

SAPPHIRE

# COMMUNITY PROJECTS

EST. 2018

2018 ANNUAL REPORT

Sapphire Community Projects Incorporated  
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Sapphire Community Pantry  
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## Message from the President

Dear Friends,

On Thursday 28 September 2017, the Sapphire Community Pantry opened its doors for business at the front of the Salvation Army Family Store in Bega. In May 2018 we moved to larger premises at 2 Peden Street, Bega.

The Pantry's initial operations were generously auspiced by the Southern Women's Group and were only possible due to that support along with assistance from the Salvation Army, Bega and the generous donations of seed funding from the Rotary Clubs of Merimbula, Pambula and Bega, the Lions Club of Merimbula, Social Justice Advocates of the Sapphire Coast, the Reaching Out Foundation and others.

From the start, the Pantry was a success, measured by the number of members, customers and the positive feedback we received. By the second week of trading, we had enrolled 100 members. Seven months later, on 3 May 2018 we reached 500 Pantry members, and by the end of the financial year, almost 600 Pantry members. It is important to note that Pantry membership is not compulsory so this number we have reached demonstrates the tremendous amount of support we have from our community. We average around 90 customers every week.

Sapphire Community Projects Incorporated came into being on the 21<sup>st</sup> February 2018 with the main intention of running the Sapphire Community Pantry and associated activities. The new organisation applied for and became a registered charity with tax-deductible status whose first task was to find suitable premises for the continued operation of the Pantry.

We have so many people and organisations to thank – and without our volunteers and customers we wouldn't exist. Please have a look at our Book of Thanks and be amazed by the number and variety of our "Angels".

So, we look forward to another year, full of love, joy and satisfaction, knowing that we are helping people, but on the other hand, saddened that so many people in the area suffer from a lack of nutritious, affordable food, housing and other basics of life. But we know that while we can't by ourselves solve these problems, we can be part of the solution by our actions.

Thank you

Christine Welsh

President



## Our Vision, Mission and Values

Our vision, mission and values guide everything we do – they are the bedrock for our activities and our attitude. They are the **WHY** for our **WHAT**.

### Vision

A community where everyone is nourished.

### Mission

Supporting people to nourish themselves, their families and their communities

### Values

Access to nutritious food is a basic human right. We are committed to responding to the needs of our community through focusing on food access and community connections.

**Collaboration:** We value all our partners, including members, customers, and volunteers in the mission to end hunger, knowing that working together we are stronger together.

**Innovation & creativity:** We strive to constantly evolve and evaluate, so we may implement the most effective strategies to achieve our mission.

**Compassion & respect:** We value and hold in high regard our staff, volunteers, partners, donors, and our community for whom we work.

**Integrity:** We conduct our work with fairness and transparency.

**Passion:** We do this work with a shared passion, because no one should face the day hungry.

## Volunteers

***Three thousand hours of donated time, valued at \$108,000.***

The Pantry runs on volunteer power. All of us are volunteers and we have no paid workers. Our volunteers come from all walks of life – retired teachers, nurses, public servants, customer service, business owners, unemployed, under-employed, participants in NDIS programs. Their reasons for volunteering include giving back to the community; making new friends; reducing social isolation; helping people.

Our volunteers work on a roster, doing a number of activities, and doing as much or as little as they wish. Roles we have include serving customers; stacking shelves; operating the cash register; welcoming customers; guides; cleaning and tidying the premises; serving tea and coffee; running our cooking programs; computer mentors; administration; pick up food.

Over the past 12 months, we estimate that our volunteers have given over 3,000 hours of their time. In 2012-13 the ABS calculated that Australians put in 521 million hours of volunteer time for an imputed value of \$17,323 million dollars – that's about \$34 per hour. Add in five years of inflation since 2012, or about 8%, and you get \$36 per hour (as of 2017).

Using this formula, Pantry volunteers donated \$108,000 worth of their time.

Thank you, volunteers, – you make the Pantry happen.

## Programs

### Sapphire Community Pantry

Although the Bega Valley is a beautiful area, in common with the rest of Australia it also has many people struggling to make ends meet and suffer from food insecurity – that is, being without reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food.



### According to Foodbank<sup>1</sup>

*“Hunger is a hidden crisis in Australia, with over 3.6 million people experiencing food insecurity at some point every year, 27% of which are children.”*

Foodbank also reported...

