

Ashburton Baptist Community Services Incorporated (ABCSI)

Annual Report 2022-2023

Introduction

1. Ashburton Baptist Community Services Inc. (ABCSI) is an incorporated association that exists to express Christian care through such charitable activities as may be authorised as an activity of a public benevolent institution and as the Association shall determine from time to time. ABCSI consists of both a Committee of Management and general members and, seeks to provide relief for people from poverty, sickness, suffering, distress, misfortune, disability, or helplessness in the cities of Boroondara and Monash, by mobilising the gifts and talents of members of Ashburton Baptist Church, other churches, and people of goodwill in our local community. The ABCSI Committee of Management makes decisions about who ABCSI partners with and where they direct funds to fulfil that purpose. They maintain oversight over each partnership to ensure the funds are being utilised in accordance with their charitable purpose.

2. Rather than ABCSI directly providing the relief itself, Ashburton Baptist Church provides most volunteers that both organise and run the charitable activities that are funded and overseen by ABCSI. This collaboration provides the most effective means of delivering material help to those in need in the local community. However, ABCSI projects are not solely in collaboration with Ashburton Baptist Church. Some projects funded and overseen by ABCSI are delivered in collaboration with other organisations, such as Baptcare, Samarinda, Kids Hope Australia and Ashwood High School. ABCSI is grateful for the opportunity to fulfill our purposes in partnership with all these organisations.

3. To best effect our purpose, ABCSI:
 - considers ideas and proposals for partnerships and collaborations to provide benevolent relief within the local community;
 - raises funds;
 - makes decisions about partnerships, collaborations and, where to direct funds;
 - ensures the good governance of ABCSI activities and that the legal obligations of operations are met;
 - may own and maintain real property for a benevolent purpose; and
 - reports back to their supporters.

Overview of 2022-2023

4. This year the ABCSI Committee of Management has continued the work that commenced in early 2022 on ensuring our vision and purpose were clear, our operating principles were well known and understood and, our governing documents were up to date. This work has

brought about some important changes in the way we operate, and it has consolidated other practices.

5. But our work has not been all management related! There has been so much great work going on with our projects and the Committee of Management are deeply grateful to those who volunteer to bring our projects to life, to sustain them and to ensure they bring real assistance to those who need it most in our community.
6. With so many important projects funded by ABCSI, one of our key objectives for this financial year was to ensure the Ashburton Baptist Church community (where most of our financial contributors and volunteers are drawn from) were updated regularly on our projects and how they could get involved. Special thanks must go to Committee of Management member Marilyn, who has put in a significant effort to ensure the Ashburton Baptist Church weekly bulletins contained regular ABCSI contributions, focusing on our individual projects and special events.
7. While we are grateful to all our supporters, a real highlight of this financial year was the contribution of the Ashburton Baptist Church youth group. This group of youths from Grade 6 – Year 11 dreamt of, planned, prepared, and ran a fabulous trivia night to raise funds for ABCSI. About 60 people attended the trivia night on 17 June 2023, participated in trivia and a silent auction and purchased cakes from their cake stall, resulting in a total of \$1599 being raised for ABCSI's Houses of Hope and School Chaplaincy projects. We thank the youths, their parents and everyone who attended and baked cakes to make this such a successful night. It is heartening to see all generations of the Ashburton Baptist community getting behind the work of ABCSI.



8. Finally, if you have ideas for the ABCSI Committee of Management to consider, we will shortly release an application form that can be completed and submitted for our consideration. This will enable us to assess both long- and short-term projects against our purpose and consider our ability to assist more people in need in our local community.

Committee of Management

9. The 2023 Committee of Management:

Abbie Roodenburg – President

Geoff Shepherd – Vice President

Lyn Wilson – Treasurer

Maurice Robson – Secretary (retired from the committee in February 2023)

Helen Fearn-Wannan – Secretary (from 14 February 2023)

Sharyn White

Marg Carter

Marilyn McPherson

Peter Nichols

10. The Committee of Management met bimonthly to review our projects and finances and discuss any general business arising, including proposals for new and developing needs within our local community. My thanks go to each of the members of this Committee for their dedication to this Association, their volunteer hours, and their passion for the respective projects they are involved in. Special thanks to Helen Fearn-Wannan for stepping into the Secretary role after only a month on the Committee! We thank Maurice for his service to the Committee of Management over many, many years and are grateful he remains involved in both the Ashwood High and Houses of Hope projects.
11. We also recognise the efforts of the previous President, Megan Barnett, who served the ABCSI committee for many years and retired at the conclusion of 2022.

