

the  
**VALLEY**  
project

# AGM 2023



***Ko ta matou tirohanga he hapori  
whakauru, hono me te oranga***

*Our vision is an inclusive, connected and thriving  
community*

# THE YEAR THAT HAS BEEN!

**At the AGM last year, the Executive reflected on the “premium luge ride that none of us wanted”. I am pleased to report that the luge has come to an abrupt stop, and we are now on the climb back to the top of Baldwin. The impacts of COVID are still being felt in a wide range of effects across our community, coupled with a looming economic crisis, for many of us this will be the hardest year yet. But the project is well placed, well resourced and managed to be able to work with our community partners to ensure that our communities remain well resourced, supported, kind and compassionate to whatever the world throws at us. We have consolidated our staffing structure, finances, activities, relationships and governance, so we can confidently back the communities to develop and deepen for many years to come.**



Ross Bennett, a valued exec member at Spring Clean 22

## FINDING THE RIGHT SIZE

**When COVID-19 hit we opened the floodgates of capital to hire staff and deployed significant resources that were not to be needed. We have since cut the cloth radically to reduce unnecessary spending, halving our staffing and trying to scale back the whole organisation to a more sustainable measure.**

**We said goodbye to Kate Vercoe who had been in the job for nine months as manager. Kate has been instrumental in the positive changes regarding the Valley Project, after a series of break-ins in the previous year. Kate made a huge impact on her time while here as manager, putting the wheels in motion for a series of positive changes for staff wellbeing, Project processes and tidying up loose ends. We can not thank Kate enough for her hard work, community drive and resilience she brought to the role was huge. She very much left the project in a thriving state. All of us in the community, staff, executive and volunteers want to thank you for what you have done.**



T&G feeding our community with donations of fruit!

**We welcomed Jen Rodgers to the team as manager late last year. Jen in her already short time has created a wealth of change is a down to earth, and a community minded person. Jen has dived straight into the role, and already under her tenure has seen the project enhance, grow and develop community ideas further. Jen, we are super pleased to have you on board.**

**We also welcomed Nathan Laurie into the role of Receptionist and Community Rooms booking Coordinator. Nathan, who was on the Executive for a term, has slotted into the project's staff and has been seen as an integral part of the team. Nathan has provided a solution for reception and its needs, allowing staff to continue with their work plans. Nathan, we are thrilled you have continued to be part of the team.**

**We welcome Tammy to the team who replaced KJ Davies in Valley Kai as she went off to tackle a new venture. Tammy who has been involved in the project in some ways over the years, now running Valley Kai and starting a dry food co-opt in our communities, as we continue to work on food security.**

**We have been thrilled to accept another Social Work intern Marie. She will be working with Nathan on a few programs around the project. Her eye to detail and youthful vision has made a significant impact. We will be sad to see you leave in September this year!**



**We are about to say goodbye to the wonderful Clare, who is the Open VUE coordinator. Clare has been with the project since 2016 and has spearheaded the role of Open VUE which is the biodiversity arm of the Project. Clare will leave a huge hole in the team, in what she has achieved and relationships she has created is huge. Clare, we wish you well in the UK.... just remember you're always welcome back to the project and our family.**



**We continue to have wonderful staff including the energetic Valley Voice Editor Krysha, Fabulous Community Trapper Emily, and our Community Guru Liam Dell who is currently on leave in Australia. These guys are also supported by our wonderful wiz of a bookkeeper Jess Corbett who keeps us all in line and is a huge asset to the team and our needs.**

**We continue to be hugely grateful for the volunteers who are too many to name, but you all know who you are.**



Trash To Treasure from Pine Hill at Creek fest

## A PUMPING HEART - OUR EXECUTIVE

Following the last AGM we had a huge change around in roles and responsibilities on the Executive. With a new team we hit the reset button and began our climb of Baldwin. I was elected Chair, Rob Thomson Deputy Chair, Marc Schallenberg Treasurer and Eleanor Linscott as Secretary. We also welcomed a huge wealth of knowledge and expertises to the executive in the form of Chris Aubin, Julie Broderick, Ross Bennett, Ceri Jenkins, and retained the wonderful Radha Forest. We bid farewell to Eleanor Linscott and Ceri Jenkins for personal reasons earlier this year. A special thanks to Eleanor who was co-chair last term and continues to be instrumental in the Open VUE side of operations. Eleanor, thank you for your contribution to your community.

