
LILLIAN'S 2016 – 2017
ANNUAL REPORT LILLIAN HOWELL PROJECT INC



We gratefully acknowledge funding from the NSW Department of Family and Community Services

We acknowledge the Gadigal and Wangal people of the Eora nation on whose country we are meeting today and their elders past and present

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MINUTES OF AGM 15 -16

**2016 Annual General Meeting
Erskineville Town Hall 104 Erskineville Rd Erskineville
10 November 2016**

Present: Helen Campbell, Danielle Renwick, Lauren Emerton, Bonnie Jean Penn, Virginia Bustamante, Vivian Stavis, Victoria Bell, Karen Lindley, Lucy Watchirs Smith, Naomi Crago, Chinasa Urigwe, Sally Fitzpatrick (via phone).

1. Open, welcome and Acknowledgement of country – Helen
2. Apologies: Ann Watchirs, Jan Christie
3. Acceptance of minutes of 2015 Annual General Meeting (AGM)
Motion; to accept the minutes of the 2015 AGM moved; Karen, seconded; Victoria; all carried
4. Chairpersons' report and managers' report
Helen presented chairperson's report and thanked residents and staff for their remarkable achievements as well as farewelling Sally and Cindi and thanking Ping and Victoria for their efforts updating the financial statements. Vivian presented the managers' report and also thanked residents and staff and reflected on some of the achievements over the last year including increasing revenue, the memorandum of understanding with Girls refuge and Metro housing and the partnership with Youth off the streets.
5. Treasurers report and adoption of Audited Financial statements
Victoria presented the treasurers' report and audited financial statements. Vitoria also commended Ping and Vivian.
Motion to accept the treasurers' report and audited financial statements; moved: Victoria; seconded: Naomi; all carried
6. Appointment of company Auditor
Motion to accept John Oehlers as the company auditor; moved: Karen; Seconded: Victoria; all carried
7. Service users report
Lauren gave a report on her experience as a resident at Lillian's. Vivian also read an email from one of the residents.

8. Election of new committee

The following committee were elected unopposed

President: Helen

Vice president: Lucy

Treasurer: Victoria

Secretary: Ann

AGM closed at 7.15 pm

Special general meeting

1. Welcome – Helen
2. Proposal to adopt and change the constitution

Motion:

"That the Constitution of the Lillian Howell Project Inc as amended 20 December 2000 be repealed in its entirety and replaced with the Constitution titled Lillian Howell Project Constitution dated 10 November 2016."

moved: Naomi; seconded: Victoria; all carried.

Meeting closed 7.30 pm

MANAGER'S REPORT

Vivian Stavis 2016 - 2017

I am pleased to present the 2016 – 2017 Annual Report for the Lillian Howell Project Inc. This financial year has been about maintaining Lillian's growth and development in both service delivery and financial capacity.

We continued in our efforts to fundraise through our Give Now donations page and established a Good2Give campaign. Our fundraising efforts have been very successful, and with continued community support, we secured \$7,645 in donations. We further developed our partnerships with corporate companies such as Price Waterhouse Coopers (PWC) and Lendlease who supported us financially and through Community efforts.

We received grants from Commonwealth Bank of \$10,000, Lendlease of \$6,500, Streetsmart \$4,650, Cafesmart \$1,000, private donations \$3,000 and Zonta Club \$550 to continue to fund our Youth Outreach Support Worker and to provide experiences for the girls that they could not afford on their own. We were also successful with the Safer Connections submission, giving our girls access to new mobile phones if escaping a domestic violence situation. Through all this effort and support, Lillian's total revenue for this financial year was \$47,000.



There are so many supporters and people that we need to thank. As always, the Australian Services Union (ASU) for their ongoing dedication in assisting us. This year they nominated Lillian's for a fundraiser through CFMEU (a construction company) where they talked to the builders and tradies at rallies about domestic and family violence and homelessness to raise awareness of the issues and the services that can help. The CFMEU fundraised and generously donated \$3,240 to Lillian's and another women's service!

