

# CHELSEA COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES INC

## ANNUAL REPORT 2015 -2016



Supported by  
Commonwealth  
DSS

Chelsea Community Support Services Inc.  
1A Chelsea Road, Chelsea, Victoria, 3196  
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Email: [www.chelsea.org.au](http://www.chelsea.org.au)

*This report was kindly printed by: The Office of Tim Richardson, Member for Mordialloc*

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The Chelsea Community Support Services Inc. sincerely thanks the following for their support and contributions during the year. And the various other businesses and private donors who continued to support us

Bakers Delight  
Bayside Masonic Centre  
Chelsea Church of Christ  
Chelsea Parish Unity Church  
Edithvale Probus Club  
Chris Ewin (Enhance Computers)  
City of Kingston, Councillors and staff  
Frankston Magistrates Court – Court Fund  
Good Guys Moorabbin  
KOGO – Knit One-Give One  
Longbeach Community Centre  
Members of St Nicholas Anglican Parish of Mordialloc  
Members of St Chad’s Anglican Church Chelsea  
St Aidan’s Anglican Church  
Victorian Relief and Foodbank

## **CHRISTMAS HAMPERS**

Bayside Masonic Centre  
Ray White Real Estate  
Sandringham Masonic Centre  
Chelsea District Lions Club  
Woolworths Patterson Lakes  
St Chads Church

## **OUR ORGANISATION**

Chelsea Community Support Services Inc. (ChelCSS) is a not for profit incorporated association that was established to provide emergency relief and social support services to the residents of Chelsea and surrounding suburbs. The agency is governed by a community based Committee of Management, managed by a paid part-time manager and staffed by a large number of trained volunteers, two part-time employees and a number of visiting professionals.

The services provided by ChelCSS include:

- Emergency relief
- Community Information
- Practical support (assistance with reading and typing letters and forms)
- Individual support provided by a caseworker
- Referrals to counselling provided by trained psychologists
- No Interest Loans Scheme (NILS)
- Tax Help
- Justice of the Peace

Visiting or co-located agencies providing outreach services include:

- Peninsula Community Legal Centre
- Australian Hearing
- Taskforce

ChelCSS is a member of Community Information and Support Victoria (CISVic) which is the peak body for the community information and support sector. We also enjoy a close relationship with other welfare and support agencies in the local community and belong to a number of networks including: the Victorian Council of Social Service, Foodbank Victoria, Westernport Regional Association of Community Information Centres and the Southern Emergency Relief Network.

ChelCSS recognises the growing needs and factors of disadvantage that have affected low income, disabled and unemployed people in the area. We have a commitment to providing the best information and referral service to community members and to this end ChelCSS is always looking for ways to improve connection to services. Despite its limited staff resources, ChelCSS values positive networking and engages as much as possible with Centrelink and other relevant agencies and community groups to build positive working relationships.

## **FUNDING**

### **City of Kingston**

ChelCSS appreciates the support and interest of Kingston Council in the continuing role we play in providing services to the most disadvantaged and vulnerable members of our community. Kingston Council supports ChelCSS through the Community Grants Program. The Kingston

Council funding is critical to the agency's continued service to Chelsea and surrounding South Ward suburbs – without it our agency would not have operational funds for keeping the doors open. Aligned to Kingston Council's priority for healthy, strong and connected communities, we recruit and train volunteers in an accredited course '*Assess and Provide Services to Clients with Complex Needs*'. ChelCSS also plays a significant role in providing information and opportunities for potential volunteers in other activities within the municipality as we are committed to a vision of social inclusion, and connecting people to a diverse range of social, educational, cultural, health and leisure opportunities.

### **COMMONWEALTH - DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

DSS provides the funding under its Financial Management Program to improve the financial knowledge, skills, capabilities and financial resilience of vulnerable individuals and families to alleviate the immediate impact of financial stress and to progress initiatives in relation to problem gambling. Whilst we serve people by providing immediate financial relief, we refer them to financial counselling and assist them in household budgeting and financial management (which may involve advocacy with utilities companies, landlords and Centrelink).