Operational updates

12. Work began on updating our statutory rules many years ago. This work culminated in a vote at last year's AGM to replace the old rules with a slightly modified, fit for purpose, version of the model rules. The new rules were submitted to Consumer Affairs in early 2023 for approval and now form the rules governing our operations. The new rules provide for a different membership process. To that end, documentation was developed to explain the new process and the ABCSI Committee of Management has considered our first membership applications. We look forward to welcoming more new members in 2024.

13. We also spent time considering our obligations under the Safe Church policies and associated legislation. To that end, we consulted with the Ashburton Baptist Church deacons to discuss our different roles in programs that are funded and overseen by ABCSI, but where volunteers were drawn from Ashburton Baptist Church and elsewhere to run those programs. We considered who was required to hold Working With Children Checks (WWCC), police checks, and do vetting of new volunteers.
14. To that end, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed in early October 2023 between Ashburton Baptist Church and ABCSI setting out our individual obligations and our collective understanding of our respective Safe Church responsibilities. By agreement, and in acknowledgement that the ABCSI Committee of Management does not have any direct contact with children or vulnerable adults but is an association that seeks to provide for such individuals, ABCSI Committee of Management members will adopt and comply with the Safe Church Policy, Safe Church Procedures and Leaders Code of Conduct of Ashburton Baptist Church as if it were a policy, procedure or code of ABCSI.
15. The Committee of Management's operational documents are now up to date and the vision, purpose and responsibilities of our incorporated association are clear. This puts ABCSI in the best place possible to fulfill its purpose and meet its operational obligations.

ABCSI Programs

Houses of Hope

16. Houses of Hope continues to provide supported transitional accommodation and a caring, supportive welcome for people seeking asylum in Australia. The program runs in partnership with Baptcare and currently supports a number of families in our local community.
17. More than 13,000 people in Victoria are seeking asylum and living in the community with very little government support available to them. They are at high risk of homelessness. We can therefore expect that strong demand for the transitional housing this program offers will continue for some time.
18. In 2023, after two years of being residents in one of our units, one of our families was able to move out and into the community after they successfully obtained a visa allowing them to stay in Australia. More recent volunteer efforts had focused particularly on helping the mother with learning how to independently access services like Centrelink. English practice over many months made a significant impact on her success with these essential online services. Volunteers also ferried the daughter to her school basketball matches and helped her practice riding with a recently donated bike. We were pleased to hear the

transition to their new accommodation had gone smoothly and they were becoming settled.



19. Soon after, we warmly welcomed a new resident into that unit. He settled in quickly and is participating regularly in church community activities. He is very much appreciating the hospitality being shown to him.
20. Our other residents continue to wait in hope that their visa status will be resolved soon, enabling them to move on with their lives.
21. Houses of Hope have ten active volunteers who continue to provide practical and social support to our residents. Their ongoing concern and commitment is an inspiration.
22. The Houses of Hope program is nearing completion of its seventh year of operation. We strive to continue while the need persists and are heartened by the consistent level of donations and donor support over this year and previous years. The Committee of Management thanks Bernie Pigeon for his leadership of the volunteers and the subcommittee that implements this program.

Ashwood High Chaplaincy

23. The program of support to Ashwood High continued into its fourth year in 2023 and comprised funding for two days per week of chaplaincy support, which was supplemented by an additional half day per week funded from the school's own resources. The chaplain is recruited, and supported technically, by Korus Connect, an accredited provider of chaplaincy services to government schools.
24. The chaplain builds one-on-one relationships with students who are displaying behaviours such as chronic absenteeism, self-harm, anxiety, depression and/or suicidal ideation. This support is also complemented by the Friday Breakfast Club Program (see below). The

chaplain participates actively in the Breakfast Program and values it as one means of connecting with students at risk.

25. The Principal and Deputy Principal of Ashwood High have spoken very positively about the value of the chaplaincy program and its importance in providing support to students at risk. This enthusiasm has led to a government funding application to support chaplaincy in 2024 (up to \$20,000 per year for three years). If successful, this will provide much needed support to enable the program to continue, but it will require some continuation of support from ABCSI. The school has not yet been advised of the result of their application for government funding.
26. In April 2023, the Committee of Management were grateful to welcome Richard Kolega (Korus Connect) and Meg McLellan (Deputy Principal, Ashwood High) to our meeting to report on the chaplain's involvement in Ashwood High. The school is very grateful for our financial contribution as the work of the chaplain is described as "destiny changing" by the Assistant Principal and it is not currently funded by any Government grant. The chaplain works within a wellbeing team. School refusal/non-attendance is a significant issue at Ashwood High and Ms McLellan noted the important role the chaplain has played in working alongside students to increase their school attendance. Further, the mental health impacts following COVID lockdowns and home schooling have notably increased. The school indicated that, if funds were available, they would have sufficient need for the school chaplain to be at the school five days per week. His contribution is greatly valued.
27. The significant cost of this program presents a budgetary challenge for ABCSI going forward, but the Committee of Management believe the chaplain's work to be vital in supporting vulnerable young people in our local community. ABCSI proposes to continue to support this program as needed in 2024. We have recently been provided with a cost proposal from Korus and discussions with Ashwood High will commence in the near future.
28. The ABCSI Committee of Management thanks Maurice Robson and Sharyn White for their liaison with Ashwood High School and Korus Connect throughout 2023.

