

DAREBIN CITY COUNCIL LEADING THROUGH CHANGE

**Sue Wilkinson, CEO
November 2020**



Acknowledgement of Country

Ngarrgma Wurundjeri Woi wurrung Guljin gurringanyinu bik wenerop Darbin dharri.
Ngarri yana ngarnga Bik, Baan ba Ngarrgu. Gahgook-al Nanggit bambuth, yalingbu ba
gama-dji.

I acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi wurrung People who are the Traditional Owners of the
Land. I recognise their continuing connection to Land, Water and Culture. I pay my
respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

Artwork by Natasha Ellis-Corrigan, proud Jinabara/Bundjalung woman.
Aboriginal artist from Jinabara Designs.

Change context like no other – the initial response

- We set our #1 priority from the start – to protect the health and wellbeing of our staff and community
- Council is fortunate to have people with expertise to guide our response and we formed an Emergency Management style 'Incident Control Team' to oversee our response
- With their expertise we were able to seek relevant information and make decisions to keep people safe
- Things were happening fast - our people were working in rapid time, many of them around the clock for days on end
- From the beginning, we prioritised communication with our staff and community

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Change context like no other – the evolving response

Beyond what our response in terms of our services was involving, we very early on recognised and understood the feelings of anxiety, distress and concern many of our 1,300 staff may be experiencing.

We also recognised that the societal changes coronavirus necessitates required a significant shift in mindset and that its unlikely we will go back to “the way things used to be”.

Acknowledging the potential impacts on:

- the mental health and wellbeing of staff and their families;
- staff engagement and performance; and
- effective service delivery to the Darebin community,

Council invested in **mental health and wellbeing support and enablers to our changing way of work for all staff**, through a program of work involving resources and learning targeted to staff profiles and developing current or new organisational practices to emerging needs.

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Supporting and enabling unprecedented change

Scope of the program of work:

- **Increase awareness** of mental health, wellbeing and changing way of work
- **Increase knowledge** of mental health, wellbeing and changing way of work
- **Increase capability** and skill relating to mental health, wellbeing and changing way of work
- Encourage employees to **actively seek treatment and support early**
- **Ensure compliance** relating to mental health, wellness and changing way of work
- **Support and enable** workplace connection
- **Redeploying our people** impacted by COVID-19 to suitable temporary assignments
- **Communicate** clearly, and inclusively of all our people across many and very diverse teams, to enable them to engage in and access the support



Stay Well Stay Connected

- 1. Increase awareness** of mental health, wellbeing and changing way of work
 - New Health and Wellbeing 'Hub' for ready access to available services and support
 - Nudges so staff engage with information, resources and learning (e.g. working from home, ergonomics, mental health)
- 2. Increase knowledge** of mental health, wellbeing and changing way of work
 - Provide targeted information and resources to staff and people managers (e.g. tip sheets, guides, toolkits etc)
 - Via intranet and other means for staff without intranet access (i.e. email packs, 'show bags')



Health and Wellbeing

The mental, physical and social wellbeing of all our people is a top priority at Darebin City Council. We want Darebin to be a great place to work.

The following programs are available to all our people. You can access them at any time to support your wellbeing and general good health. So please use them to stay connected, well and healthy, you are an important part of our team!

Mental health and wellbeing

Our Thrive Live portal, EAP counselling and support, Contact Officers Network and a whole range of training, webinars, resources, support services and tipsheets to support your mental health and wellbeing.

Physical health and wellbeing

Workstation ergonomics, workplace stretches, leisure centre programs, physiotherapy and Metalfit. Stay active and stay well.

General health and wellbeing

Immunisations for staff and the Local Government Employee Health Plan are on offer to help you stay well.

Healthy skills and behaviours

Mindfulness, getting a good night's sleep, building our resilience. These are just some of the tips you'll find to develop healthy skills and behaviours to stay well and connected.

Employee Assistance Program - Counselling and EAP Portal

EAP counselling and services are free and confidential for all Darebin staff and their immediate families.