DSS also funds our part-time Generalist Caseworker position which provides a service to people in the area affected by multiple disadvantage and/or disabilities. The case worker focuses on building the financial resilience and wellbeing of clients over the medium to long term. The funding can be used for case management, direct assistance and brokerage to other services – aligning to the Kingston Council's priority of building strong, connected communities.

### **OTHER FINANCIAL SERVICES**

We also receive significant financial contributions from the Magistrates Court in Frankston and many local churches, including the Carrum Chelsea Edithvale Parish Uniting Church, the Anglican Parish of Longbeach and St Nicholas Anglican Church Mordialloc, Chelsea Rotary and individual donations

### **OUR MISSION AND VALUES**

CHELCSS is committed to providing high quality information and support services to the local community. In particular, we provide services to support the wellbeing of people experiencing financial hardship or social disadvantage due to poverty, illness, disability or misfortune. We provide a free, confidential, and impartial service and are committed to maintaining the privacy, autonomy and dignity of those using our services. We value, respect and support our staff and volunteers and building partnerships in the community.

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**



**Joy Fletcher**  
**President**

This is the 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Report of the Chelsea Community Support Services and our Agency is still going strong despite major changes due to reduction of our government funding. Thanks to the dedication and efforts of our Manager, staff, volunteers, and COM we have come through relatively unscathed and optimistic without causing our clients any disruption to the level of service and care they are accustomed to.

We are still working dilligently on renewing our Business Plan and Policies and Procedures, and despite our diminishing members we are finally nearing a conclusion to putting these time consuming but important documents to bed.

The requirements placed on the Agency by way of regulations and legislations is quite demanding and it is the Committee of Management that is responsible for ensuing that we meet and adhere to these requirements. As our committee members are diminishing (3 members have left since our last AGM ) I am extremely grateful for the support of the loyal members who still continue to give freely of their time and experience in making sure the Agency continues to function.

I would like to thank our previous Manager Anne Catanese for her hard work and dedication in seeing the agency through some difficult and challenging times and leaving the Agency in a healthy and financially stable position.

Welcome to our new Manager. Debra Webb who took over the role in April has settled in nicely and is dilligently and productively working her way around the many responsibilites in managing ChelCSS.

I would like to conclude by thanking the wonderful volunteers who provide the many services that the agency provides. They do this in a professional manner and give freely of their time to do so. And as I have noted on many occassion, they are the core of our organisation and without their dedication and committment we simply would not have Chelsea Community Support Services.

Members of the Committee of Management 2015-2016

President:	Joy Fletcher
Vice-President:	Con Stamopolous
Secretary/Public Officer:	Megan King - Resigned

Treasurer:	Henry Koberle
Ordinary Members:	Bill Turner Uma Laverack - Resigned Dianne Phillips - Resigned
Ex-Officio Member	Debra Webb (Manager) Anne Catanese (Manager) Resigned

## MANAGERS REPORT



**Debra Webb**  
**Manager**

My name is Debra Webb and I am the new Manager of Chelsea Community Support Service, I started in my position in April 2016. I have around 14 years of management experience. I have worked at Kingston City Council for seven years as a Community Development Officer where I gained an insight into the needs of this community.

Chelsea Community Support Service was left in a good financial position and is working well with the current volunteers. The cutbacks from the Department of Social Service influence how we do business and there were some recommendations suggested by the last manager. These recommendations have put into place to ensure there is enough funding for our core business which is emergency relief.

We have had to cut hours from our volunteer coordinator role and the case worker position. The case worker has taken this on board and is considering some innovative strategies by making the most out of the hours she provides to her customers. She is running some group work with her hours and at the same time I'm investigating the role of the Volunteer Coordinator, to consider how we can develop the best position description which fits the new hours and our changing service delivery.