Ashwood High Breakfast Club

29. ABCSI funds approximately 1600 free breakfasts per year for students at Ashwood High School! This is a program that has run for about 20 years and is currently growing due to the significant increase in student population in 2023.
30. This program endeavours to promote healthy eating habits, while helping to improve students' concentration and learning capacity through access to a nutritious breakfast. It

encourages relationship building between students, teachers and volunteers from the church. It is also a lot of fun and helps build social connections in the church community.

31. We are grateful to the team of volunteers who make this program possible. We thank subcommittee members Liz Jones, Maurice Robson and Lyn Wilson for their ongoing commitment to the program. Of course, without the many, many other volunteers from Ashburton Baptist and the CWA who attend the program, mix and flip pancakes and contribute their time and efforts, this valuable program would not be possible, and we are grateful for their service.



Elsie Salter House

32. The Samarinda Day Respite program at Elsie Salter House (administered by Samarinda) is an inclusive specialist day program operating four days per week for people living at home with dementia, memory loss or confusion. ABCSI provides and maintain the building in which this important program is held. Volunteers from Ashburton Baptist Church maintain the gardens and do odd jobs as required.
33. In 2023, ABCSI has funded important building maintenance including new carpet and vinyl, painting, and roof repairs. This year, we also contributed towards new fencing at the property, a cost shared with Ashburton Baptist Church given the shared boundaries.
34. Special thanks to Margaret Carter, Peter Nichols, Coralie Wright and Richard Thwaites for their continued commitment to this program.

Community Care

35. Ashburton Baptist Church has been providing hampers to local families for almost 40 years! The donations to ABCSI allow us to provide 40 hampers to Camcare at Christmas time and 20 hampers in winter (when utility bills often consume clients' income and donations of groceries are particularly welcome). 85% of the hampers go to residents in our local Ashburton community.
36. Christmas hampers were again the major Community Care activity in the past year. Generous donations amounted to \$4720, exceeding our target of \$4000. On a Monday afternoon in December a hardworking team collected our large grocery order from Woolworths and arranged more than 1100 items in the church. Then on Tuesday morning another large all-ages team packed 80 large boxes (40 hampers) and delivered them to Camcare for local families in need.
37. In August we invited grocery donations to make up 20 smaller "winter warmer" hampers to ease the financial pressures on households at a time when energy bills are highest.
38. These hamper packing activities continued our longstanding collaboration with Camcare, whose Ashburton office in Y Street has now reopened after renovations. According to Camcare, people are truly grateful to receive an "amazing" hamper. They always express surprise at the size of the gift and most start talking about how certain items will be used and which is someone's favourite. This connection to the hamper and what it provides to a person goes beyond the physical process of donation, packing and distributing groceries to being an ongoing connection between individuals living in Ashburton and the Ashburton Baptist community.
39. Thank you to everyone who contributed financially or physically. You helped to make a difference! The ABCSI Committee of Management thanks Deborah Patterson and Alan Pinkard for their leadership of Community Care over many, many years, but particularly in the last 12 months.



Kids Hope

40. ABCSI has been partnering with Ashburton Primary School for over fifteen years to support the Kids Hope program. This program develops and supports 1:1 mentoring relationships between ABC trained KIDS HOPE AUS mentors and children selected by the school to be in the program. The Kids Hope ministry takes the form of weekly meetings throughout the school year and each of these mentoring relationships are in turn supported by prayer partners. Donations to ABCSI fund the annual registration for Kids Hope.
41. Since this partnership began, 46 adults from the Ashburton Baptist Church community have developed mentoring relationships with 66 children. An additional 30 members of the Ashburton Baptist Church community and beyond have been prayer partners providing regular, intentional prayer support, the impact of which is immeasurable.
42. The strategic partnership developed with the school leadership and the teaching body is highly valued by both parties. The unique nature of the KIDS HOPE AUS program, means that mentors continue to see their child as they move through the school. This provides a unique sense of continuity and security for children for whom this is not always experienced, and the mentors have reported many instances early in the school year, when teachers seek them out for context or support ideas regarding the child, rather than the other way around! Over the years, the school has regularly recognised KIDS HOPE publicly as their most significant and impactful program for 'at risk' children.
43. The current mentoring team includes Ann Nash, Viki Pinkard, Tri Nguyen, Michael Mobbs, Helen Driver, and Cathy Mobbs. We thank the team for their faithful commitment to their individual mentees, some of whom have been part of the program for several years and to Cathy Mobbs for her ongoing dedication to coordinating and overseeing this program.

