



# Wallara

Grow. Work. Explore. Live.



## ANNUAL REPORT 2019

# Chairman and Acting CEO's report

With our transition to the NDIS almost complete, we focussed on our 'Think Client First' value for 2019 to ensure quality of service remained a top priority. As a values-driven organisation, we have an important mission – **driving social change in our community to empower people with different abilities.**



We believe this is achieved by ensuring we understand client goals and align our services accordingly. We partner with corporates and the community to create opportunities for valued social roles, and work, which opens a world of possibility for people with different abilities.

In our 60th birthday year there was much change as we continued to deliver on our organisational strategy 2018-2022. Systems and processes were redesigned, and a new CRM and payroll system were implemented to create a solid foundation in the NDIS operating environment. Our Wellness365 Committee held several fabulous events in the name of staff wellbeing, and demand for Support Coordination services grew as clients from across Victoria sought assistance to navigate service options. Our re-brand was completed with the launch of the new Wallara website. We expanded our quarterly client newsletter to include all divisions and created an online option as well.

One of our strategic priorities is to be the **leading provider of NDIS supports in Melbourne's South East region by providing quality services.**

In Day Services we restructured and moved to a more self-directed teams approach, removing the Area Manager and Team Leader layers and creating the role for Support Leads across support categories.



Our aim was to facilitate greater understanding of client goals by Core Workers and facilitate real time decision-making at site level.

This led to a review of our programs, the tools we use to support clients, the training and support for staff, communication across the organisation, outcomes measurement and engaging with stakeholders. We undertook some site consolidation in the Pakenham region and moved into more community-based sites for greater integration.

Our strategic priority is to become the leading disability educator in Victoria by 2022 and provide pathways to work

Our strategic priority to become the leading disability educator in Victoria by 2022 and provide pathways to work meant our education team refreshed and created new content for more than seven programs including development of our new 'My Life, My Way' independent living skills portfolio. In 2020 we will launch The Kube work readiness program based out of our new social enterprise in Keysborough.



Hawthorn player Dylan Moore visits Logistics

## Logistics

We moved into 160 Bridge Road in Keysborough, doubling our capacity and bringing all of corporate services and service delivery management together in one location. The state-of-the-art facility was officially opened by the Honourable Dan Andrews, Premier of Victoria. This move aligned with our goal to be the most innovative, progressive provider of supported employment in Australia and our supported employee numbers continued to grow to 110 with the aim of increasing to 130 by year end.

Wallara Commercial Lawns and Garden Care launched with four supported employees, and secured the contract to maintain the St Kilda Football Club grounds as well as other large contracts.

The Hawthorn Football Club expanded their support of Wallara by including a pick and pack slip signed by our supported employees and some information on Wallara on each delivery of merchandise. Several supported employees expanded their skills on the Mary Kay 3PL line to include pack and send tasks.



## Accommodation

We wanted to offer innovative and inclusive living models that provide choice and control to residents, as we know supported independent living is a substantial need in the community.

Our accommodation hit 100% capacity and with even more clients seeking supported independent living options we established a wait list. Our clients enjoyed using their 1:1 supports to do more of the things they liked including swimming, sightseeing, and coffee with friends.

We also saw huge growth at **Sages Cottage Farm** where our aim is to create Australia's most inclusive farm and showcase Wallara's social enterprises. Day Service client numbers doubled and the farm focussed on the environment with its new programs in Ecology and Paddock to Plate. Harvest Café set a zero-waste target for 2021. Eleven clients received 1:1 support from highly experienced hospitality staff who have worked across the Peninsula in well renowned venues. The clients increased their confidence and skills significantly. We launched our #GrowSages campaign to raise

\$1.5M to build the Eco Hub at Sages and engage philanthropists and government on this journey.

During all of this transition we maintained a high net promoter score of +43, with 90% of clients saying they loved coming to Wallara.



A handwritten signature in black ink.

David Willersdorf  
**Chairman**



A handwritten signature in purple ink.

Taimi Clinch  
**Acting CEO**

At the time of preparing this Annual Report CEO Phil Hayes-Brown was overseas on sabbatical. We are pleased to report he is now back and you can read more about Phil's reflections on his sabbatical experience on pages 24 and 25.

# Wallara Board



**David Willersdorf**

Chairman



**Anne Tierney-Roberts**

Director



**Philip Scorgie**

Director



**Don Elgin**

Director



**Michael Butler**

Director



**Don Farrands**

Director



**Sally Hines**

Director



**Stephen Michelson**

Director



**Mark Cowley**

Director



‘Driving social change in our community  
to empower people with different abilities’





# My mentor and me

In 2014, Ben Van Raay nervously sat behind a computer at Potter Street and began editing his first video under the watchful eye of Jay Pinkster, Wallara's Digital Communications Manager. From that experience Ben and Jay formed a dynamic partnership which laid the foundation for the WallaraTV School of Media. They have produced five television shows, multiple videos and participated in major concerts and events.