We have been steadily recruiting new volunteers to fill in gaps. I'd like to organise three volunteers a day, one for the front counter, and two to interview. I'd also like to rotate the roles and responsibilities with interesting and challenging activities. At present we have about fifteen volunteers and they are hardworking and consistent in their approach to their work, and I'd like to take the time now to thank them. Thank you all for your work here at ChelCSS!

We have been building the capacity of volunteers to provide customer focussed service provision for vulnerable people and communities and we hope to provide more training in the New Year. We also take on students who fill the counselling requirements of our customers. I am looking at developing policies and procedures to support both volunteers and customers to

ensure there is a consistent approach to service provision and everyone has a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

Another outcome we are focusing on is the safety and security of volunteers, along with reviewing policies and procedures. Our organisation is working with Kingston to address some of our building shortcomings. We have a new security system to access our building and this will be further addressed in the New Year.

I look forward to the New Year where we can work towards better outcomes for our customers and I am excited about the potential of this organisation and where we are heading. Lastly I would like to thank all of our community members who support us during the year and hope this support continues and grows in the future.

## **OUR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS**

Manager	Debra Webb Anne Catanese - Resigned 2016
Volunteer Coordinator	Kathy Barnett - Resigned 2016
Caseworker	Helen Byrne

## **VOLUNTEERS**

The quality of the services provided by ChelCSS depends to a large degree on the skill and commitment of its volunteers. We are very fortunate to have a group of hardworking and committed volunteers who fulfil their various roles in a professional and competent manner. These include Emergency Relief interviewing, data collection, advocacy and support, tax help and administration duties.

Volunteers who contributed to the services provided during the year include:

**MIRZA MILLER**  
**JOY FLETCHER**  
**BRIONY DONOVAN**  
**MARY PALZER**  
**SANDRA LHOTELLIER**  
**MARION HOWLETT**

**NOELINE ABBEY**  
**ADA YOUNG**  
**RENNIE DYER**  
**ALISON BURN**  
**MARGARET BROWN**  
**HENRY KOBERLE**

Student Placements:	Katie Brown Johanna Moden Jenny Rundle Sandra Lhotellier
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**Voluntary professional services are provided by:**

Information Technology	Chris Ewin (Enhance Computing)
Finance and Accounts	Grant Plozza (Auditor and Financial Adviser) Vivienne Heath (Accounts)
Tax Help Volunteers	Alan Sergi Marion Howlett

**VOLUNTEERING AT CHELCSS**

Chelsea Community Support Services has a team of volunteers who selflessly give their time to provide support and assistance to vulnerable members of the community. The majority of our volunteers have been working with ChelCSS for over 5 years, with a couple of people who have been with us in excess of 10 years.

As we know there comes a time when volunteers will resign from their organisations, whether to take up paid work, moving house, to travel or to spend more time with family. During the last financial year, sadly we have said goodbye to some of our regular volunteers as they start on a new chapter in their lives.

**OPERATIONAL REPORT**

**Statistics 2015-2016**

As members of the CISVic Consortium we are now using the CISVic Portal which was developed for the consortium to mainstream data collection and reporting systems for member agencies aligned with DSS Data Reporting requirements. As demonstrated in the statistics the predominant age group remains 25-44 year olds, with females representing just over half of the total number of clients in 2015–16. Almost half of the services provided were Emergency Relief in the form of supermarket and meat vouchers, petrol vouchers, myki cards, pharmaceutical expenses, Telstra vouchers, utility bills, and school relief for return to school expenses in cases of extreme hardship.

Our data continues to indicate an increase in the number of individuals identifying as Homeless or of no fixed address. We have been able to provide high quality swags or backpack beds through a program 'Swags for Homeless' who partner with more than 200 hundred agencies to distribute the swags to individuals who complete or are assisted in completing a survey. The results of these surveys help organisations for the homeless get valuable insights into homeless densities in regions across Australia.