*“it is also a common misconception that only homeless people require food relief.*

*However, the main recipients of food relief are individuals and families who have generally low incomes or are unemployed, not just those who are homeless.*

*The face of hunger in Australia is diverse – it affects males, females, children, the elderly, single people and families, students, employed, unemployed and retired people.*

*High risk groups include people with disabilities, refugees and Indigenous Australians.”*

The Sapphire Community Pantry was established to provide people suffering from food insecurity with inexpensive and free foods and other items. A deliberate choice was made to provide access to all, without requiring Centrelink or other “proof of need” identification. We felt that people in need should have a stress-free, dignified and respectful experience.

The food and grocery items are sourced mainly from Foodbank, the nation’s largest food rescue charity which sources its stock from the food and consumable industries’ excess stock. It then on-sells this stock at very low prices to charities throughout Australia. We also receive rescued items collected by OzHarvest and SecondBite (such as bread, fruit, vegetables and grocery items), the local community, local growers, home pantry cleanouts, food drives and community gardens.



<sup>1</sup> <https://www.foodbank.org.au/hunger-in-australia/the-facts/>

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, over 30% of people in the Bega Valley live on some form of government benefit. There are also a large number of renters, high unemployment, seasonal

employment, low wages, many casual and seasonal workers, and limited public transport. Nearly 20% of children aged 0-14 live in poverty in the Bega Valley. On a per capita basis, the Bega Valley also has the highest rate of homelessness in NSW. The combination of these factors leads to a limited ability for people to feed themselves nutritiously.



### The Pantry Community (Demographics)

83% are female

47% aged 26-50

32% aged 51-65

17% over 65

8% Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander

15% non-English speaking background

33% have a disability

67% have difficulty in past 12 months paying bills

50% have sought help to buy foods and/or pay bills

75% are on some form of income support

65% have difficulty in past 12 months paying for food

50% of the age group 26-50 have the most difficulty paying bills and buying food

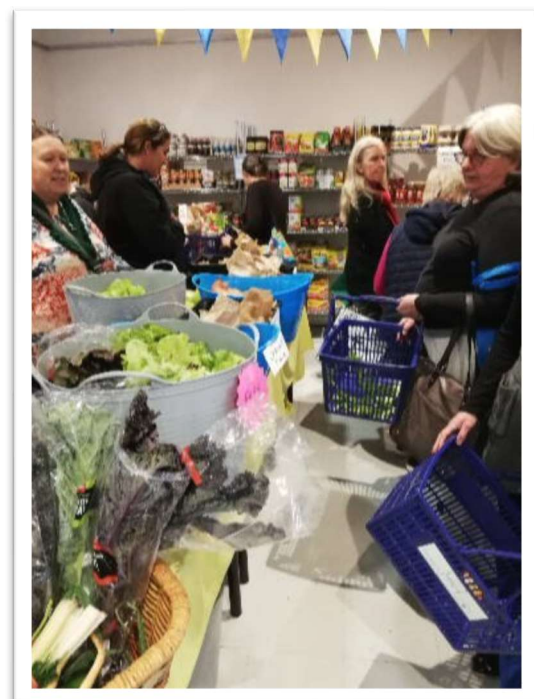
### Stories from the Pantry

The success of the Pantry has been phenomenal.

*“I was rapt with the amount of groceries I got for \$19.80. It included veggies, fruit, dog food and then, upon leaving – free bread! Thanks for a great initiative Sapphire Community Pantry” – Single Working Mum in her 30’s*

*“Until I had my stroke, I was in a job and could pay my rent, bills and buy food. These past few months have been so hard – I lost my job, moved out of my rented house because I couldn’t pay the rent, and now struggle to buy good food. The Pantry is a life-saver for me, I can get good food, free bread, fruit and vegetables. Thank you” Man in his 50’s*

*“I love shopping at the Pantry – all the volunteers are so nice; the place has such a happy atmosphere. And they don’t judge me – and that’s important because when you have to rely on*



*welfare for help, you start to feel worthless and judged. The Pantry people never make me feel like that – they are so respectful.” Pensioner in her 70’s*

*“I am a grandparent who has recently assumed custody of my grandchild, who has a disability and special needs. I was finding it hard to buy food, school items, pay living expenses and other things, on my pension. Shopping at the Pantry has helped me stretch my pension. And you are all so welcoming, the Pantry has a great atmosphere. Thank you.” Pensioner in her 60’s*

*“I am a widow and have just taken responsibility for my disabled grandchild. The Pantry helps me stretch my pension and get good food for us and pay my rent and my bills. The Pantry has been a lifesaver for me” Grandmother in her 60’s*

## Cook and Connect

Cooking and food are the perfect tools to create community connections. Cooking together encourages community, sharing of knowledge and stories, and enables people who feel intimidated by large groups to get totally involved in an activity, learn new dishes and make friends.