The executive has worked tirelessly to create huge change and make the Valley Project tic. They have also implemented huge structural improvements to how both the executive and staff work. Some of these have been in the works for years, and the amazing team around the table have put in the huge hours. I would just like to highlight a few for our community to note:

- Introduction of a new social inclusion program call the Good Sort all Sort Award, celebrating the unsung heroes in our community,
- Drafted, written, and in the process of implementing 35 Policies,
- Updated our 6 MOU's and have in addition created an MOU with The Valley Baptist Community Trust, to formalise and further, community led collaboration between the two organisations.



### Our Community Gardeners

- **Implemented an executive charter which gives the executive a guideline on best practice governance.**
- **Taking control of the room bookings from North East Valley Normal School, which better fits with us and our needs for our community,**
- **Introduction of manager and chair meetings weekly to ensure that the manager has support and small issues can be solved, rather than being deferred to the executive meeting's,**
- **Implemented a review of the Valley Voice, changing the newspaper to better fit the needs of our community amidst the ramifications of the paper crisis the world is experiencing,**
- **Taken over the operation of Valley Community Workspace, which would enable more sustainable management, allowing lease holders to get on with their work, enabling better community led outcomes,**
- **Started the process of creating a plan around the updation of Valley Community Workspace to ensure that it meets the needs of our community now and into the future,**
- **Created relationships with other place-based groups, especially the South Dunedin Community Network, and Greater Green Island, we thank them for being only a phone call away!**
- **Implemented a strategic plan that has renewed priorities that would better enable us to serve the community and their needs. We are progressing very neatly through the plan,**
- **Strengthened relationships with the Otago Poly and Social Work Students from the University which has seen us give lectures, and engage with students in their work projects. This has been hugely beneficial for the project and the communities have benefited from this collaboration. We thank the two institutions for their continued investment in our communities,**



## School War Memorial Re-Dedication

- **Introduction of the Otago Military Historic Group into the project as an Umbrella Program which has been huge, allowing this awesome group to benefit from our charitable status. They have restored the Upper Junction War Memorial and Schools Memorial Archway,**
- **Implemented a budget that will get us back in the black, and established an asset register that will enable long term sustainability of the project and all that we do.**

**And so much more has been achieved by this team, each month the agenda is packed, and we manage to achieve so much. There is still more to do! As an Incorporated Society we became deregistered in October this year, so we have to write a new constitution to become re-registered and continue the great work we undertake.**

**To the current executive, your determination to do the best for our community is huge. I feel hugely honoured to work with you all.**





One of our wonderful VV delivery team!

## FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

**Another large part of the huge reset undertaken by the Executive has been on the finances. Over the past couple of years we have seen the belt loosen and capital freely spent. We have put in major work consulting, questioning and ensuring our community is getting value for money.**

**From a situation of almost \$40,000 in debt we have managed to put plans in place and change how our finances are managed and coded. We are always looking into fundraising opportunities to diversify and create micro fundraising on a smaller scale, for our community to buy into the great work we are creating.**

**With the adoption of VCW we will continue to manage the financial situation closely and see how we can budget to transform this magical space, into a hub for our communities and wider Dunedin to thrive in.**

**We continue to receive funding from different sources throughout the year. A key project for us continues to be the great work from the Dunedin City Place Based Funding. The Funding allows the Valley Project to opens its doors.**



Some of our awesome team!

**We thank the following for the support of The Valley Project for our work this year;**

- **Dunedin City Council, PBF, City Sanctuary SLA, Waste Minimisation**
- **Lottery Grants Board**
- **Ministry of Social Development**
- **DIA - COGS**
- **Otago Museum**
- **Lion Foundation**
- **Bendigo Trust**
- **Otago Community Trust**

**We also thank the following for their very generous donations;**

- **Leith Harriers**
- **Crush the Cargill Team**
- **New World Gardens**

**And all of those that have donated via our Give a Little Page... Thank you so much.**

**Together they make the Project viable, so you have our sincere thanks and admiration.**



VCW - Dunedin Electric Bikes!

