

Our Place
Love
Hope
Compassion





Message from our Chief Executive Officer and Board Chair

Last year was one of accomplishment, but also one filled with unexpected challenges that demonstrated the strength and adaptability of Our Place.

The generosity of community members enabled us to complete the beautiful renovations to the buildings and grounds at the New Roads Therapeutic Recovery Community in View Royal. We also witnessed the program's first graduates, and are so proud of their accomplishments.

After many years of successful leadership, Don Evans moved on to new career challenges, and we are most appreciative of the many accomplishments during his tenure. When we embarked on a national search for a new CEO, Alf Eamer maintained his responsibilities as Finance Director while also ably leading the organization for six months as Acting CEO, including through the unexpected challenges of COVID-19.

During this time, safety concerns dictated that many of our traditional services be modified, and the assistance provided by volunteers be drastically reduced. The demands of social distancing also caused significant hardship and disruption to the community we serve. Through creativity and hard work, along with the generosity of our donors, we were able to continue to provide services, including food and showers, to those most in need.

With provincial government leadership in supplying many new temporary housing units, we are actively working on improving living conditions and reducing disruption for those on the street. There is a long way to go, but we are moving in the right direction. Our Place is actively involved in supporting these changes by operating a number of these new living units.

In hiring our new CEO, Julian Daly, the Board of Directors is confident that with the support of our staff, volunteers and donors, Our Place will meet the challenges we face in the coming year.

Thank you for your ongoing support in our efforts to improve the lives of our community's most vulnerable members.

With much gratitude,

Julian Daly
CEO

Ernie Quantz
Board Chair



Programs & Services

Growth, Opportunity & Challenges

The 2019–2020 fiscal year was an exciting time of growth and opportunity for Our Place Society, which saw several projects long in the making grow into fully operational services for vulnerable, displaced people. The men and women using our services have access to more supports today than ever before.

The year was also marked by several challenges, including the departure of CEO Don Evans after more than seven years of dedicated service, the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the continuing opioid overdose crisis.

Nourishing Change

Our Place continued to serve three meals per day, 365 days of the year. We averaged 1,280 meals per day, and donors ensured that we were able to deliver over 885,000 nutritious meals and snacks in the past fiscal year. The meal program provided a safe place to meet with friends, find community, and connect to services. A series of fall focus groups met with almost 100 family members, and found over 90% of them first came to Our Place for a meal before accessing other supports.

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Compassionate Outreach

In 2019–2020, we achieved a milestone of remaining open for extended hours (7am to 9pm) all 12 months of the year. Open seven days per week, the Drop-In on Pandora Avenue is a welcoming place for people who would otherwise have nowhere to relax. This centre is particularly valued by family members experiencing homelessness or severe poverty, or even just for those seeking a sense of community. While many will use the Drop-In as a safe place to connect with friends, they also have access to a wide range of services provided by a team of professional outreach workers and volunteers.

Health and Hygiene

When Our Place first opened in 2009, we increased the number of public toilets available to homeless adults in Victoria by 900%. In 2019–20, Our Place provided over 16,000 showers, in 30-minute bookings. Each shower comes with a selection of hygiene products, and are complimented by other services provided by volunteer professionals, including footcare, on-site doctors, dental hygiene, haircuts, healing acupressure treatments, and Reiki.



Our Mission
We offer our most vulnerable citizens a place to call their own, where we live, share and grow together.



Our Vision
Nourishment,
hope and
belonging for
all in Greater
Victoria.



Vital Volunteers

As always, Our Place is a volunteer-driven organization, and nothing we do would be possible without the hundreds of volunteers who contribute every day to the work being done in our organization. In 2019, over 600 individual volunteers contributed over 49,000 hours at a cost-savings of \$1,235,000!

With a Vital Victoria grant from the Victoria Foundation, Our Place's volunteer manager has revised the intake, screening, training and evaluation protocols for Our Place. In the past, the majority of volunteers assisted in food services. Last year, we added a growing number of volunteers supporting our **Next Steps to Employment** program, **New Roads Therapeutic Recovery Community**, health serices and spiritual care. These new volunteer roles created opportunities for people to bring their professional skills and contribute to the wider community in a safe, supported environment.

In early 2020, Our Place was declared an essential service by the province in response to COVID-19. Our Place staff worked diligently to provide thousands of meals, as well as outreach, health, hygiene and other basic needs throughout the pandemic.

Reaching Isolated Seniors

In 2019-20, programming for seniors was given a boost thanks to grants from the City of Victoria, New Horizons for Seniors, and the Windsor family through United Way of Greater Victoria. The **50+ Connection Club** was put in place to support vulnerable seniors accessing Our Place services. The average life expectancy of persons who are street-involved is 47, which made us focus on how to engage and retain relationships with an aging, at-risk population.