## Describe each other

**Ben:** Jay is fun and engaging. He always finds entertaining ways to teach us.

**Jay:** Ben is one of the most positive people I know. He has a great outlook on life and is always up for a challenge or willing to learn something new. He has a serious appetite for sport and will sometimes go to three major games in one weekend. Ben's only major flaw is his sense of humour!

## Describe your working relationship

**Ben:** We have a dynamic working relationship. We always have a lot of fun, but we are very focussed on what we are producing, making deadlines and staying busy. One thing I really appreciate about Jay is, when I make mistakes he always turns it into a fun experience. He'll pause a video to highlight a funny face or laugh at a noise someone is making in the background so that we never feel bad about stuffing up.

**Jay:** That's a really important part of our culture at WallaraTV. You can't push the boundaries of creativity if you're not willing to experiment and make mistakes. Another

value we have is being independent. Ben knows not to ask for help until he has tried at least two options to solve the problem for himself.

**Ben:** I learnt that one pretty quickly. I think we've worked together so long that we are now on the same wavelength. It doesn't take a lot of communication to understand where each other is coming from.

## What have you learnt from each other?

**Ben:** Learning how to edit videos has been amazing. I find my imagination works better when I'm on a computer than when I'm writing or drawing. I feel much freer. As I've become confident with editing, I've learnt to trust my own decisions a lot more.

**Jay:** I've learnt to never place limits on what you think someone else might be capable of. That's for them to discover.

## Tell us about Ben's internship with the St Kilda Football Club?

**Ben:** Working at the Saints was an amazing experience. I really loved being part of



their team. I got to edit player highlights and go behind the scenes on match days. It definitely confirmed my dream of working in sports media.

**Jay:** Watching Ben roll into the Saints building for the first time was one of the best experiences I've had at Wallara. In that moment I saw Ben being rewarded for years of hard work and dedication and it was a catalyst for us to start exploring new opportunities for Ben outside of WallaraTV.

## What's next for you two?

**Ben:** Wallara is supporting me to set up my own video editing business. It's called 'Bended Flicks'. I'm really looking forward to getting that off the ground and up and running. I'm really excited about that.

**Jay:** I'll be shooting more videos and developing the WallaraTV School of Media. If that doesn't work out I might get a job working for Ben!

# Grow

Wallara's Grow programs focus on developing the skills required to live happy and healthy lives. In the last twelve months Wallara significantly extended its range of Grow programs and strengthened their delivery with exciting new resources and support coaches. We now deliver over thirty different Grow programs and many of them are unique to Wallara.

'My Life My Way' is one of our key Grow programs that targets independent living skills. It combines practical activities and class-based projects centred around managing money, building healthy relationships, traveling with confidence, nutrition and food. 'My Life My Way' takes clients on a real journey, empowering them to make informed decisions and to take more control of their lives.

'Connecting Me With Technology' is another exciting course developed by Wallara. It teaches participants to confidently use technology in very practical ways. Clients learn how to manage social media safely, to



Wallara 's Connecting Me with Technology

research events that interest them and to get around the community. It also includes making digital presentations and writing resumes. Rather than just developing skills, 'Connecting Me With Technology' has a strong focus on using technology to improve communication and access to the community.





Wallara start travel training and teaching people Independent living skills.



Wallara shifts focus from caring for children to training adults with a disability.



Potter Street redevelopment. Day programs delivered from community sites.

**FREE TO BE A**

**TURN YOUR PASSION  
INTO A PATHWAY**



# Growing Wallara's Education Programs

The need for quality educational programs and varied pathways to employment for people with different abilities is critical to Wallara's mission. With this in mind, Wallara recruited Tammie Moroney in 2017 as our Education Manager. Tammie's role involves strengthening our existing 'Grow' and 'Work' programs and developing new opportunities to meet our client's needs.

Tammie has been training people with different abilities for over a decade and has diplomas in Training and Assessment, and Business Management. Within a few moments of talking to Tammie, you'll realise she is extremely passionate about her role. She openly shares that her goal is for "Wallara's clients to have the best education programs in Australia". On her desk is evidence of her commitment to this. It's stacked with plastic tubs, laminated cards, games and teaching notes. Every resource is meticulously presented and visually engaging. Every curriculum is developed through games, discussions, videos and practical activities, and excursions maximising our clients' success by catering for different learning styles.

