

Our committee began in February with some strategic thinking about ways in which we can further help people in need in our community. We revisited our purpose to keep in mind through the year, and it turned out to be quite prophetic with Covid-19: Our purpose is “to build a resilient community and to send the message that someone cares – be the heart of the community through ongoing care and education”. Our rolling Strategic Plan covers three years, and we were planning some of our regular social and training events, and we prepared a survey for feedback from our members. We even had detailed plans for an ‘Easter Foreshore Mingle’ on Good Friday in early April. But by then our attention was focused entirely on helping our community through Covid-19, and we prepared for a severe impact on our community – thankfully we’ve been spared, so far.

We began in March by calling for additional volunteers, as Cathy led a very busy process of providing boxes of groceries and other needs that were delivered by volunteers. The aim was not just to remind people that we are here to help, but to develop a list of the more vulnerable members of our community. This serves a wider purpose as Killy Cares together with other local organisations seeks to develop a Community Resilience Plan, so that we can all know how to respond to major disasters that could impact our community. I wrote a short piece each month in Talking Turkey to encourage our positive support for government restrictions and guidelines, to beware of compliance fatigue, and ways in which we can survive lockdown and support each other. We used social media to keep our community up-to-date with the Covid challenges, such as the impact on mental health.

The pandemic has however meant we have been unable to hold some of our usual annual events this year. The Clothing Sale and our Fundraising Dinner are victims of Covid-19, but we do hope they’ll return next year. On the fundraising front, we are pursuing an application to the ATO for Deductible Gift Recipient status ie tax deductibility for donations to KC. And as we head into this AGM our committee is also taking initial steps towards establishing a ‘Men’s Shed’ and a ‘Heart Club’ for ladies – more information on these two local initiatives will be available very soon.

Our committee also continued to work on capacity building in our community with our twofold strategy, to equip people in our community for first aid and urgent medical attention, together with the provision of accessible AEDs for emergencies. Yet another first aid training session was held in August, with another to happen before Christmas, and there are now five AEDs located around our community. We are planning a sixth. Our thanks to our partners in these efforts, HBCC, RFS and WTKCA. We have been congratulated by both local and state governments for this initiative.

As I move out of the President’s role at the end of this year, I thank our hard-working committee for playing a part in getting this local organisation so well established. Each committee member during these foundation years has been very generous with their time and constant efforts, with great success. Thanks to Brent for his attention to our finances and compliance. We could not ask for a better Volunteers Coordinator than Elizabeth, who with our volunteers is at the frontline of assisting people in such a variety of ways. Cathy often inspires us with new ideas, such as the soon forthcoming Men’s Shed and Heart Club. The glue in every organisation is the hard-working secretary, so Lyndall deserves our constant appreciation, slotting in seamlessly after Jenni.

To our members, volunteers and donors belong the credit for believing in and supporting such a fledgling start-up. Those we have helped or trained or supported in difficult times are very thankful for the kindness and generosity shown to them. As we move into the future, Killy Cares is very well placed to continue to help and train people for the critical times and incidents that can unexpectedly and randomly impact any of us. There is a sense of quiet pride and satisfaction that we have such a community spirit that Killy Cares can tap and channel for the ongoing welfare of our neighbours.