



# ANNUAL REPORT 2020



## The Biggest Life Possible

**Goulburn Options** is a community based, not for profit, registered charity providing support services, including those delivered under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

Our aim is to assist participants as they seek to live their 'biggest life possible'.

Assisting individuals to meet their goals means we are also supporting carers and families.

Goulburn Options was born from community action in 1981 and has grown to become a leading service provider in Seymour and the Goulburn region. The organisation is strongly integrated into regional life, enjoying community collaboration and employing 52 local staff alongside 36 volunteers.

We are committed to leading an inclusive community that enables and encourages diversity.



*"I make my friends through Art"*  
Susan



We encourage people of all abilities to,  
***Live their 'biggest life possible'***

*With our support, Susan enjoys being creative with friends and sharing her Art with the community. That's just one of the ways we help people to live the life they choose.*

**Goulburn Options:** Appreciating individual capacity, recognising the value of diversity and promoting equality.



# Board Chair Report

***“It is only through labour and painful effort, by grim energy and resolute courage, that we move on to better things” – Theodore Roosevelt***

What a year we have just lived through! When the current Board set off on its journey last year, our strategic outlook was focused on simply getting our new business systems aligned to the NDIS bureaucracy and facing the competitive environment of new public management. Within a matter of weeks, we all watched in a kind of wonderment as Australia was threatened by a nationwide emergency, breathing in smoke from fires burning hundreds of kilometres away. The fire season passed, as it was expected to do, and we felt everybody could settle down to getting things back to normal.

What was normal like anyway? I seem to have forgotten.

No sooner than the fires were out, the world itself was impacted by the arrival of the once in a hundred years' pandemic. The function of every level of government itself was initially confused and flat-footed. It seemed we all were about to be overwhelmed by a disaster that no-one had prepared for and nobody was in a position to predict what was going to happen next.

Early on, organisations like Goulburn Options were largely left to fend for themselves as all the formal structures of society struggled to adapt to a vast unknown. And many organisations like Goulburn Options failed and closed their doors; some for the duration, others permanently.

But Goulburn Options endured and we saw up close how it is that some communities survive and even thrive in adverse situations. Shared objectives, personal effort and a realistic confidence in our own abilities have seen us live through an incredibly difficult time.

Your Board has been repeatedly impressed by the skills, talent and attitude of the management, staff, Participants and families. Goulburn Options has demonstrated an innate strength which indeed has occasionally been found lacking in a lot of other organisations and areas.

We have been held back this year in some activities due to the impact of bushfires and pandemic. But in other areas, we have grown immeasurably and continue to make an imprint on the local community through a positive and outward leaning approach in serving the needs and interests of our members, Participants and carers.

We won't know what the new normal looks like for some time yet. We do know that we are ready and able to move on to better things.

I must acknowledge the services of Margaret Sheppard, Bill Keating and Gary Doherty who have all indicated their intention to retire from the Board this year. Each leaves a positive stamp of their service to Goulburn Options. Cheers to you all and we hope you may continue with Goulburn Options in other capacities.

Lastly, please accept from the Board its hope that all of the Goulburn Options community have a meaningful and safe New Year.

***Ewan McDonald***





## CEO Report

Only when people, organisations, systems and relationships are put under stress can we really know their true quality. What looks appealing, clever, or well put together does not always stand up to testing times.

Last year I wrote in my report that ‘...Goulburn Options has heart as well as muscle which is why we can go forward confident that we have what it takes to support our participants to live their biggest life possible.’ Little did I know that 2020 would test us so intensely, but these qualities were equal to the test. Together we saw confirmation that this is a community of people that is strongly committed to its purpose and each other.

The pandemic stopped us providing services in the usual way and so we adapted. Working with families we addressed individual needs to suit each situation. In some cases, families chose to take on more support roles and to keep their loved ones at home. We offered meals, shopping and regular contact via phone or internet where requested. The internet sessions proved so popular, including art and cooking, that some may continue post COVID. A grant from the Victorian government recognised our efforts and will help us to consolidate this work.