As these resources roll out across Wallara the feedback we are getting is amazing - clients are more engaged, retention of information is improving, and many clients have been achieving brilliant outcomes. While Wallara's resource revolution continues, Tammie is now setting her sights on empowering Wallara's Support Coaches to be better trainers and exploring work experience opportunities with our corporate partners.



Mental Health Class



Melissa cooking up a storm

# Work

2019 has been a year of change and new beginnings. The move to 160 Bridge Road has meant a consolidation of Wallara Logistics and corporate services to one, convenient building. The incredible new warehouse provides a more comfortable environment for supported employees with a fully climate-controlled production area. It also has a huge 3PL warehouse, an outdoor atrium and large canteen area which all staff share. It's great to be in a modern and progressive workplace with brilliant visibility from Eastlink.

In August, the Victorian Premier, the Honourable Dan Andrews, officially opened Wallara Logistics with over 300 excited family, friends, customers and state dignitaries. It was a brilliant time to reflect on how far Wallara has come in the last 60 years and to celebrate our achievements. Dan Andrews highlighted the outstanding contribution and high-quality work delivered by our 110 supported employees in his speech. "For sixty proud years Wallara has got better and stronger, giving opportunities to so many people" he said. "The quality of the work that is done here is second to none. No one produces a higher quality product or service than Wallara Logistics." The ceremony finished with cake cutting, a plaque unveiling, tours of the new premises and the signing of our first major contract with CPB contractors, part of the Metro Tunnel Project.

During the year we launched several new employment options giving our supported employees greater work choices and training opportunities. Wallara Commercial Lawn & Garden Care offers our clients outdoor work



1975



Sheltered workshop opens at Potter Street

1986



Wallara purchased a factory in 34 Sinclair Road and ran a sheltered workshop called New Dandenong Industries.



and horticultural training and we will soon develop a food preparation and hospitality work choice. New customers including St Kilda Football Club, The Heat Group, Hinkler Books and CPB Contractors have provided a range of new and challenging jobs for our supported employees.

Daily achievements by our team of dedicated supported employees include sorting and counting over 50,000 pieces of linen for Princes Laundry, sorting and reconnecting 20,000 Myer security tags for Checkpoint, and over 500 orders picked, packed and despatched for Mary Kay. Our supported employees who drive the Wallara truck also transport 10 tote bins a day and our forklift team move over 50 pallets a day.

We continued our corporate volunteering, with several customers taking the opportunity to work with our supported employees to learn what life is like for them. We continued workplace training for both mainstream and special schools in our region, with students working alongside our supported employees. The experience gives students valuable insights into the work undertaken by our supported employees, with some students choosing to join Wallara after positive work experiences.

As we move into 2020, we will continue to grow our supported employee numbers, add new and exciting employment opportunities, and continue to grow our customer base.



Christina Gerges - Quiet Achiever Award 2019



Natalie Van Damme - Supported Employee of the Year



**1998**  
Wallara Industries - Tower Court, a small low span double fronted workshop of 1,600m<sup>2</sup>. Commercial turnover in 2008 \$400,000. 60 supported employees.



**2008**  
Wallara Industries & Logistics. Key Point Industrial Estate, larger high span warehouses totalling 6,000m<sup>2</sup>. Designed for bigger customers as the business moved into 3PL. Commercial turnover in 2019 \$3,000,000, multiple work choices. 97 supported employees.



**2019**  
160 Bridge Road, a single site integrated 3PL and Production facility of 8,900m<sup>2</sup>, offering a climate controlled work place, atrium and other amenities. A range of work choices including; 3PL, production, outdoor and hospitality. Estimated commercial turnover \$3,500,000. Over 110 supported employees.

# WallaraTV School of Media

WallaraTV was launched in 2012 with one person, a dated camera and a single computer. We quickly learnt the incredible impact these videos were having and WallaraTV became a key part of Wallara's overall mission.

In 2018 we launched the WallaraTV School of Media with the goal of empowering our clients to capture and broadcast their stories on social media. We now have a classroom with 5 computers and cutting-edge video equipment thanks to generous grants from Gandel Philanthropy and the RACV. We have expanded the number of courses we run to include video production, filming and photography on your iPhone, and graphic design.

Our clients' engagement in courses has been remarkable. They have shattered the ceiling of what we previously thought was possible. The WallaraTV School of Media has opened up a whole range of pathways toward employment in digital communications.