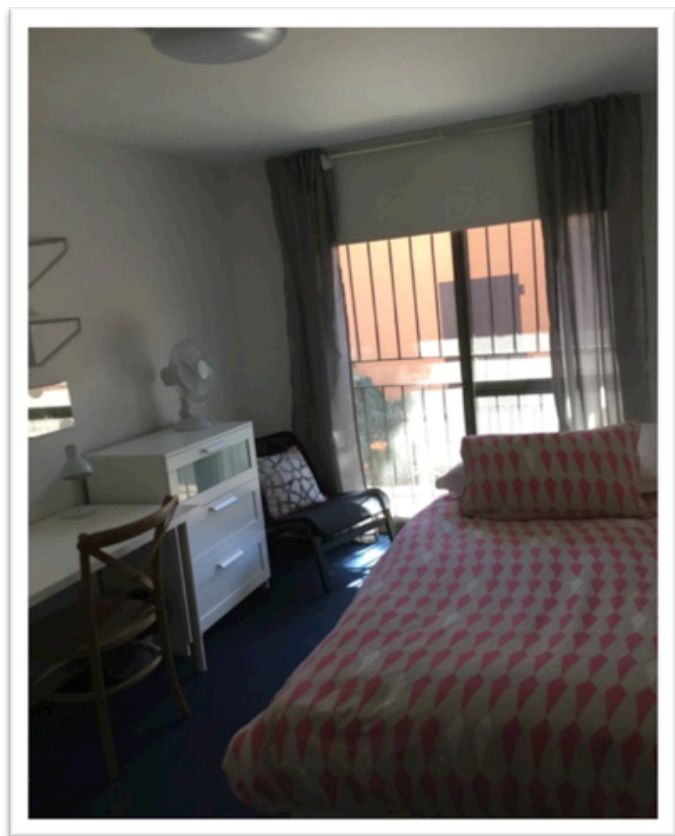
We partnered with Price Waterhouse Coopers (PWC) and made a documentary called "Being Invisible" which starred two of our girls, which raised awareness on youth homelessness and how Lillian's helped the young women featured. This then started the ongoing support that PWC provide, the

donation and installation of the shade sails in the gardens, cash donations and corporate matching of funds donated through good2give and supporting our girls by offering tutoring in Maths and English. PWC are also part of the EGG Mentoring Program (Encouraging Girls to Grow), which is a career mentoring program, run in partnership with Leichardt Women's Health Centre, Lillian's and The Girls refuge (TGR) helping the girls with job readiness, presentation, interviewing skills and CV's. 10 girls participated in the mentoring program, some have completed it and others are ongoing.

We also had many supporters who made many donations for our girls, the Beauty Bank, Share the Dignity, Zonta Club, Sephora, Body Shop, Dandelion Foundation, Good 360 and donations of hand made teddy bears by Pania and Patricia. Thank you to Karen Lindley who organised an enormous amount of hand made quilts from the "quilting ladies" as well as a helicopter flight for the girls. These donations were used as

Christmas, Birthday and "Welcome to Lillian's" presents. Thank you to Erskineville Family Medical Practice (for always making time to see our girls), OZHARVEST (who supply food every Thursday) and Adamo pasta for their generous donation of fresh pasta and frozen pasta meals. All of these people have enriched the lives of our girls with their kindness and generosity and have also helped with our bottom line!

We started the process of transforming Lillian's in September. We won a grant from IKEA to makeover the girl's bedrooms, IKEA's team consisted of 30 workers, including an interior designer working over three days to paint, change light fittings and build and install new furniture in all the girls bedrooms, they even made a video showing the transformation as it occurred, which is on our website, The rooms have truly become an awesome space for the girls to "chill" with each other. Thanks IKEA!



We also organised a Community Day with Lendlease, 30 Lendlease workers in partnership with DULUX, who donated the paint for the whole house to be

painted, as part of their Community Day came out and painted the kitchen, lounge room, dining room, hallways, balustrades and skirting boards. They also sanded and refinished the dining table and outdoor table and chairs. We changed all the light fittings in the hallways, dining room and offices and had the carpet steam cleaned through out the house. Our office had a makeover too, with new desks, office chairs, filing cabinet, stationary cupboard and office equipment. Our garden has also been beautified thanks to the help of a gardener, who comes every few months.



As required by Specialist Homelessness Services Practice Guidelines, In February we completed the gruelling process of Compliance through the Quality Assurance System. We were 100% compliant and Dr Pat Johnson from Crystal Phoenix carried out the desktop review and assessment. Through this process we updated all our Policies and Procedures manuals, our intake forms and many of our processes streamlining with the Practice guidelines as set out by FACS.