Solway Primary contribution / Markham Estate

44. In 2023, the Victorian Government completed the construction of 178 new units on Markham Avenue in Ashburton. 60% of this development was for public housing and 40% is classified as affordable housing. Identifying this development as likely creating additional needs within our community, Committee of Management member Marilyn met with the principal of the closest local primary school to find out about likely needs.
45. Anytime from term 2, Solway Primary School was anticipating receiving between 20 and 40 new primary school students from this estate. These students would be from lower

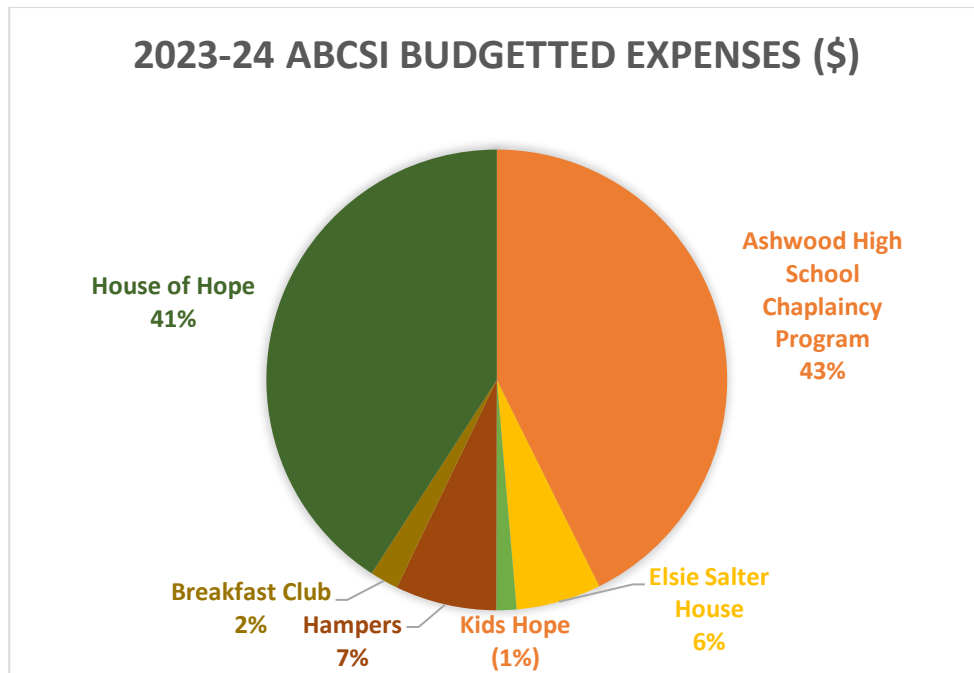
income families and likely be facing a number of expenses to set themselves up at the new school and participate in programs run by Solway Primary.

46. In our April meeting, the ABCSI Committee of Management passed a motion to show support towards our new community members at the Markham Estate by making a modest one-off financial contribution to Solway Primary School. This money will be used by the school to assist low-income families (on a case-by-case basis) with school expenses as prioritised by the school's principal (access to uniform, swim program fees and school camp).
47. The Committee of Management has maintained an interest in the Markham Estate development in 2023 and, has already considered opportunities and needs that might arise from this development for our local community for which we may be able to make a meaningful contribution. We will continue to engage with this new estate to identify needs that may arise and fit within our vision and purpose.