Individuals who have received this assistance prefer to sleep rough rather than find accommodation in boarding houses or other arrangements. We provide a hygiene pack of toothbrush, toothpaste, comb, soap etc. The other group of individuals live in a state of insecure housing through “couch surfing” or no fixed address.

Our support is provided in a confidential and non-judgemental way and our caseworker works with housing agencies and other services to seek positive housing outcomes and advocate for individuals. Mental health, personal relationship and drug and alcohol issues are often contributing factors adding to the complexity of the work.

## **CASEWORK**

ChelCSS employs a part-time caseworker (funded by the Department of Social Services) to assist clients who have complex problems requiring assistance across a number of areas. Helen Byrne is a highly experienced qualified Social Worker. ChelCSS is very fortunate to have Helen on board as are the Social Work students from RMIT who commit to 6 month placements with us under Helen’s professional supervision.

Approximately 368 casework sessions were provided in the last financial year and there have been six Social Work students on placement supporting the casework program. The caseworker has attended community activities such as Matts place, pantry 5000 and attended network meetings with CISVIC and the SE welfare network

## **FINANCIAL LITERACY & SUPPORT PROGRAM**

The Financial Literacy and Support Program offers free and confidential one on one sessions with individuals who would like to have more control over their personal finances. The financial literacy worker can assist with providing the right tools for you to take control of your personal finances, this may include:-

- Budgeting
- Discuss financial concerns or difficulties e.g. bills, debts,
- Money management tips and ideas
- Save money on utility bills
- Various bill payment methods
- Understanding financial products e.g. bank account
- Debt and consumer credit
- Your rights and responsibilities

Increasingly, financial literacy is the focus of our work as the outcomes are more sustainable for the individual than Emergency Relief financial support which is the safety net in times of crisis

### **CAIRNMILLAR INSTITUTE AND ACAP (AUSTRALIAN COLLEGE OF APPLIED PSYCHOLOGY)**

The relationship between ChelCSS and the Cairnmillar Institute commenced in May 2012 with an internship program and the provisional psychologists provide personal support counselling to clients who are referred by our caseworker. The counselling provided is a valuable additional service to compliment the casework. Cairnmillar and ACAP placements increase the number of counselling hours we can provide to the community. The high quality of their work and their genuine interest in the psychological welfare of clients reflects their personal and institute's high service standards. We hope to continue and grow our arrangement with Cairnmillar, ACAP and Monash University into the next year and beyond.

### **HOLMESGLEN TAFE**

ChelCSS has been able to place several Holmesglen Community Service students who benefit from the "front line" experience researching, observing and working within the context of a community agency.

### **TAX HELP**

There are many tax payers who are unaware that we offer a free service to assist low-income earners with lodging tax returns. Occasionally, tax payers will come in with past years of returns to be completed - in some cases, this may be up to ten or eleven years of past returns to lodge. Our Tax Help volunteers, Marion and Allan are very understanding and able to offer practical assistance, information and advice in these situations.

Our volunteers complete income tax returns, either on-line through the tax office's e-Tax and My-Tax systems, or by using various forms appropriate to individual circumstances. Some of our clients are unsure whether they need to submit tax returns due to their income levels and our volunteers are available to provide advice in those circumstances.

The Tax Help program has been in operation for 28 years. During the 2015-2016 tax season, our volunteers assisted many community members with their income tax matters including registering for online tax returns.

### **NILS (No Interest Loans Scheme)**

NILS is a national program auspice by the Good Shepherd Youth and Family Service and sponsored by the National Australia Bank. This scheme has been operating from Chelsea Community Support Services since 2009 and the two NILS officers (Margaret and Joy) have been with the program from the start.