We continued building our partnership with Youth off the Streets (YOTS). ***LOFT – Lillian’s Opportunities for Tomorrow.*** Our key deliverables on our funding through the Homeless Youth Assistance Program (HYAP) service Description are:

- **Providing a medium term response:**
- **Provide intensive responses for clients with complex needs:**
- **Intervene early to prevent Homelessness:**

The way in which we have addressed these key deliverables are as follows: Our relationships with other organisations, schools and FACS ensured that we received the referrals required to achieve and even exceed the numbers needed for our service agreement. This year Lillian’s supported **104** young women. We provided **25 accommodation** stays and provided an **outreach case management service to 79 young women** combined of low, medium and high effort. We signed an MOU with MYRC (Marrickville Youth Resource

Centre) to participate in the girls club run with Marrickville High School, every Wednesday, where girls were referred for Case work.

This table shows the service provided in age range for both Accommodation and Outreach:

AGE	AMOUNT
10 - 14 years	27
15 years	31
16 years	24
17 years	20
18 - 19 years	2
TOTAL	104

Our girls are the reason we keep working as hard as we do! They inspire and motivate us with their achievements. Achievements of our amazing young women have been many, and include re-engagement to school and maintaining attendance, completion and graduation of HSC, enrolment into Youth Work, enrolment into Hospitality (Chef), enrolment into Childcare, Hairdressing, Makeup and Beauty. Work includes, Part-time work in retail, make up artist, McDonalds, KFC and Price Attack. Getting L's, buying motorbikes, saving money and learning the living skills needed to move into independent living. Well done girls!

This table shows the achievements of the young women residing at Lillian's:

Discipline	Amount
Re-engagement to school and maintaining attendance	13
Completion and graduation from HSC	2
University entrance	2
Nursing	1
Hospitality	1
Childcare	1
Hairdressing	2
Makeup and Beauty	1
Youth work	1

15 girls moved out of Lillian's this year. They either moved into independent living/transitional housing, the private rental market or back into the family home. We had a total of 6 girls transition into our transitional properties, 2 into other transitional housing through SHS, 4 moved back into the family home, 1 into private rental and sadly, 2 exited to other refuges due to breaking house rules or unsafe behaviours towards other residents.

We provided group work to the girls in the refuge, we ran workshops with the assistance of our students, these include Tie-dyeing, Plant potting, Vision boards and painting for self worth. Yoga workshops were also provided; a

trained yoga instructor volunteering her time to Lillian's facilitated the workshops. The yoga was introduced this year and has been running every fortnight for the residents and transitional housing residents of Lillian's. The girls reported increased physical stamina and flexibility and increased general feelings of well-being. The girls were also engaged in many activities, these include, self defence classes at TGR, English and Maths tutoring, Driving Lessons, and the Sister2sister Program. The girls were also given a once in a lifetime experience, the opportunity to go on a helicopter ride, which they absolutely loved! They also went to X Factor!

As always the biggest challenge for Lillian's staff was managing young women with existing and emerging Mental Health issues. The management of Mental Health issues such as Anxiety, Depression and Personality disorders was achieved through partnerships with Camperdown Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), Royal Prince Alfred Hospital (RPA), Marie Bashir Short Stay Unit and Marrickville Community Health Centre. Headspace, Youth block and Poets Corner provided counselling that works alongside the management of Mental Health issues. We continued to utilise the wellbeing index in our Case Management procedure called the DASS 21 (Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale). This measured levels of Depression, Anxiety and Stress and is conducted every 3 months to determine the wellbeing of our girls during their stay at Lillian's

Our staff team continued to have supervision once a month and training in many areas of work including Love Bites, Start Early – Respectful Relationships (Module 1), Gender Respect and Identity (Module 2), Father Inclusive Practise (Module 3), Motivational Interviewing, Case Management Part 1 and Part 2 Building Practise, Aboriginal Mental Health Assessment, Aboriginal Mental Health, Suicide and Self Harm Prevention, Condom Credit Card Project, Therapeutic and Proactive Case Management, Creating a Reparative Ecology – How trauma impacts brain development. Staff also attended many events the Recharge Conference by Yfoundations and the OZHARVEST CEO cook-off.