Financial report

48. Our very able and long-serving Treasurer, Lyn Wilson, has been managing our financial accounts throughout 2023. The annual financial accounts are annexed to this report in Appendix A.
49. The last few years have been a time when the finances of ABCSI have tightened a little. There have been some necessary repairs done to Elsie Salter House which should set it up well for some time. We have also increased support for the Chaplaincy program at Ashwood High School.
50. At the same time the financial support for the Houses of Hope program has dropped a little. This program was started in 2017 and initial funding has set it up well, but some regular supporters have dropped out for a variety of reasons. We still have a reasonable fund which has been built up over time.
51. The situation is however, that unless we increase the support base in the future we will need to revise the programs we currently support.
52. The ABCSI Committee of Management met in mid-2023 and approved the budget for the 2023/2024 financial year. Our largest budgeted expenditure in 2023-24 will be for the Ashwood High School chaplain (we are currently funding two days per week in 2023-24) and for the Houses of Hope program. The following chart displays the ABCSI total budgeted expenditure by program percentage (total budget is approximately \$70,000):

2023-24 ABCSI BUDGETTED EXPENSES (\$)



53. All donations made to ABCSI are tax deductible. If you would like to contribute, please contact the ABCSI treasurer at treasurer@abcsi.au.

Final words

54. We are humbled by the support provided by the wider Ashburton Baptist Church community to support our projects with their time, skills, finances, and prayers. The 2023 Committee of Management has served the Association well and has spent much time to ensure our operations run within legislative boundaries, meet our purpose and, most importantly, bring relief to those in our communities with real needs.

55. We pray our work will continue to be a blessing to those in need in our community for many years to come, and bring joy to those we serve and those who serve. Thank you to all who have supported ABCSI in 2023.

Abbie Roodenburg
President

Balance sheet

For the year ending 30 June 2023, cash basis

ACCOUNT CODE	ACCOUNT NAME	BALANCE
ASSETS		
CURRENT ASSETS		
-	Bank - Term Deposit 157052945	\$80,590.79
-	Bank - Statement Account	\$30,806.87
	TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	\$111,397.66
NON-CURRENT ASSETS		
-	Land and Buildings	\$289,291.00
	TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS	\$289,291.00
	TOTAL ASSETS	\$400,688.66
LIABILITIES		
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
2-1150	GST Payable	-
2-1155	GST Collected	\$675.00
2-1160	GST Paid	-\$2,248.27
	Total GST Payable	-\$1,573.27
	TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	-\$1,573.27
	TOTAL LIABILITIES	-\$1,573.27
	NET ASSETS	\$402,261.93
EQUITY		
3-0100	Opening Balance Equity	\$471,330.04
3-1000	Retained Earnings Surplus/(Accumulated Losses)	-\$34,752.62
-	Current year earnings	-\$34,315.49
	TOTAL EQUITY	\$402,261.93

Ashburton Baptist Community Services Inc.
Statement of Income and Expenses
Period ended 30th June, 2023

	Budget	Actual	Variance
Income			
Donations for Special Projects	\$22,780.00	\$20,949.50	\$1,830.50
Elsie Salter House			
Water Usage	\$243.00	\$257.47	\$14.47
Rental Income (Elsie Salter House)	\$27,000.00	\$27,000.00	\$0.00
Total Elsie Salter House	\$27,243.00	\$27,257.47	\$14.47
Community Care			
Community Care – other	\$780.00	\$1,490.00	-\$710.00
Community Care – Hampers	\$6,175.00	\$7,460.00	\$1,285.00
Total Community Care	\$6,955.00	\$8,950.00	\$1,995.00
Asylum seekers	\$28,630.00	\$23,065.50	-\$5,564.50
Interest Received	\$1,615.00	\$1,009.09	-\$605.91
Total Income	\$87,223.00	\$81,231.56	-\$5,991.44
Expenses			
Special Projects	\$53,600.00	\$58,353.40	\$4,753.40
Elsie Salter House			
Repairs and Maintenance	\$10,000.00	\$21,933.53	\$11,933.53
Rates – Council and Water	\$1,348.00	\$1,330.67	-\$17.33
Insurance	\$1,522.00	\$1,383.52	-\$138.48
Total Elsie Salter House	\$12,870.00	\$24,647.72	\$11,777.72
Subscriptions	\$300.00	\$546.09	\$246.09
Community Care			
Community Care expenses – other	\$1,335.00	\$1,485.16	\$150.16
Community Care expenses – Hampers	\$4,669.00	\$4,717.94	\$48.94
Total Community Care	\$6,004.00	\$6,203.10	\$199.10
House of Hope			
Repairs and Maintenance	\$0.00	\$71.45	\$71.45
ABC Programs (House of Hope)	\$25,200.00	\$23,565.00	-\$1,635.00
Asylum Seeker expenses	\$2,416.00	\$2,158.87	-\$257.13
Total House of Hope	\$27,616.00	\$25,795.32	-\$1,820.68
Bank Charges	\$0.00	\$1.42	\$1.42
Total Expenses	\$100,390.00	\$115,547.05	\$15,157.05
Net Income (Loss)	-\$13,167.00	-\$34,315.49	-\$21,148.49