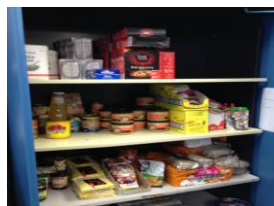
NILS enables individuals and families to take out small, manageable loans to purchase essential items whilst on a low income. They can borrow from \$200 up to \$1,200 and repayments are deducted fortnightly through Centrepay over a 12-18 month period. There

is no interest on the term of the loan and no upfront fees. Loans can be for fridges, washing machines, televisions, spectacles, computers, dental work, car registration and many other items

NILS's loan interviewers are able to undertake additional training and workshops in order to further assist the client through the interview process and to help them with achieving the best possible outcome. We have had several clients who having paid off their first loan, are now on to their second loan with us, and one client has now completed his fourth loan.

The "Good2GoNow" partnership with the Good Guys retail outlets has proven very popular with clients who are wishing to purchase household electrical appliances. This scheme enables clients who wish to make their purchases from The Good Guys are offered a substantial discount on many items e.g. washing machines, fridges, TV's.

### **PANTRY 5000**



Over the last 4 years, Pantry 5000 has become an important food parcel distribution service in the Chelsea community. Food that has been collected from Vic Relief Foodbank and supplemented through local purchases is distributed on a Wednesday morning at St Aidan's Anglican Church Carrum. The successful running of this program is dependent on St Chad's volunteer parishioners, who have contributed a significant amount of time and energy into the continuation of this vital service.

ChelCSS has been distributing food parcels as part of our service when we are unable to assist in other ways. Food parcels are given at the discretion of the interviewing volunteer but as we only have one pantry, there is a limit to the food that we can store. We have been able to assist Pantry 5000 with our supplies from Vic Relief Foodbank, resulting in a doubling of the quantity of product that is distributed.

Not only has this greatly assisted the people that visit ChelCSS, it has also provided a much needed social and community connection. Many of the people who attend Pantry 5000 have commented on the value that they obtain from the social interaction and the friendships and support they receive from other participants. Through our continued partnership, ChelCSS and Pantry 5000 hope to continue the feeling of community and support for participants, thus increasing social connectedness.

## **CHRISTMAS HAMPERS**

Each year in December, ChelCSS provides Christmas hampers to the community. The hampers generally contain an assortment of goods, including food items, meat and grocery vouchers and toys. The products are donated by Chelsea Rotary, local businesses, individuals and community groups and we are very grateful for this support. A list of supporters is included at the front of this report.

Our Christmas Hamper service is well-known and appreciated by our clients, who often make enquiries many weeks in advance. More than 50+ food and toy parcels were provided to clients in December 2015.

## **VISITING SERVICE REPORTS**



### **Peninsula Community Legal Centre**

Peninsula Community Legal Centre (PCLC) is an independent, not-for-profit organisation that has been providing free legal services to Melbourne's south-eastern communities for almost 40 years.

The Centre provides legal advice & casework on a variety of (non-commercial) issues, subject to guidelines. Ongoing assistance is targeted to assist clients who are experiencing disadvantage. In addition to its general services, the Centre operates programs for clients with family Law, family violence, tenancy & consumer disputes.

PCLC has provided a visiting service to ChelCSS for over 15 years. A community lawyer attends ChelCSS on a fortnightly basis to provide clients with on the spot legal advice and in some cases ongoing casework and court representation. Over the last year, PCLC has helped more than 120 clients with a range of legal issues including neighbour disputes, motor vehicle accidents, police charges & family law.

For more information about free legal services, please call PCLC on 9783 3600 or visit the website at [www.pclc.org.au](http://www.pclc.org.au).

### **Australian Hearing**



Australian Hearing provides a full range of hearing services to eligible adults. These services range from hearing screening to fitting hearing aids and counselling about hearing loss.

Our services include:

- hearing assessment
- selecting and fitting hearing devices
- regular hearing checks to monitor any changes in hearing levels
- training to improve listening and communication skills.

We help these clients to choose the most appropriate hearing intervention option and work with them to develop strategies to manage their hearing loss.

Visitors to the service avail themselves of other information and friendly advice from our resourceful volunteers.

