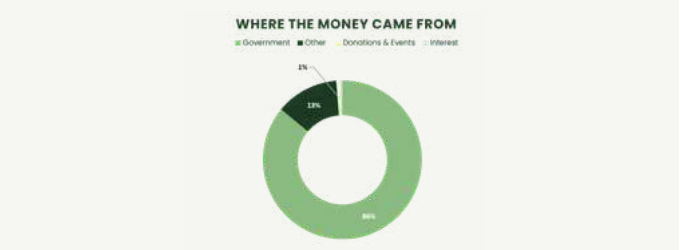
From a $224,785 deficit to two consecutive surpluses.

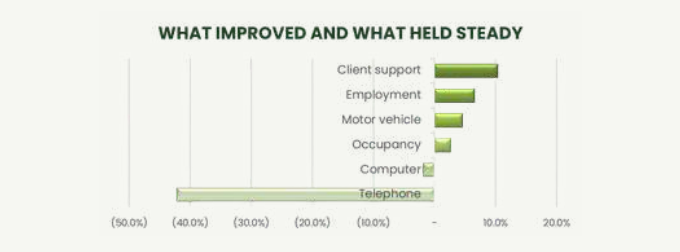
A FIVE-YEAR VIEW OF PERFORMANCE, FUNDING AND INVESTMENT

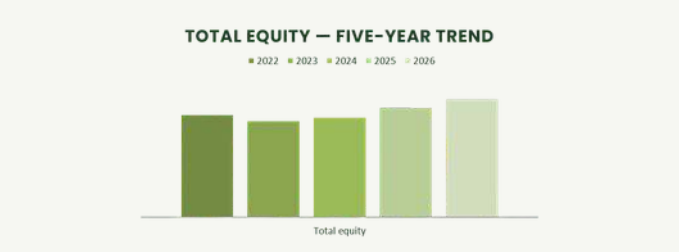












KEY TAKEAWAYS

Larger frontline investment	Client support increased 10.4% and employment investment rose 6.6%, reflecting service delivery priorities.
Growing funding base	Government funding increased 3.6% with a 10% increse in other income.
Stronger financial position	Total assets increased 10.0% to $2.77 million and equity reached $1.58 million.



Statement of

PROFIT OR LOSS

STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS

for the Year Ended 30 June 2026

INCOME	2026 $	2025 $
Government funding	7,693,058	7,422,554
Donations and philanthropic income	72,531	2,056
Other income	1,144,251	1,029,324
Interest received	37,981	41,281
Gain on disposal of assets		805
Total income	8,947,821	8,496,020

EXPENDITURE	2026 $	2025 $
Employment benefit and expense	7,355,854	6,902,379
Occupancy	285,443	278,214
Computer	193,806	197,562
Telephone	44,959	77,712
Depreciation	55,343	42,931
Motor vehicle	288,545	275,888
Client expense	497,524	450,791
Other expense	110,963	140,806
Total expenditure	8,832,437	8,366,283
Net surplus / (deficit) for the year	115,384	129,737

This is an extract. Our full audited accounts can be found on our website.

Merri Outreach Support Service Ltd / ABN 42 318 912 323

BALANCE SHEET
and trends

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
as at 30 June 2026

CURRENT ASSETS	2026 $	2025 $
Cash and cash equivalents	831,283	657,224
Accounts and other receivables	72,889	42,242
Other assets	78,882	80,774
Investments in term deposits	504,545	480,156
Total current assets	1,487,599	1,260,396
NON-CURRENT ASSETS		
Property, plant and equipment	1,290,683	1,257,766
Total non-current assets	**1,290,683**	**1,257,766**
Total assets	2,778,282	2,518,162
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Accounts and other payables	622,984	548,910
Employee benefits	572,234	499,611
Total current liabilities	1,195,218	1,048,521
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Employee benefits	467	2,428
Total non-current liabilities	**467**	**2,428**
Total liabilities	1,195,685	1,050,949
Total assets	1,582,597	1,467,213
EQUITY		
Accumulated funds	1,582,597	1,467,213
Total equity	1,582,597	1,467,213

This is an extract. Our full audited accounts can be found on our website.

Merri Outreach Support Service Ltd / ABN 42 318 912 323

Looking
FORWARD

OUR PRIORITIES

As we look to 2026–27, our focus is on deepening impact, strengthening the foundations that support our work, and continuing to build belonging alongside housing.

Strengthening housing pathways
We will continue advocating for safe, secure and affordable housing options, while strengthening the pathways that help people move from crisis into stability.

Building belonging in community
We will keep creating opportunities for connection, participation and inclusion so that people are not only housed, but feel part of community life.

Growing with purpose
We will pursue opportunities for sustainable growth where they meet community needs, strengthen service access and align with MOSS's mission and values.

Investing in our people
We will continue supporting staff wellbeing, capability and connection, recognising that strong outcomes for community begin with a supported workforce.

Deepening partnerships
We will work alongside councils, health services, housing providers, community organisations and funders to create practical, coordinated responses.

Improving systems and evidence
We will strengthen quality, reporting and continuous improvement systems so that our work remains accountable, responsive and focused on impact.



moss

BEYOND HOUSING, BUILDING BELONGING

Everyone deserves more than a roof over their head. Everyone deserves a place to belong.

To find out how you can get involved, scan the QR code below, or go to **merri.org.au**
Thank you for your support.

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Phone: (03) 9359 5493
merri.org.au