I cannot say enough about the amazing staff team that encapsulate Lillian's. They have been brilliant in supporting me through the growth and development of Lillian's with their awesome ideas and their expertise on

working with girls and trauma. We have all worked tirelessly, cohesively and collectively to achieve all that we have this year and I'm so proud to have you all as my colleagues. Dan, Carlene, Bonnie, Rea and Laura A and also our fabulous casual workers – Virginia, Alex, Laura M, Brooklyn, Katherine, Kai, Katie, Sophie, Tash, Jen and Diana for their sustained efforts to provide our residents with the best possible care and support and to work collectively in the intake and assessment process with new girls. Sadly, due to other work commitments we farewelled Katherine and Maral, we wish them all the best. A big thank you to Ping for her en pointe accounting and support with the bookkeeping.



We continued to support students from various TAFEs and OTEN completing Certificates and Diplomas in Mental Health, Youth Work and Community Services, Catherine, Alana, Jessica, Gabriella, Tess, Meabh, Monique and Jen. Monique loved it here so much that she has continued to work here on a volunteer basis every Thursday assisting me with administration, submission writing and donations. Monique was instrumental in securing many new donations for Christmas presents for our girls and assisting me in searching and applying for new grants. Thanks Monique!

The brilliant team at SAL Consulting, Lisa Gardiner and Frances continued to provide an excellent job with professional supervision and training to all staff. Their support allowed us to continue to Case manage our girls in the best possible way.

The Management Committee has been fantastic in their dedication to the running of Lillian's and providing the guidance that has sustained us this year. Sadly, we said farewell to Julia, and welcomed Nicole. A huge Thank you to Helen, Lucy, Naomi, Ann, Karen, Victoria, Jan and Nicole. I couldn't have done it without your support.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Helen Campbell 2016 - 2017

I am pleased to report on the activities and development of Lillian Howell Project Inc. during 2016 – 17 and I can say up front that the organisation has continued to thrive. We have seen the growth of our service footprint to under 16 year olds through the HYAP program and our partnership with Youth off the Streets (YOTS), called LOFT (Lillian's Opportunities for Tomorrow) the consolidation of the Committee and the continued commitment of the staff team.

Due to the unwavering commitment of the staff, our girls, management committee, as well as our community partners, as Vivian will report, we are now stronger than ever. Our fundraising has been a massive effort and we secured funds from Commonwealth bank, Lendlease, Cafesmart, Streetsmart, Zonta and our Give Now donations page. We also established a good2give donation page that features corporate matching of funds donated.

Meanwhile our girls continued to flourish and achieve remarkable things. This year Lillian's supported **104** young women. We provided **25** accommodation stays and provided an outreach case management service to **79** young women combined of low, medium and high effort. Well done Team!

The Management Committee has been brilliant in their dedication to the governance of Lillian's. We reviewed and finalised our Governance and Financial Policies and Procedures and our Constitution, which are a truer reflection on how Lillian's operates today. We completed the process of compliance through the Quality Assurance System achieving 100% in compliance.

Thank you to Lucy, Naomi, Ann, Karen, Victoria, Jan and the newest member of our Committee, Nicole. Thank you to Ping and Victoria for overseeing the financial management of Lillian's and for doing such an exemplary job! Sadly, we said farewell to Julia.

Thank you Vivian, Danielle and to everyone of the staff for all that you have contributed; and most of all, a big thank you to our girls for your remarkable inspiration and achievements.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Victoria Bell 2016 - 2017

The audited financial statements for Lillian Howell Project Inc. covering the financial year 2016 - 17 are available here tonight.

This financial year, we received full funding of \$460,908 via our subcontract arrangement from Youth off The Streets (YOTS) through Family and Community Services (FACS)

They show that we experienced an operating loss of \$30,843.47 on funding from FACS. This was attributable to an increase in staffing expenses with our staffing expenses being \$444,337, which is 95% of our overall budget, that is even with the engagement of staff on Full and Permanent/Part-time contracts with casual staff required minimally. The staffing expenses are high but necessary as its best practice to staff the refuge accordingly.

Our overall administration expenses increased by \$3000, our residents expenses increased by \$5,800 and our Electricity bill increased by \$1600 compared to the last financial year due to the cost of living increasing.

We continued in our efforts to fundraise through our Give Now donations page and established a Good2Give campaign. Our fundraising efforts have been very successful, and with continued community support, we secured \$7,645 in donations.