## LANDLORD TO THE STARS

**As landlord and partner of The Valley Community Workspace in Allen Street, we have taken on the significant responsibility of absorbing and dissolving the former Valley Community Workspace Committee. As we work together on a landlord/partner, lease/partner collaboration to allow the organisations and businesses in the building to focus on what they are good at.**

**The building, like many around the city, is Earthquake prone, the executive has worked hard to bring together structural engineers and is now working on a business case to take to funders to develop the space further to meet the needs of our community. This major works program will see the space transformed into a 21st century low carbon hub. We are hoping to build this into our 10 year strategic plan.**

**We still have a huge amount to work through, to see if it is sustainable and viable for our community, and balance sheet. When available we will bring the ideas to the community for their feedback and support.**

**What an exciting time to be in the Valley!**

**A huge thanks to the support of the VCW lease holders and also the former committee for trusting us to look after you all.**



James and Liam lecturing social work students at Otago uni.

## COMMUNITY BUILDING, EVERY DAY

**The Valley Project has consolidated in some parts of the organisation but grown in others. We continue to punch above our weight in wider Dunedin and afar, with what we offer our communities, and what our communities offers us. We have knowledge, skills and friendship at the end of our fingertips.**

**Some of the highlights from our main projects:**

- **The community rooms have been placed under VP control for a 12 month trial period. It makes sense to ensure that we are able to manage these community assets. It has enabled us to unlock this social enterprise further and thank the NEV Normal School for trusting us for this period of time. We hope we can continue this long term.**
- **Kai Share has been reset to the principles of the 2017 review of 'Short Term Support for Locals'. The disruption of the Projects internal troubles from the break-ins created a situation of little support for our Kai Share team. We have transformed this and have created boundaries, policy and also honorariums to ensure that volunteers are looked after in their time helping at the program.**
- **The Valley Voice, our communities now '6 weekly' newspaper reaches over 3,700 households, and a readership of over 10,000 - and includes new columns from the chair, initiatives and has been reformed following the AGM review last year. It is now a sustainable asset of our community for many years to come.**



The team supporting Gumboot Friday

- **OpenVUE continues with its participatory science in the community, with a focus on a 100 year plan for our Lindsay. Clare who has created and crafted this program will leave at the end of June this year, we are excited for the person to replace her to continue this great work. Clare has been a trailblazer for biodiversity in the community and has been well supported by the newly changed advisory group. The project executive has taken over the formal financial management of OpenVUE.**
- **Good Sort AllSort Award, founded on the need to combat the negative effects of the COVID isolation. We see this as a chance to celebrate those that need celebrated, we have many unspoken/unsung Good Sorts in our community. It celebrates the social inclusion, leadership and uniqueness of the place we call home.**

**This year our events included:**

- **Spring Clean,**
- **Crush the Cargill**
- **NEV PTA Market Day**
- **Open VUE Community Huis**
- **Creeffest**
- **Seed Library/Growing Days**
- **Winter Warmers**

**There are many more, but I keep on losing track....**



Our cool team.... some of them!

**The many community projects we support are mostly going strong too:**

**They include:**

- **North East Valley Community Gardens - Just celebrated 10 years**
- **Dalmore Community Gardens**
- **Valley Counseling Service - Celebrating 3 years**
- **Otago Military Historic Group**
- **One Food Network**
- **North East Valley Seed Library**

**These groups are the foundation of our community - their enthusiasm and drive make the Valley special.**

**Things we had to say goodbye to this year;**

- **Sharing shelf**

**New things we are investigating and/or supporting**

- **Bringing back Community Dinners**
- **Community Car Boot Markets**
- **Quiz Nights at Fillies**
- **Spud in the bucket Competition**
- **Bash the Baldwin**
- **2.0 Jaffa Race Baldwin Street... with tennis balls.**
- **Container Kai**
- **Reception Social Enterprise**



Community Kai Parcels

## COMMUNITY SOCIAL DEPRIVATION

**This year has been hard on our community, money is tight, people are struggling and they are being forced into extremes in order to survive. We as a community are needed more than ever as groups around the city are stretched to the limit. However with funding from MSD we are finding ways to make the community more inclusive and open up new opportunities in food security to ensure that our communities are well fed throughout the ages. It is going to be a challenge ahead.**





## FINAL COMMENT FROM JAMES

**I have enjoyed my time as Chair this year, it has been bloody challenging to try and steer the ship around, but we have made progress. We have created inroads where it seemed impossible last year to do so. We can only say that it is a chance to affirm that we stand even more united as a community, we have each other, our connections and networks that have made the project stronger and more resilient. Continue to connect with your family, neighbors and environment.**

**Continue to make that positive change in your communities, because you are the community.**

**This is your place, This is our place. Together we are stronger.**





the  
**VALLEY**  
project

***Our mission is to mobilise our  
community's strengths and  
resources into locally led action.***