Where supports were required staff used their own vehicles and worked in bubbles with their participants. COVID restrictions meant that staff were often unable to attend work due to testing guidelines impacting themselves or their families, but the team pulled together filling in for each other and ensuring that participants received the supports they needed. There were many community fears about COVID, but our staff were asked to put their concern for our participants above their personal concerns and they stood up to that challenge.

The Board worked with management forming a COVID emergency management team to monitor all threats and advocate for support from all levels of government. This work had to be done 7 days of every week to stay on top of the risks and I am indebted to Ewan, Sarah, Megan and Bec for their devotion to this task. The Board was also strong in supporting staff welfare and I thank Treasurer Michael Molony for his advice and guidance regarding JobKeeper. This initiative supported many of our staff through difficult economic times and assisted us to continue operations at an effective level.

We started the year with a new commercial kitchen that we have not yet been able to fully utilise so we are looking forward to 2021 and the new cooking / hospitality activities that we can explore, along with our new coffee van. We will also celebrate 2021 by opening our new verandah with direct access to our sensory garden. As we move ahead to these and many other new initiatives, I trust that every person in the Goulburn Options community will enjoy a happy, healthy new year. Thank you to everyone who has given so much this year to keep our unique community safe and supported.

***Rosey Panelli***





## Goulburn Options Snapshot

Support services are provided at the Seymour centre and throughout the community of Goulburn region.

Participants	81
Staff	52
Volunteers	36

## Programs are designed to build

- Independent living skills
- Work & vocational skills
- Recreation and leisure participation
- Health and wellbeing
- Community access
- Social connections
- Interpersonal skills

Supports are available for groups or individual needs. We can tailor services to accommodate requirements such as attendance at medical appointments, event participation or holidays.

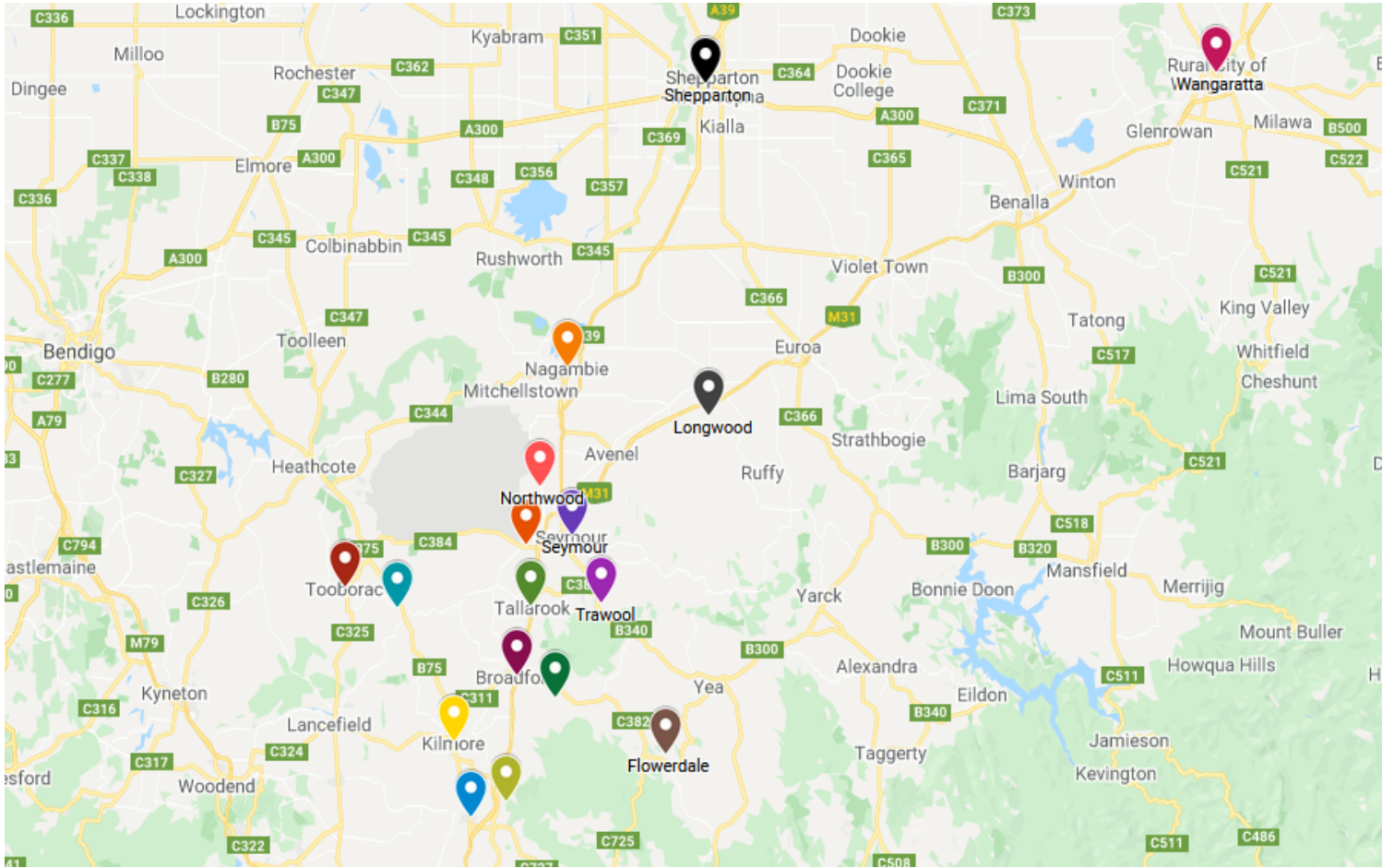
In-home independent living supports are also available for people who require assistance to remain in the family home or for people who require support to live independently.