Last year we watched Zac Woller, 'The Voice Ninja' pursue his dream to become a voiceover artist. With 1:1 support from Matt Andersen, he visited radio stations, recorded voices in an animated movie, completed voiceover work on two training videos and started building an audience on social media. His story has inspired people with different abilities from all over Australia.

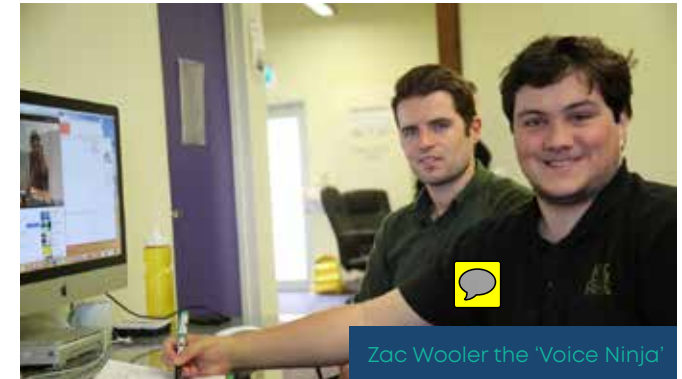
Ben Van Raay is another great example. He used his video editing skills to land an internship in the media department of the St Kilda Football Club. He says, "Getting drafted by The Saints was one of the best things to happen to me" and the experience has given him the confidence to set up his own video editing business.

Bella Firth is also pioneering this new territory. After her first day in our graphic design course, she turned to us and said with complete conviction "This is what I want to do for a job. How do I make that happen?" She spends every spare moment studying design tutorials and developing her skills on Wallara's computers. To give you an idea of her progress you need to look no further than the annual report you are holding. Bella co-designed the annual report with support from our graphic design coach, Simon Way.

You can follow their stories and many more like them on Wallara's Facebook page and through our YouTube Channel, WallaraTV.



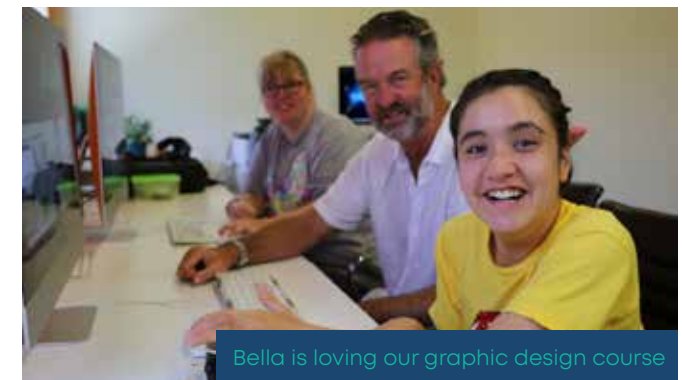
**WallaraTV**



Zac Woller the 'Voice Ninja'



Ben editing at the Saints



Bella is loving our graphic design course

# The Wallara Shop



Cihan Kaya at the Wallara Shop

The Wallara Shop in Dandenong Plaza provides retail training opportunities for clients wanting to expand their skillset and enter open employment. The Wallara Shop sells a variety of gifts, soaps and handmade products created by our clients.

Our clients love being in Dandenong Plaza and really enjoy the regular tasks they perform each day. Serving customers creates outstanding opportunities to practise social skills and money handling in a supportive environment. Wallara's Education Manager, Tammie Moroney, has developed some brilliant training resources to reinforce what is being learnt in the shop. When the shop is quiet, clients work on their portfolios, count the cash in the till using worksheets, and stock the shelves.

Cihan Kaya says "I'm really happy in the Wallara Shop. I like talking to the customers and counting money. I was nervous at the start but now I really like it". The Wallara Shop is open Monday to Friday and we now have Pop Up Shops at special events for our corporate partners.

# Stacey's Story

When Stacey Edwards shared her life story at Wallara's first Dinner Under The Stars fundraiser, it had a profound impact on everyone in the room. In that moment, as the room erupted in applause, Stacey discovered a love for public speaking and became Wallara's first official Ambassador.

Stacey now identifies public speaking as one of her personal goals. She says "I really enjoy it and like to help people understand what it is like to have a disability". Stacey was recently invited to speak at the KAO Group staff conference. She was warmly received and delivered a clear message about her personal goals and life in the Wallara Community. Again, everyone present was moved by her sincerity and courage.

If you would like to have a Wallara client speak at your workplace or event contact Wallara.



# Explore



At Wallara we love making people's dreams come true. One day Chris Walden was exploring 'fun things to do in Frankston' when he found an image of a beach accessible wheelchair. The image captured his imagination and he turned to his support coach and said "I want to do that. I've never been on the beach." The next sunny day they went down to

the Frankston foreshore and borrowed the beach accessible wheelchair.