### **Taskforce**



**Youth Start Services Transition to Work provides** intensive, pre and post education and employment support to improve the work readiness of young people aged 15–21 to help them into work or education. Youth Start Services are made up of three youth community organisations – IMVC, Jesuit Social Services and Taskforce. Our services are offered across the Inner Melbourne Region and are located in Melbourne CBD, Collingwood, Cheltenham, Chelsea, Flemington and Brunswick.

Young people will undertake up to 25 hours of activities and services each week, activities can be individual, group or self-directed. Activities will address significant barriers young people have to entering and maintaining education, training or employment. Activities may include; Support Services Appointments, Active Job Search, Work Readiness workshops, Career Pathway Exploration and Planning, Work Experience Placements, Volunteer work and any other activities that assist the young person to prepare for employment.

The Transition to Work Service targets three groups of young people who are considered most at risk of long-term unemployment. The eligibility requirements of each of the three groups vary.

The overarching eligibility requirements to participate in Transition to Work are: aged 15-21 years on Commencement in the service, and an Australian citizen, **or** the holder of a permanent visa, **or** New Zealand Special Category Visa holders (a protected Special Category Visa holder; and non-protected Special Category Visa holder), **or** Nominated Visa Holders (including Temporary Protection Visa Holders and Safe Haven Visa Holders).

### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

During the last Financial Year (2015/16) Chelsea Community Support Services Inc. Continued strongly supporting disadvantaged members of our community despite an approximate 33% cut in funding through DSS.

This continued support was made possible by finding ways to more effectively assist community members. These ways included finding other funding sources and shifting the emphasis from traditional to new areas. Incidentally, we only slightly exceeded our budget.

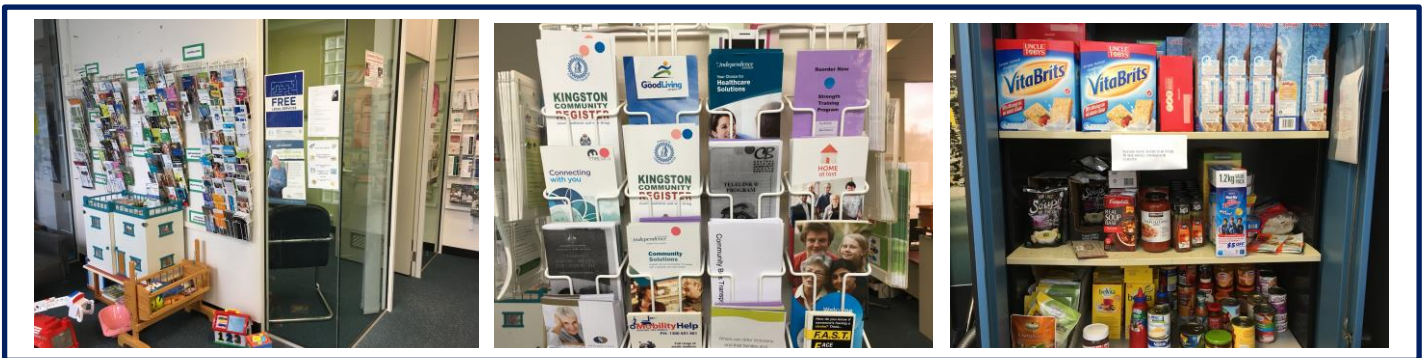
As to our fund providers we are extremely grateful for the increased support by the City of Kingston in granting us \$87,724 in total. Further support came through our umbrella organisation Community Information and Support Victoria (CISVic) They were able to allocate us \$62,573 from their DSS grant. Other than that we received a special grant from the Department of Infrastructure of nearly \$5,200 to assist in improving our facilities.

Our main donors again were Frankston Magistrates Court with \$5,000 and Chelsea Uniting Parish with \$1,450.