Short term accommodation (respite) is available if required.

Support Coordination is available to NDIS participants regardless of whether they attend Goulburn Options activities.



# Distribution of Participants



# Participant 2020 Christmas collage





## Our Board

The Board governs the organisation and is accountable to its members for its performance. The Board has nine members elected by the members of the Association.



Ewan McDonald  
*President*



Raelene Eason  
*Vice President*



Michael Molony  
*Treasurer*



Bob Edwards  
*Secretary*



Bill Keating



Margaret Sheppard



Trevor Harnes



Sarah Pyle



Gary Doherty

## Strategic Direction

*Appreciating individual **capability**, recognising the value of **diversity** and promoting **equity**.*



## Supporters of Goulburn Options

Goulburn Options is the recipient of wonderful community support through donations, in-kind support, fundraising and grants. Our supporters are of all ages and come from every corner of our community. Heartfelt thanks to every person, business and organisation that has provided encouragement and support throughout 2020.

## Service Awards

The Goulburn Options team is fortunate to include loyal staff and volunteers, who have contributed to the organisation over many years. The service awards celebrate each 5 years of service achieved.

## Staff

- Rebecca Staring 20 Years
- Megan Hill 15 Years
- Mandy Gloede 10 Years
- Hayden Saunders 10 Years
- Brittany Jones 5 Years
- Diane Sloley 5 Years
- Teresa Reid 5 Years

## Volunteers

- Jan Deglatis 20 Years
- Janet Fish 10 Years
- Barb Molony 5 Years
- Dot Kanters 5 Years



# Goulburn Options

Seymour, Vic 3660

**GO Centre** 28 High Street  
**GO-Again Op Shop** 115 Anzac Avenue  
**GO Get Living Units** 22 O'Sullivan Road

**Telephone:** (03) 5792 3192  
**Mobile:** 0417 153 365  
**Admin:** finance@goinc.org.au  
**Programs:** programs@goinc.org.au  
**Website:** www.goinc.org.au  
**Postal Address:** PO Box 345 Seymour 3661



## Goulburn Options Disability Services

@goulburnoptions · Community organisation

<https://www.facebook.com/goulburnoptions>



## Goulburn Options GO ART

@goulburnoptionsgoart · Art

<https://www.facebook.com/goulburnoptionsgoart>



## Goulburn Options GO Coffee

@goulburnoptionsgocoffee · Community organisation

<https://www.facebook.com/goulburnoptionsgocoffee>



**Thank you!**

Goulburn Options would like to thank its participants for generously sharing their photos with us for this report



Goulburn Options is a registered charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission.



Donations can be made at [givenow.com.au/goulburnoptions](https://givenow.com.au/goulburnoptions)