Chris couldn't stop smiling as he left the pavement and rolled onto the sand. He waved to everyone he passed and chatted to a boy building a sandcastle. They looked for shells, explored under the pier and had an incredible day. "I got to go on the beach for the very first time" Chris said, "I even got to go in the water. It was awesome"

# Explore Activities Week

In 2019 the number of clients wanting to access services during the school holidays dramatically increased. An exciting program of activities was developed based on our client's interests. Each day we intentionally included off-site adventures and on-site activities. The variety of activities ranged from a themed My Kitchen Rules Cooking competition, City Scape Photography, Exploring Melbourne's Graffiti, Natures Art and so much more.

Some of our sites combined with others, and this gave the opportunity for clients to meet new people and to develop new friendships.

We're really excited to be offering new and exciting experiences for our clients and to extend our services in creative ways. Wallara's Explore Activities Week is a client driven program and will continue to run during school holidays.



Nicholas Koukounaras hanging around

# Live

Wallara's Live services currently include 8 houses from Noble Park, through Dandenong, Narre Warren and out to Pakenham. Our homes range between 4-6 residents in each house and we support 42 residents in total. Our residents range in age from mid 30s to late 60s.

Since the NDIS has come into effect most of our residents have been able to enjoy significantly more individualised activities. Having regular 1:1 support on weekends and after hours allows them greater access to the community and to the activities they really love to do. It's been exciting to watch them planning outings and exploring new possibilities. Some recent activities they have chosen include visiting the chocolate factory, connecting with family and friends, hanging out at a beach, and going to the movies.

The change in funding allocation has allowed residents to have more streamlined daily activities as well. Under the NDIS there is greater access to allied health professionals, which has led to increased



Greg and Stacey playing Monopoly

independence and better overall health. This has been a fantastic outcome for our residents.

While the NDIS has provided Wallara with plenty of challenges, there are some great rewards for our residents. Our staff continue to look for innovative ideas and opportunities that allow for new experiences for the residents that allow them to get out and involved in the community.



1968  
Cussen house purchased and run as a hostel



1973  
Jarvis Lodge built at Potter Street to accommodate more residents.





Karina 'Kat' Margetts

## Kat's Story

Karina 'Kat' Margetts is a new Wallara resident who recently moved into our Rosling Lane home. "I was living with my dad but it was time for me to move out of home and to be more independent" she shared.

Kat says she is still adjusting to the change, but she really likes the house. Her main interests are cats, music and dancing. She has a growing collection of soft toys and DVDs. "I really like movies with singing in them" she says.

Kat is proud to be extending her cooking skills in the house. "It's really fun. I can cook chops and stir fries." During the day Kat works at Wallara Logistics. "I have lots of friends there and the people are really nice."



2008



Wallara formed an historic partnership with Wintringham



2017



Wallara's Potter Street redevelopment officially opened





# Leanne Best | Employee of the Year 2019

**Wal:** *Tell us about your history with Wallara?*

**LB:** I joined Wallara in 2001 as a casual. A week later I was offered a position at our Hennessey Street home and I've been with Wallara ever since. Over the last 18 years I've worked in most of our houses including Roy Close, Cussen House, Close Avenue and I'm now at Nance Street.

**Wal:** *You played a key role in the Potter Street redevelopment, helping residents transition out of hostel style accommodation into smaller homes and independent living units. Tell us about that?*

**LB:** When I first started at Wallara there were 23 people living at Cussen House and Jarvis Lodge. There had been up to 36 people living here. When the Board started to imagine different models of supported living it was hard to see how it could work. Many of our residents had been in congregate care for so long that they had no memory of anything else. It was a really exciting time and still is one of the most fantastic initiatives undertaken by Wallara. It gave our residents so much more choice in how, where and who they lived with.

**Wal:** *What was the transition like?*

**LB:** There were some really gut-wrenching moments for our clients. Even though we were instigating a brilliant change, some of our clients felt like we were splitting up their family as we dismantled the congregate care model. We worked really hard to make that transition as smooth as possible but it was definitely unsettling in the short term.

**Wal:** *You have also been part of another significant change at Wallara, the transition to the NDIS. What has that been like?*

**LB:** It's been really exciting to see new possibilities opening up for our clients. The NDIS has given the people we support a new sense of freedom. You just have to look in our newsletters or on social media and you see our clients are doing some incredible things. The opportunities for people with different abilities to achieve their goals and live independently have never been greater.