This year we offered *Chop Chat Chew* - 2-hour, weekly cooking sessions.

These are small groups (maximum of 6 people) meeting to cook a couple of their favourite dishes. They are coordinated by volunteers who obtain the food, organize the kitchen equipment, and work with participants to choose dishes to cook and share cooking skills. The participants pay a small contribution for each session, if they can afford it, or participate for free as part of their Pantry membership benefits. As the Pantry does not have a kitchen, these sessions have been held at the Masonic Hall in Canning Street, Bega and we thank the Freemasons for their generosity.

A number of the participants were isolated, due to health or transport issues. Others wanted to improve their skills and try new things. And others just wanted to come along for the fun and atmosphere. Feedback has been uniformly positive.



Depending on volunteer resources, we would like to expand our cooking programs, offering more and in various locations, on specific topics, and to particular audiences, such as Men’s Sheds and disability groups. We would also like to introduce budgeting into our cooking groups.

Thank you to the Social Justice Advocates of the Sapphire Coast, and to ClubGrants who have given us funding to run these programs.



## Be Connected

The *Be Connected* program is an Australian Government program to connect senior Australians to the internet. In June we received a grant to purchase computers for this purpose. In return, we will be providing one-on-one



**Be Connected**  
Every Australian online.

short lessons on topics such as emailing, web surfing, using a computer and other topics. Our primary target is people over 50, but all will be welcome to participate. Thanks to the generosity of Splash Internet, we can also provide free Wi-Fi at the Pantry. Volunteer trainers will be recruited, and the program publicised when ready to roll.

## Rural Outreach

BRAS (Bemboka Rural Area Support) is a small community group of women living in the Bemboka area who get together to run social activities and events for their community. Being an unincorporated association, there are many challenges to overcome including the cost of insurance for public events. Sapphire Community Projects is proud to be able to support BRAS, who in turn raise funds and/or donations of dry goods from the generous people of Bemboka for the benefit of the Sapphire Community Pantry and its customers.

The Sapphire Community Projects will continue to seek opportunities to work with some of the smaller and isolated communities within the Bega Valley Shire Council area.

## Community Partnerships

Sapphire Community Projects is proud to develop links with and support local community groups and activities. We currently engage with NDIS providers, welfare organisations and support groups. We work with those groups to provide activities and the sharing of resources.

Over the past year we have worked with Mission Australia, Flourish, Wellways, Sapphire Support Services, PCYC and others.

## Waste Reduction and Recycling

From the start, the Pantry made a conscious decision to be a “waste warrior”. We do not provide plastic shopping bags for our customers, but we do have multi-use bags for purchase, and each new or renewing member receives one of these for free. We also have bags made by volunteers out of tea towels, curtains and other fabrics; and are occasionally available for sale. We also provide cardboard boxes in which to pack purchases, and shoppers are encouraged to use these.

Plastic wrap in which our stores arrive is gathered and taken to supermarket plastic collection bins. Cardboard is collected and taken to the Merimbula Waste Recycling depot. Paper bags are used wherever possible throughout the Pantry for fruit, vegetables and other items. Occasionally Foodbank has bulk lots of heavy-duty plastic bags available for free and we use these for items such as fruit and vegetables, as the bags have already been manufactured and should be put to use rather than go straight to landfill.

Perishable food that is damaged and is rejected by shoppers is taken to Potoroo Palace, a local wildlife refuge for their animals, along with rescued bread not taken by shoppers.

We are economical with our use of water and electricity, doing as much as we can in a rented premises to reduce our footprint. It may be possible in future years to purchase a commercial composter which turns waste food, paper and other items into compost, in a matter of hours.