Linking People to Jobs

The **Next Steps to Employment** program has grown significantly in 2019-20. Responding to surveys of our family members, Our Place has put a major focus

- 126 Intake Assessments
 - 106 Clients Served
 - 70% completion rate
 - 54% of participants moved into employment
- on creating opportunities to access employment and training. One new offering in 2019 was the "Women in Progress" cohort, an employment training program. With contributions from the Greater Victoria Community Savings Legacy Fund of Vancity and private donors, eight weeks of sessions were offered. Responding to feedback from women and sister agencies, this life skills and job placement program served the needs of 14 vulnerable women who did not feel comfortable in a group of men, due to prior trauma.

A Year in Review

Through hard work and dedication, we meet a variety of critical needs. Here's a snapshot of this past year's services and supports made possible by our generous volunteers, donors and funders.

* COVID-19 has affected all totals

Our Place offers food, shelter, hygiene, and much more, 365 days a year

441,508 meals served
444,950 snacks served

49,402 volunteer hours

*A savings of \$1,235,000

16,536 hot showers in Our Place hygiene

23 Eyeware exams & glasses with Mayfair Optical

498 paramedic/outreach medical assessments

54 supportive housing referrals

23 vulnerability assessments

41 detox and treatment referrals

377 unique storage facility visits

62 BCID I.D. referrals

141 birth certificates

900 foot care treatments

1,320 medical room visits

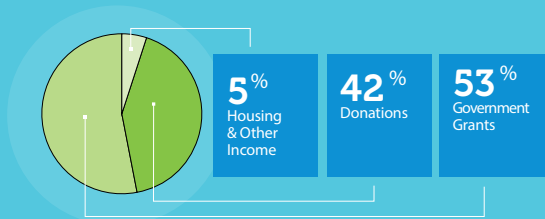
49 rent/hydro supports

400 haircuts

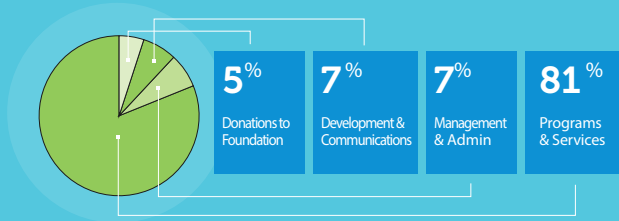
Financial Supports

Thousands of caring supporters joined us in helping Greater Victoria's most vulnerable citizens. Here's the breakdown of how we carefully used donor dollars to support our mission:

Revenue
\$12,408,580



Expenses
\$12,128,552



Operating Income	\$ 280,028
Allocation to COVID-19 Restricted Fund	\$ 250,000
Net	\$ 30,028

Our financial information is based on audited financial statements for the year ended March 31, 2020

New Roads Therapeutic Recovery Community

The New Roads Therapeutic Recovery Community had a busy year as the facility underwent a major HeroWork renovation to the living quarters plus the construction of a beautiful healing garden thanks to the the Jaymac Fund. While construction was disruptive to the program, the transformation to deinstitutionalize the facility made living through the months of renovation worthwhile.

Community partnerships was another focus with information, training and education provided to partners on the Therapeutic Recovery Community (TRC) model of treatment to ensure appropriate referrals. This will continue to be a focus as we move into the new fiscal year.

Over the past year, we have learned a great deal, including that finding staff who are familiar with the TRC model of treatment, assessment and planning is a significant challenge. This has required intensive focus and resources be applied to staff training in the model, plus self-care and skill enhancement to work with this complex population.

Further challenges in treating this complex population were experienced with retention of residents. We have learned that initial assessment and treatment readiness are key to successful integration into the model. Over half of the residents found that being smoke and caffeine-free was not a goal they could achieve and self-discharged from the program. (Changes have now been made to allow coffee, plus smoking at set hours in a designated outdoor area.)

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Others found the structure difficult, and after a period of treatment felt they were healthy and ready to exit the program.

However, early indication is that those residents who remain in the program benefit in all areas of their lives, and for many this is the first time they have been successful.

Finally our goal was to further develop the program and the work as therapy component of the TRC model. It has taken the full year to solidify the structure, and we are now adding additional training opportunities, including a school.

We are excited for the future.

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Donors Make a Difference Every Day!

More than 25,000 donations were generously offered last year by community groups, families, businesses or individuals, all with the same goal of bettering our community. On behalf of each person whose life was made that much brighter and healthier because of your care and compassion, Thank You!



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At Our Place, we serve our family with love and respect. We work for social justice for Greater Victoria's most vulnerable citizens.



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ourplace

Hope and Belonging

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