**Wal:** *Eighteen years is a long time to be a part of an organisation. What's your secret to longevity in the workplace?*

**LB:** I've always enjoyed the work and found it personally rewarding. Watching people achieve their goals and supporting them to have a great day is not something you get sick of. I've consciously tried to mix it up by working in different places and with different people. Because Wallara is a large organisation there is the scope to change sites and roles when you need to.

**Wal:** *How is Wallara different to other organisations?*

**LB:** I've worked with three other disability organisations and none of them were as unique as Wallara. Wallara isn't satisfied by doing what everyone else does. We take our cues from what our clients want, not from what the sector does.

I've worked under three distinct management groups in my time at Wallara. Each one has been very different, but all of them have strived to remain client centred and on the cutting edge of service delivery. They have made some pretty brave decisions over the years like investing in the redevelopment of Potter Street, expanding Wallara Logistics and developing WallaraTV to promote inclusion, and that's what I appreciate about Wallara, they really put clients first.

# Growing Sages

Sages Cottage Farm has continued to grow and flourish since Wallara purchased it in 2016. The 38 acre heritage-listed property is now maintained exclusively by volunteers, staff and Wallara clients, and the property has never looked better.

The number of clients on site has doubled and we are continually expanding and refining the educational programs being delivered at Sages Cottage Farm. We now have programs in horticulture, animal care, ecology and a brilliant paddock to plate program in our café.

Thanks to the amazing generosity of the Frankston RSL, we have been able to build a new horticulture precinct with a new potting shed, igloo and growing areas so we can propagate our own plants and eventually sell them or restock the gardens.

Our café in the barn, Harvest, has become a popular destination for tourists, community groups and local coffee lovers on the Mornington



1850



Sages Cottage built. John Sages and his wife and 8 children lived there



Wallara clients do voluntary work at Sages Cottage Farm



Wallara lease Sages Cottage Farm from Menzies

Peninsula. The café is now providing supported employment and hands on training for our clients with a passion for hospitality. Harvest also creates a space for social interactions for our clients. When the customers are served a meal by one of our clients, or wander through the manicured gardens, they get to taste and see the wonderful ways we facilitate inclusion at Wallara.

The success of these programs has galvanised our commitment to grow Sages into Australia's most inclusive farm. In 2019 we launched our #GrowSages campaign calling on government and philanthropists to help us build the Eco Hub which will enable us to triple our training places and provide a place for the community to gather. We invite you to take a moment to go to the Sages Cottage website and sign the petition to help us to Grow Sages.

#### Wallara's 'Paddock to Plate' program:

Wallara's 'Paddock to Plate' program teaches people of all abilities the power of growing your own food, and sustainable gardening practices. Clients learn about nutrition, food production and working together in a team. Support Coach Candice West, who oversees the program, is delighted with how far it has come. "It's been really incredible to see the

progression in our clients this year" she said, "from nervously preparing soils in week one, to sowing seeds, maintaining plants in the growing season and now we are harvesting food and exploring new recipes." The herbs, fruit and vegetables that are grown in the program are all used on site in the Harvest kitchen and café, and leftovers are fed to the farm animals. Our clients have become remarkably aware of processes involved and have great joy in seeing what they have grown being used.

Ethan Mitchell is one Wallara client who is thriving in the 'Paddock to Plate' program. He shares "I feel happy and proud when I see people eating the food that I've grown." We invite you all to come, see and taste what is being produced in our 'Paddock to Plate' program.



visit  
[sagescottage.com.au](https://sagescottage.com.au)  
to sign the  
petition



Wallara purchases  
Sages Cottage  
Farm from Menzies



Harvest café opens  
at Sages Cottage  
Farm



# Phil's USA Adventure

In August 2019, I left my role as CEO of Wallara Australia for a 6-month sabbatical in southern California with my wife and 2 kids.

The main reason was to help our 19-year-old son settle into US College. He was very fortunate to be offered a basketball scholarship with University of California Riverside (UCR), which is about one hour east of Los Angeles. It was also 10 years since I took on the role of CEO of Wallara and I had been toying with the idea of using all of my long service and annual leave on a sabbatical whilst in my mid-50s, rather than 'banking it' until retirement.

It was a daunting decision. My wife is CEO of a national non-profit agency and was fortunately able to continue doing her job from our US base. Our daughter, 18, has an intellectual disability and was in the middle of her school year. After careful consideration, we felt our family might never have another opportunity like this to spend quality time together experiencing life in another country. The call to adventure was too loud to ignore.

With support from our incredible employers, we packed our bags, pulled our daughter out of school, rented out our home and boarded a plane for California.