## Diversity, Inclusion and Access

The Pantry should reflect the community in which it lives. We work hard to provide a safe, non-discriminatory and accessible venue, within the constraints of a rented premises. Entry to the Pantry is accessible to people with limited mobility and vision. As the actual shopping area is quite small, we invite and encourage people in wheelchairs, with walking frames and other mobility aids to come shop before the general public does. We also extend this invitation to people who have health, anxiety or noise issues, offering them a quiet time to do their shopping.

We have a small area with toys, books and children's table and chairs where children shopping with their carers can play.

We welcome volunteers with all abilities, offering and creating roles to suit their particular skills and interests. We are proud to have a number of volunteers working with us as part of their NDIS program.

In the next 12 months we will be offering our volunteers short courses in diversity and inclusion, and mental health first aid training, as well as short "tool box" talks on issues such as homelessness, domestic violence, mental illness, suicide and other topics to increase awareness and to know what help is available in the community.

## Looking Forward

We have many exciting ideas for the future and some of these are

- Expanding our cooking programs to reach more people in more locations
- Obtaining funds so we can build a commercial kitchen to provide meals, teach cooking, use excess produce, and show people different recipes using the goods available at the Pantry
- With funding, buying a coffee van to provide barista training to people with disabilities and disadvantaged people
- Running "Be Connected" short courses for people uncomfortable with computers
- Partnering with community groups to share our facilities
- Provide volunteering opportunities to students, people with disabilities, and those needing to meet their Centrelink requirements. We see this as a way to provide experience, belonging and be mutually beneficial. Volunteering is a wonderful path to learn new skills; use the skills you already have; make new friends; and if you are a job-seeker, keeping active and showing future employers that you would make an excellent employee.

The Pantry building is more than food – it is also a tool for connectedness and community. All of our activities have as a main focus the bringing together of people, nourishing their lives, in a warm and supportive environment. With your help and support we can achieve this and much more.

## Volunteer Board (2017-2018)

Christine Welsh, President and Secretary

Peter Buggy, Vice-president and Public Officer

Chloe Bourke, Treasurer

Sue McKinnon, Board Member

Deborah Hall, Board Member

Joanna Oastler, Board Member

## Donate & Volunteer

You can help in several ways –

### Giving Time

Not everyone can make a financial contribution. Maybe you could consider volunteering, either regularly or for special projects?

Call the Pantry on 0490 843 518 or email [spantry@gmail.com](mailto:spantry@gmail.com) to discuss your options



### Giving Money

Every dollar donated helps feed a family. To donate, call on 0490 843 518 to or email [spantry@gmail.com](mailto:spantry@gmail.com) for more information. Sapphire Community Projects is an approved charity and receipted donations are tax deductible.

### Giving Goods

Food drives, pantry cleanouts, donating excess fruit and vegetables. Cafes, clubs and restaurants donating meals or ingredients. Donating good excess or unwanted food helps reduce waste and food insecurity. Just call the Pantry on 0490 843 518 to arrange pickup or email [spantry@gmail.com](mailto:spantry@gmail.com). We can arrange a regular pick up or organise a pick up on demand service for clubs and corporate commercial organisations.

# Thank You to All of Our Donors and Supporters

## Donors & Supporters

So many people, businesses and organisations have helped the Pantry be established and continue to operate. We thank you from the bottom of our heart for your support.