We received grants from Commonwealth Bank of \$10,000, Lendlease of \$6,500, Streetsmart \$4,650, Cafesmart \$1,000, private donations \$3,000 and Zonta Club \$550 to continue to fund our Youth Outreach Support Worker and to provide experiences for the girls that they could not afford on their own. Through all this effort and support, Lillian's total revenue for this financial year was \$47,000.

Ping Wang, our bookkeeper has done an excellent job balancing the books this financial year, thanks Ping! I would also like to thank Viv for all her wonderful work in getting those extra grants. We welcomed John G. Oehlers chartered accountants to do our auditing. Thanks to John and staff for doing an amazing job at auditing our financial records.

In conclusion, we enter our next financial year with all accruals and provisions in the bank and nearly \$62,500 equity.

AUDITOR'S REPORT

John Oehlers 2016 - 2017

Lillian Howell Project Incorporated

ABN 22 465 606 851

Committee's Report

For the year ended 30 June 2017

Your committee members submit the financial accounts of the Lillian Howell Project Incorporated for the financial year ended 30 June 2017.

Committee Members

The names of committee members at the date of this report are:

Helen Campbell - President

Lucy Watchirs-Smith - Vice President

Victoria Bell - Treasurer

Anne Watchirs - Secretary

Naomi Crago - Member

Jan Christie - Member

Karen Lindley - Member

Nicole Graham - Member

Principal Activities

The principal activities of the association during the financial year were: The provision of a specialist Homelessness service providing medium to long-term 24 hour supported accommodation for young women and girls 13 - 17 years, that is trauma informed, reparative and empowering. As well as providing a safe and secure setting, Lillian's builds the capacity of the girls and young women and supports them in their transition to independent living..

Service approach includes:

- Intervening early to prevent homelessness by promoting awareness of the causes of homelessness and working closely with 'first-to-know' services (e.g., schools, housing providers, correctional facilities, domestic and family violence services, child and family services and other services) to identify people at risk of becoming homeless
- Providing a medium-term response by offering medium-term accommodation with 24/7 support in our refuge and transitional properties including ongoing case management
- Providing intensive responses for clients with complex needs through intensive, multi-disciplinary support to girls and young women at risk of chronic homelessness as well as assertive outreach

Significant Changes

No significant change in the nature of these activities occurred during the year.

Operating Result

The profit from ordinary activities after providing for income tax amounted to

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Members of the Committee by:


Helen Campbell - President

Dated:

24 October 2017


Lillian Howell Project Incorporated
ABN 22 465 606 851
Statement by Members of the Committee
For the year ended 30 June 2017

The Committee has determined that the association is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements.

In the opinion of the Committee the Income and Expenditure Statement, Statement of Financial Position, and Notes to the Financial Statements:

1. Presents fairly the financial position of Lillian Howell Project Incorporated as at 30 June 2017 and its performance for the year ended on that date.
2. At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the association will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Committee and is signed for and on behalf of the Committee by:



Helen Campbell - President

Dated: 24.10.17



24 Oct 2017

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Lillian Howell Project Incorporated
ABN 22 465 606 851
Income and Expenditure Statement
For the year ended 30 June 2017

	2017	2016
	\$	\$
FACS Grant		
Income		
FACS Grant		
- Youth Off The Street	440,832.00	450,268.00
- SACS ERO	20,076.00	0.00
	<u>460,908.00</u>	<u>450,268.00</u>
Other Grants & Funds Received	0.00	1,000.00
Total income	<u>460,908.00</u>	<u>451,268.00</u>
Expenses		
Staffing Expenses		
- Wages & Salaries	353,193.76	354,355.24
- Superannuation	36,956.13	33,332.36
- Workers Compensation	9,492.83	17,385.56
- Worker Compensation -Adjust Prior Year	0.00	5,138.67
- On Call/First Aid Allowance	10,186.34	0.00
- Sleepover Allowance	14,985.20	0.00
- Travel Reimbursement	521.73	0.00
- Movement in Long Service Leave Provision	8,635.65	(2,201.00)
- Movement in Annual & Personal Leave Prov	4,792.97	3,690.28
	<u>438,764.61</u>	<u>411,701.11</u>
Administration Expenses		
- Accounting	6,888.00	7,811.66
- Audit Fees	2,200.00	2,200.00
- Administration Expenses	1,092.64	757.09
- Computer Expenses	2,113.36	153.64
- Conferences/Education Resources	0.00	426.67
- Consultant's Fees	0.00	440.00
- Insurance - Liability	1,000.00	1,100.00
- Postage, Stationery & Printing	1,695.93	2,517.87
- Sundry Expenses	0.00	1,690.52
- Telephone	1,870.15	2,545.86
- Travel	440.04	169.09
- Motor Vehicle Costs	3,413.86	3,393.39
- Office Equipment & Furniture	35.46	0.00