Six months have flown by, and after being back home for a week. I have four main reflections from the experience that I wanted to share:

1. From a family perspective, our experience has been fantastic. Our son has really settled into US College life which we're very grateful for as these transitions are usually the most difficult during the first year. He will stay behind when we leave in a week, and we can't wait to see him when he returns home for his summer break in June. Our daughter, aged 18, has thrived in the different setting and has grown through close contact with all of us. Acting as her primary carer was a strong reminder for me how important, challenging and often lonely it can be as a carer, and how crucial high-quality staff are for any support provider. When I return as Wallara's CEO it will fortunately be to an organisation with fantastic staff, so I am very fortunate.



Phil with Oliver and his daughter Phoebe at University of California Riverside (UCR)



Phil with disability providers at a function in California

2. From a professional perspective, it was terrific to be able to reach out to others in the sector in the USA via LinkedIn and other networks and simply ask them how it works here. I ended up speaking at conferences in New Mexico and Idaho, and have met some fabulous people with broad and diverse perspectives. Disability rights, diversity and inclusion are all high-profile issues here in the US, and the disability rights movement actually started in California so it was wonderful to get a feeling for that campaign and how it might impact on Australia in the coming years.
3. My third reflection is how important and unique it is that Wallara has evolved its mission from a service provider for people with disabilities to a social change agent with a key focus on educating the community. While we pride ourselves on providing innovative support to our clients, we challenge ourselves to do that in a way that engages partners and helps educate the community because this is how we change the landscape and drive greater inclusion. That's why we created WallaraTV, it's the philosophy behind our partnership with Monash University to raise the capacity of tomorrow's teachers, and it's why we set a goal to make Sages Cottage farm Australia's most inclusive farm.



The Riverside Highlanders play in the NCAA Division 1 Big West Conference

4. My final reflection is about the importance of personal choice. My son was lucky to have the choice to attend a US College and we hope that experience is life changing for him. My daughter will return to her special school for another year when we return to Melbourne and we hope that is also life changing for her. Our family's choice to take this sabbatical together has also had a profound benefit. People with disabilities overall have far fewer life choices than the rest of us. It's no different in America, and that's why raising awareness and education are such important aspects of Wallara's mission, because we want to drive that change. I encourage all providers to make this social change component a key part of their mission. People with disabilities need to have the same choices as everyone else and their choices should be respected.

In closing, a huge thanks to the Wallara Board for allowing me this privilege, as well as to our talented COO Taimi Clinch who stepped in as Acting CEO while I was away and all the other amazing staff who supported me during my absence. As I said, it's all about talented and committed staff, and I am excited about returning home to join them and keep pushing forward with our social change mission.

If you get the chance, I'd strongly encourage you to consider a sabbatical instead of banking that long service leave until retirement. I have no doubt my time in the US has made me a better leader, and a better parent.



The Victorian Premier, the Honourable Dan Andrews, officially opened Wallara Logistics on 2nd August 2019