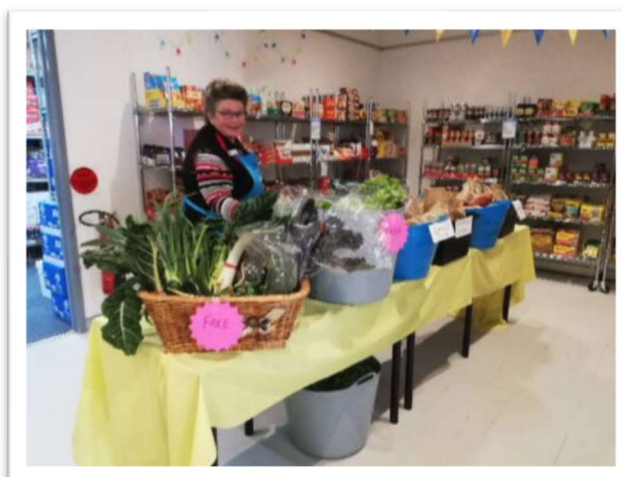
- About Regional – Ian Campbell
- Bega District News
- Bega Men’s Shed
- Bega Mitre 10
- Bega Valley Medical Practice
- Bobbins Transport
- Bournda Retreat – Steve Ryan
- Candelo Wholefoods
- Carpet Court Bega
- Chemist Warehouse Merimbula
- Chemist Warehouse Tura Beach
- Club Sapphire
- Coles Bega
- Delso Painting – Chris O’Sullivan
- Erin Threlfall
- F & J Orchards
- Foodbank NSW
- GJ Gardner Homes
- Hudson’s Coffee Bega Hospital – Alicia Edmed
- Inspirations Paint – Bega
- Jodie’s Fishpen Takeaway – Jodie Dunnage
- Lumen Christie Catholic College
- McCoys Packaging
- Microenergy Systems Australia Ltd - Stephen
- Millingandi Greens
- Ollie Masons Piattini Café – Jodie Dunnage
- OzHarvest Sapphire Coast
- Paint Place, Tura Beach
- Pambula-Merimbula Lions Club
- Pantry Volunteers
- Pantry Working Group
- Reaching Out Foundation
- Resonate Church
- Robyn Calhoun
- Rotary Club of Bega
- Rotary Club of Merimbula
- Rotary Club of Pambula
- Salvation Army Bega
- Sapphire Coast Anglican College
- Sapphire Coast Uniting Church
- Sapphire Dental
- Saucy Spices
- Social Justice Advocates of the Sapphire Coast
- Southern Women’s Group
- St Vincent de Paul Bega Conference (Tathra goods)
- Women’s Resource Centre
- and lots of anonymous backyard growers and food donors

## Volunteers

People volunteer for all manner of reasons, but the important thing is our volunteers want to give back to the community, share their love and do so in a non-judgemental way.

Our activities are only possible with the help of our volunteers. They make the organisation.

The following generous people gave their time to support the work of Sapphire Community Projects and the Sapphire Community Pantry during the period 1 July 2017 and 30 June 2018. Thank you. The list might not be perfect so if we have left you off, let us know. We appreciate you just as much.



Kiarne	Atwill	Sue	Jellis
David	Aynsley	Di	Johnson
Julie	B	Clancy	Kelly
Jess	Beasley	Janet	Kieltyka
Poppy	Benton	Joan	MacDonald
Chloe	Bourke	Rowan	MacDonald
Heidi	Burke	Sue	Mackinnon
Peter	Buggy	Kirsty	Mackinnon
Leona	Cairns	Jo	Oastler
Daniel	Cole	Ella	Phillips-Johnson
Susan	Coleman	Greer	Reeve
Sharon	Cornthwaite	Nakayla	Rootsey
Kay	Crocker-George	Alan	Rootsey
Kay	Dowman	Sue	Rootsey
Andrew	Duchesne	Josh	Shoobridge
Penny	Flaherty	Tonia	Smith
Jenny	Foster-Chrome	Susan	Smith
Deb	Hall	Mari	Smyth
Brian	Hall	Bec	Stevens
Natalie	Hallett	Deborah	Taylor
Steve	Hardiman	Mathew	Varghese
Rebecca	Hardiman	Christine	Welsh
Barbara	Helland	Karen	Wright
Kim	Hitchcock		

## Resources & Financial Management

### Sapphire Community Projects Incorporated

For the most part, the operations carried out by the Sapphire Community Projects in the 2017-8 year were auspiced by the Southern Women's Group who looked after most financial arrangements. Sapphire Community Projects was set up to take over the activities of the Pantry and other associated activities.

While incorporated in February 2018, Sapphire Community Projects financial activities were limited to entering into a lease agreement for the new premises at 2 Peden Street, Bega. The lease costs were passed on to the Pantry's auspicing body, the Southern Women's Group and these payments represent the sole income for Sapphire Community Projects Incorporated.