A special thank-you to all our donors and supporters

Finally, we stay committed to realistic and financial planning and management to serve our community in the best possible way

**Henry Koberle (Treasurer)**



## Financial Report

1.7.15

to 30.6.16

Budget

### Income

to 30.6.16

DSS CISVic Grant	62,513		62,513	
Dept of Infrastructure Grant	5,189		5,189	
BAY CISS Funds for Caseworker Sal		9,824		13,760
Kingston Corporate Grant	83,179		83,179	
Kingston Charitable Grant	4,545		4,545	
Interest received	2,215		2,300	
Donations	8,421		8,421	
Other/Room Rental	3,409		3,400	
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>179,295</b>	<b>(./4012)</b>	<b>183,307</b>	

### Expenses

YTD

#### Admin. Expenses

Salaries, Oncosts & Superannuation	75,264		78,000	
Workcover	2,026		4,000	
Volunteer Expenses & Staff Amenities		1,595	incl. Vol. Appreciation 490	1,500
Insurance	403		500	
Bank Charges	119		120	
CALD Expenses	640		650	
Membership & Subscriptions	682		750	
COM & AGM expenses	908		1000	
Rental of Office & Utilities	3,461		4,000	
New Office Equipment	11,985	s. Infrastructure Grant	8,000	
Stationery & Office	982		1,000	increased by \$600

Telephone	2,162		2,500
<b>Total Admin. Expenses</b>	<b>100,227</b>	-1793	<b>102,020</b>

<b>DSS Expenses</b>		<i>Budget</i>
	<i>YTD</i>	
Casework Salary, Superann., Taxes	31,256	31,256
Food Vouchers	25,662	25,662
Pantry Stock	521	521
Pharmacy / Travel	1,814	1,814
Clothing & Household	700	700
Bill Assistance	2,560	2,560
<b>Total DSS Expenses</b>	<b>62,513</b>	<b>62,513</b>











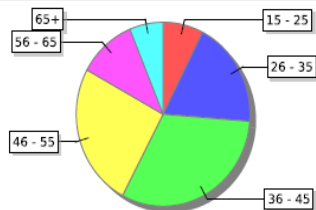


# Chelsea Community Support Services

## Statistics July 2015 to June 2016

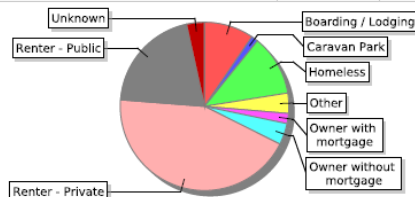
### Client Age

Client Age	Total
15 - 25	30
26 - 35	75
36 - 45	126
46 - 55	101
56 - 65	43
65+	25



### Housing

Housing Tenure	Total	Total %
Boarding / Lodging	44	9.50 %
Caravan Park	6	1.30 %
Homeless	54	11.66 %
Other	18	3.89 %
Owner with mortgage	9	1.94 %
Owner without mortgage	19	4.10 %
Renter - Private	203	43.84 %
Renter - Public	94	20.30 %
Unknown	16	3.46 %



Note: Not all tables or charts add to 100% due to rounding

### Reasons for Seeking Assistance

Reasons for seeking assistance	Total	%
Alcohol and Drugs	8	0.55 %
Education Expenses	28	1.92 %
Family Breakdown	38	2.61 %
Family Violence	15	1.03 %
Gambling	2	0.14 %
Housing - Homelessness	66	4.54 %
Housing - Mortgage stress	6	0.41 %
Housing - Relocation costs	36	2.47 %
Housing - Rent	116	7.97 %
Housing - Tenancy Issues	8	0.55 %
Infringement / Legal Expenses	22	1.51 %
Loan Repayments	49	3.37 %
Material Aid - Clothing	32	2.20 %
Material Aid - Food	527	36.22 %
Material Aid - Household Goods	13	0.89 %
Medical Expenses	146	10.03 %
No Income - Asylum Seeker	1	0.07 %
No Income - Breached	4	0.27 %
No Income - Not eligible for Centrelink	1	0.07 %
No Income - Other	5	0.34 %

Note: Not all tables or charts add to 100% due to rounding