Trish learning barista skills



Sevda working in Harvest Cafe at Sages Cottage Farm



Ethan working with his Grassbusters group



Stu performing as part of the Wallara Band program



AdVenturers bus cleaning program at Ventura buses



Volunteer - Sophie Clinch



Volunteers - Bronwyn Hadley, Joan Nichols and Sue Clark

# Volunteers

Teegan Allen

Nathan Ashby

Susan Barlow

Gabriel Berenyi

Christopher Bolding

Susan Clark

Ashley Clinch

Sophie Clinch

Terry Cosgriff

Coralie Davies

Pavitra Devendran

Hai Doan

Christopher Findlay

Sean Freeman

Lisa Freestone

Bronwyn Hadley

Pia Hams

Phoebe Hayes-Brown

Lee Hodian

Dan Idczak

Barbara Kitchen

Graham Kitchen

Andrew Looker

Gerard McDonald

Lee Mitchell

Charles Mizzi

Joseph Mout

Joan Nichols

Lisa Palmer

Vickie Papazoglou

Lara Pusin

Michael Reid

James Smith

Prateema Sookoowareea

Jeremy Spink

Gavin Stewart

Kirsty Wheeler/Idczak

Liu (Michaela) Xuanchen

# Donors and Acknowledgements

Access Group Solutions

AccessPay

Alan Roberts

Annie Carroll

Anthony Graham

Arthurs Seat Eagle

Australia Post

Baxter Barn

Birdlife Mornington Peninsula

Blayne Bertoncello

Bring the Joy

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City of Casey

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Roy Bertoncello

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Sims & Finn Chiropractic

St Kilda Football Club

Star Leadership

Sue Prestney

Tammie Moroney

Turner Engineering

Victoria State Hockey

Yarra Yarra Golf Club



MARY KAY



St Kilda footballers Jack Mayo, Max King and Hope McGann

# 2019 Financial Statement

## Income Statement

For the year ended 30 June

|                                                | 2019              | 2018              |
|------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
|                                                | \$                | \$                |
| Revenue from operating activities              | 16,767,937        | 17,726,090        |
| Other revenue                                  | 1,056,957         | 493,424           |
| <b>Total revenue</b>                           | <b>17,824,894</b> | <b>18,219,514</b> |
| Employee benefits expense                      | 13,569,743        | 13,863,505        |
| Property, maintenance, utilities and insurance | 1,673,727         | 1,598,801         |
| Administration expenses                        | 194,194           | 198,021           |
| Other expenses                                 | 2,045,584         | 2,473,040         |
| <b>Total expenses</b>                          | <b>17,483,248</b> | <b>18,133,367</b> |
| Surplus (deficit) before depreciation          | 341,646           | 86,147            |
| Depreciation on property, plant and equipment  | 223,123           | 254,312           |
| Surplus/deficit                                | 118,523           | (168,165)         |

## Cashflow Statement

For the year ended 30 June

|                                                  | 2019              | 2018              |
|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
|                                                  | \$                | \$                |
| <b>Cashflow from operating expenses</b>          |                   |                   |
| Receipts from customers                          | 17,003,070        | 19,794,953        |
| Payment to suppliers and employees               | -18,246,581       | -19,002,237       |
| Interest received                                | 36,282            | 14,099            |
| Finance costs                                    | -5,935            | -5,300            |
| <b>Net cash provided by operating activities</b> | <b>-1,213,164</b> | <b>801,515</b>    |
| <b>Cashflow from investing activities</b>        | <b>\$</b>         | <b>\$</b>         |
| Security deposits returned                       | 169,584           | -618              |
| Proceeds from disposal of land and buildings     | 9,680             | 53,503            |
| Net payments for property, plant & equipment     | -322,459          | -333,291          |
| Payment for Investments                          | 1,000,000         | -1,000,000        |
| <b>Net cash used in investing activities</b>     | <b>856,805</b>    | <b>-1,280,406</b> |
| Proceeds from borrowings                         | 0                 | 0                 |
| Net repayment of borrowings                      | 0                 | 0                 |
| <b>Net cash provided by financing activities</b> | <b>0</b>          | <b>0</b>          |
| Cash at beginning of financial year              | 1,015,879         | 1,494,770         |
| Net decrease in cash held                        | -356,359          | -478,891          |
| <b>Cash at end of financial year</b>             | <b>659,520</b>    | <b>1,015,879</b>  |

## Statement of Financial Position

For the year ended 30 June

|                                | 2019              | 2018             |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|
|                                | \$                | \$               |
| <b>Current Assets</b>          |                   |                  |
| Cash and cash equivalents      | 659,520           | 1,015,879        |
| Trade & other receivables      | 1,772,100         | 1,535,365        |
| Other current assets           | 303,533           | 125,470          |
| <b>Total current assets</b>    | <b>2,735,153</b>  | <b>2,676,714</b> |
| <b>Non Current Assets</b>      |                   |                  |
| Trade & other receivables      | 0                 | 215,914          |
| Property, plant & equipment    | 8,125,806         | 6,511,686        |
| Other assets                   | 46,330            | 0                |
| Total non current assets       | 8,172,136         | 6,727,600        |
| <b>Total assets</b>            | <b>10,907,289</b> | <b>9,404,314</b> |
| <b>Current Liabilities</b>     |                   |                  |
| Trade & other payables         | 1,245,389         | 1,262,137        |
| Short term provisions          | 1,802,542         | 1,728,249        |
| Other current liabilities      | 399,774           | 245,250          |
| <b>Total liabilities</b>       | <b>3,447,705</b>  | <b>3,235,636</b> |
| <b>Non Current Liabilities</b> |                   |                  |
| Long term provisions           | 183,904           | 160,771          |
| <b>Total Liabilities</b>       | <b>3,631,609</b>  | <b>3,396,407</b> |
| <b>Net Assets</b>              | <b>7,275,680</b>  | <b>6,007,907</b> |
| <b>Equity</b>                  |                   |                  |
| <b>Reserves</b>                | <b>1,149,250</b>  | <b>0</b>         |
| <b>Retained earnings</b>       | <b>6,126,430</b>  | <b>6,007,907</b> |
| <b>Total Equity</b>            | <b>7,275,680</b>  | <b>6,007,907</b> |