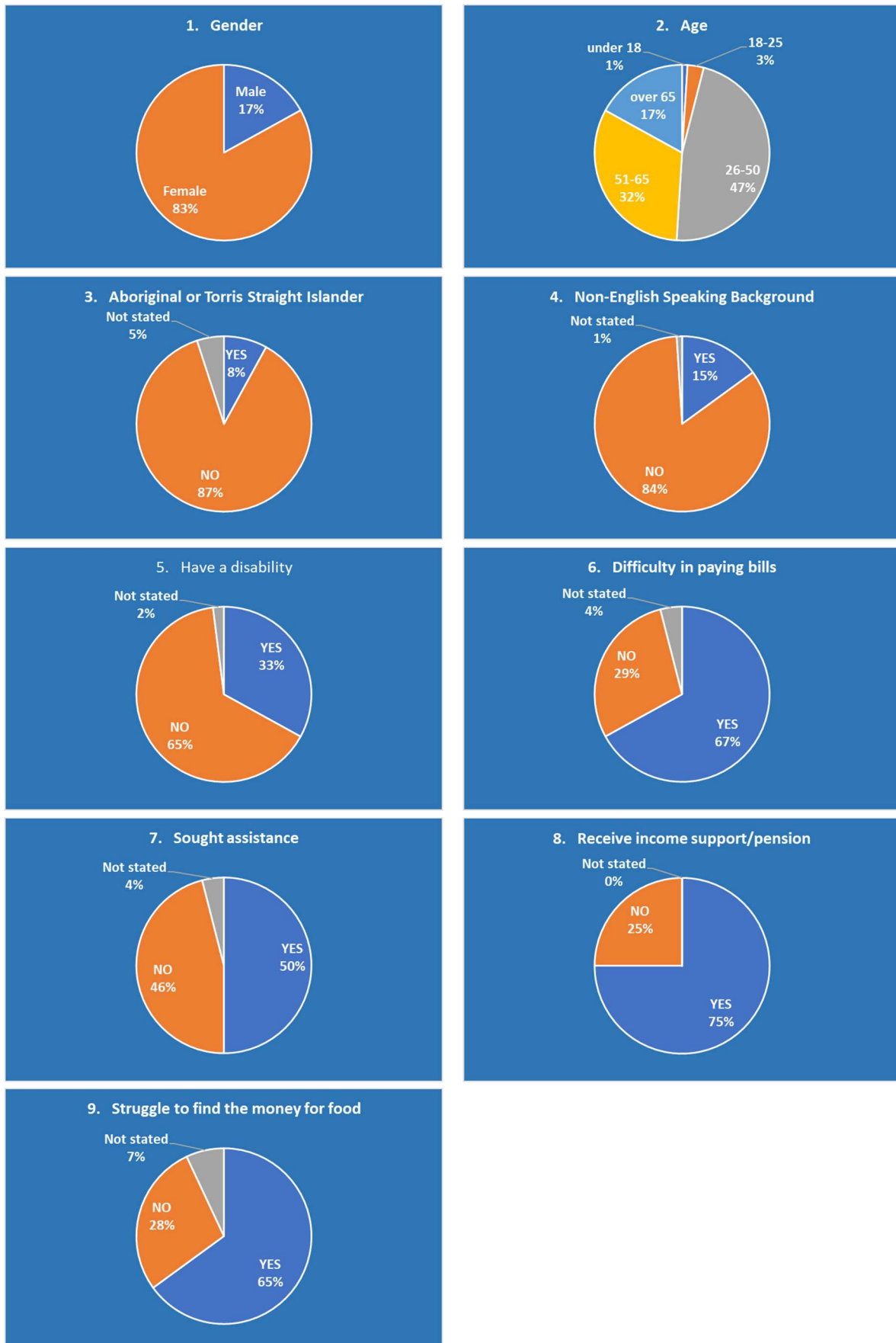
Sapphire Community Projects assumed full financial independence on 1 July 2018.

<b>Sapphire Community Projects Inc (2017-2018)</b>	
<b>Profit and Loss Statement</b>	
<b>For the period from 1/07/2017 to 30/06/2018</b>	
<b>Cash basis</b>	
	<b>30/06/2018</b>
<b>Income</b>	
Rent Income	<b>5,600.00</b>
<b>Less: Expenses</b>	
Rent	<b>5,600.00</b>
<b>Net profit (loss)</b>	<b>0.00</b>

Bank Balance at 1 July 2017	\$0.00
Cash in hand 1 July 2017	\$0.00
Bank Balance at 30 June 2018	\$0.00
Cash in hand 30 June 2018	\$0.00

## Annexe - Pantry Statistics

The following demographic data was obtained by surveying new Pantry members during the year.



**"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."**

**Margaret Mead**