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Lillian Howell Project Incorporated
ABN 22 465 606 851
Income and Expenditure Statement
For the year ended 30 June 2017

	2017	2016
	\$	\$
FACS Grant		
- Staff Recruitment	294.36	0.00
- Subscriptions	427.27	0.00
- Supervision	4,340.00	0.00
	<u>25,811.07</u>	<u>23,205.79</u>
Residents Expenses		
- Education & Amenities	303.07	269.11
- Activities & Entertainment	1,940.46	2,248.34
- Residents Personal Living Expenses	1,468.07	1,841.49
- Food & Housekeeping	12,687.14	11,099.24
- Other Expenses (Xmas, Birthdays, etc)	1,523.07	639.29
- Travel	148.89	197.08
- Brokerage	60.00	0.00
	<u>18,130.70</u>	<u>16,294.55</u>
Property Cost		
- Electricity	3,470.64	1,782.75
- Repairs & maintenance	1,584.18	1,653.97
- Household General Replacements	1,575.10	657.73
- Insurance - Contents	1,090.91	1,045.46
- Water Usage	1,233.35	0.00
- Other Property Expenses	90.91	0.00
	<u>9,045.09</u>	<u>5,139.91</u>
Total expenses	<u>491,751.47</u>	<u>456,341.36</u>
Profit (loss) from ordinary activities before income tax	<u>(30,843.47)</u>	<u>(5,073.36)</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Lillian Howell Project Incorporated
ABN 22 465 606 851
Income and Expenditure Statement
For the year ended 30 June 2017

Lillian Howell Own	2017	2016
	\$	\$
Income		
Donations	7,644.78	4,267.83
Dividends - Franked	60.84	91.26
Interest received	1,471.10	1,929.12
Admin Fee Income	5,558.40	0.00
Sundry Income	4,885.92	138.66
Rents received	27,350.50	23,075.00
Total income	46,971.54	29,501.87
Expenses		
Administration Expenses		
- Administration Expenses	207.68	0.00
- Bank Fees	303.43	348.26
	511.11	348.26
Total expenses	511.11	348.26
Profit from ordinary activities before income tax	46,460.43	29,153.61

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Lillian Howell Project Incorporated
ABN 22 465 606 851
Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2017

	Note	2017 \$	2016 \$
Assets			
Current Assets			
Cash assets	2	220,728.51	182,913.17
Current tax assets	3	13.74	1,075.70
Total Current Assets		<u>220,742.25</u>	<u>183,988.87</u>
Total Assets		<u>220,742.25</u>	<u>183,988.87</u>
Liabilities			
Current Liabilities			
Payables	4	44,928.25	25,241.51
Financial liabilities	5	254.62	2,083.85
Current tax liabilities	6	5,884.00	5,202.00
Provisions	7	92,220.08	94,416.14
Total Current Liabilities		<u>143,286.95</u>	<u>126,943.50</u>
Non-Current Liabilities			
Provisions	7	15,026.80	10,233.83
Total Non-Current Liabilities		<u>15,026.80</u>	<u>10,233.83</u>
Total Liabilities		<u>158,313.75</u>	<u>137,177.33</u>
Net Assets		<u>62,428.50</u>	<u>46,811.54</u>
Equity			
Retained profits		62,428.50	46,811.54
Total Members' Funds		<u>62,428.50</u>	<u>46,811.54</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

LILLIAN HOWELL PROJECT INCORPORATED
A.B.N. 97 130 562 119

COMPILATION REPORT TO LILLIAN HOWELL PROJECT INCORPORATED

I have compiled the accompanying special purpose financial statements of Lillian Howell Project Incorporated which comprise the attached income and expenditure statements for the year ended 30 June 2017. The specific purpose for which the special purpose financial statements have been prepared is to provide financial information to the committee of management.

The Responsibility of the Committee of Management

The committee of management is solely responsible for the information contained in the special purpose financial statements and has determined that the basis of accounting adopted is appropriate to meet the needs of the committee of management for the purpose of complying with the association's constitution.

My Responsibility

On the basis of information provided by the committee of management I have compiled the accompanying special purpose financial statements in accordance with the basis of accounting and APES 315: Compilation of Financial Information.

My procedures use accounting expertise to collect, classify and summarise the financial information, which the management committee provided, in compiling the financial statements. My procedures do not include verification or validation procedures. No audit or review has been performed and accordingly no assurance is expressed.

The special purpose financial statements were compiled exclusively for the benefit of the committee of management. I do not accept responsibility to any other person for the contents of the special purpose financial statements.

JOHN G. OEHLERS
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT



John G. Oehlers

Dated this 13th day of October 2017.

Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation

RESIDENT'S COMMENTS

2016 - 2017

When I first moved into Lillian's back in December 2015 I was a hot mess. I will admit that I still am a hot mess but I am more in control of my life now. I would say that I did it by myself but that is a lie. I would actually say that it is because of people like Dan and Viv. Just let me quickly explain how and why.

I was a smaller, more anxiety riddled 17 year old. I was working in a hairdressers and just trying to regain my relationship with my parents and biological family. There was a moment in January where I fell into a black hole because I had lost my hairdressing job. But Dan pushed me to work on myself by suggesting that I go back to TAFE to do a Cert 3 in Travel and Tourism. So I did it. Yes I was occasionally late because I love my bed, but I enjoyed it.

6 months later I had to make a choice. Either gain employment or continue to gain my Bachelor. I decided that I needed to get off Centerlink on my own terms. It literally took me less than a week to get my job as the local drug dealer¹. Of course that meant I got a job at the Erskineville Chemist and I learnt how to get ready in less than 5 minutes. Sure that meant that whoever was on in the morning hated getting me up but its a skill that I still use to this day. I have now been there for nearly 18 months, which is longer than any other employment that I have had.

A week before my 18th birthday I moved from Lillian's to Marrickville. My mum and dad decided to treat me to a nice birthday present and clean up my room for me. Of course I didn't keep it clean. But I promise you right now it is clean. Honestly. It was a difficult process but I have learnt how to do it now. I also had to learn how to pay my rent and bills on time. That took longer but I'm on the right road now.

So based on my bedroom posters, which currently are Harry Potter, Doctor Who, Sherlock and Supernatural there was only one thing that I needed to be at during 2017. Supanova. One of my mates bought me a cosplay based on Missy from Doctor Who. I must say that I was anxious about the whole event but it worked. I became part of the DWCA as their local club liaison. That meant that I managed to make more friends. The total now being 5.

Sorry but time to be serious for a second. Dan had been a huge help with one part of my life. It was my mental health. When I was 8 I was put onto medication and had been on several different combinations the last being 200mg Seroquel and 20mg of Citalopram. One of my major goals had been to get my mental health under control. It took several months a few sleepless nights where I looked like a zombie in the morning and days now that I don't

¹ I am not deleting this joke. I use it whenever I get asked what I do for a job.

feel like its working, but I managed to get off all medication in January 2017. I may still get days where I feel like I am worthless but that's where the children's section of Netflix comes in handy. I can watch bad shows for a way to laugh and keep myself somewhat sane

So when I left my parents house it was very rocky. I refused to speak to anyone in my family. I kept to myself and would decline any of their calls. I can't remember what changed exactly but I started to reach back out to my family. At the same time my biological family also wanted to be in contact with me. I have now spent Christmas and birthdays with my family and it has been hard at times but when you have me and my mum in the same room what else can you expect. My younger biological sister also decided to put me in a group chat with the rest of my family. I don't respect most of their decisions but it is their lives and it doesn't affect me. I still talk to my sister daily which helps her and me.

So that's why I am still a hot mess. But hey, Life aint perfect and I am not trying to be anyone else other than myself which Lillian's has helped shape me into who I am today. SXXX

The AGM letter

Lillian's have been supporting me for a year now.

The amount of support I've been given is beyond my belief, with Dan being my caseworker, giving good and fair advice to me, and many other workers who truly and genuinely cared for me.

Moving out of my parents' house was and is currently one of the best decisions that I've made in my life so far. I've encountered long term liberation from the people and circumstances that had contributed into keeping me in unfathomable bondage.

Thank you Lillianz Staff! :D

By: CXXX