Contact Officers Network

Our Contact Officers are employees trained to provide other employees with information and impartial support. Located across the organisation, they will listen without judgement, maintain confidentiality and remain objective.

Darebin Family Violence Commitment

Darebin says no to family violence. We are committed to supporting our people and providing a workplace in which family violence is not tolerated or excused.

Your Safety


OHS, first aid, emergency management are just some of the programs in place to help keep everyone safe at Darebin.



Stay Well Stay Connected

3. Increase capability and skill relating to mental health, wellbeing and changing way of work

- Darebin's own **ThriveLive** online portal of health and wellbeing resources including e-learning modules, surveys, videos, podcasts and tip sheets, facilitated on-line chats and social feed
- Wellbeing Webinars, virtual classrooms and e-learning covering topics such as:
 - o Managing for Team Wellbeing, Psychological First Aid and Building Resilience and Staying Positive in Uncertain Times
 - o Must Do's for People Connection and Engaging in and Leading Virtual Teams




MESSAGE FROM SUE WILKINSON

Welcome to Thrive Live!


I am so proud of everyone at Team Darebin. You are always amazing, but you have all been absolutely above and beyond amazing in rising to the challenge of responding to COVID-19.

[Read more](#)




Enhancing positive relationships at work and at home 👤 All staff
🕒 22 mins

Even during the best of times, tensions can arise in our relationships at work and at home. In this podcast, broadcaster and former news anchor Anne Fulwood talks to En Masse CEO Mark Dean about a range of helpful tools to manage relationship tensions in healthy ways, de-escalate conflict. This podcast will also provide some tips for using empathy and positive psychology-based tools to have a positive influence on others and for building your own emotional intelligence



The COVID pause: maintaining flexibility of mindset 👤 All staff
🕒 18 mins

Featuring broadcaster and former news anchor Anne Fulwood and psychotherapist, lecturer and author Dr Alison Strasser, this podcast provides some helpful, positive reflections on the value of pausing, reflecting and finding opportunities for growth through change and uncertainty. When we look closer, Dr Strasser points out, we can find opportunities to improve our lives including through engaging in new ways to build higher quality connections with people and for connecting



Anxiety 👤 All staff
📄 2 pages

The feeling of anxiety is something we all experience, but sometimes it can become so overwhelming that it interferes in a person's life in a significant way. This fact sheet outlines some key information about anxiety disorder, including an overview of some common signs and symptoms, risk factors and specific types of anxiety. It explains some of the distinguishing features of *generalised anxiety disorder*, *social anxiety disorder* and *panic attacks*. A number of

5 'Must do' for people connection

LEADING PEOPLE ACROSS PHYSICAL DISTANCE WHILE BUILDING SOCIAL CONNECTION

What can we *do* as leaders to stay socially connected at this time?

- 1 Create rituals that bring you and your team together.**
Set a daily check-in to understand your team's mindset and motivation. Get your team to self-assess how they are going, and keep asking: "What do you need?" and "How can I support you?"
- 2 Create routines that you stick to, above all else.**
Make sure your calendar has the right amount of interactions to bring your team together, whether it be a structured meeting or a 'water-cooler conversation'. Connection points are key.
- 3 Create habits that suit your new world.**
Take a moment each day to check-in with each member of your team, not on the 'work' but on their wellbeing. Consider that emotions play a big part in performance and airing them makes space for work.
- 4 Create growth opportunities for yourself and the team.**
Get your team to share their 'hacks' on working in a virtual world. What can you learn together, what can you share, and what did you learn about yourself? What was surprising?
- 5 Create accountability by role modelling what you expect.**
For the team to feel productive and perform, they need a role model who displays behaviours expected of all team members. Create a culture of accountability – if you set the tone, you get the tone.



Introduce some fun activities to keep virtual teams engaged. Use these in Allison's blog (includes showing 'moo' desk pics and gif battles). [Click here](#)

Here is a great collection of productivity methods (like the 'let the frog' technique) from Lileasay. Share these with your team to inspire good work habits while remote working. [Click here](#)

Stay Well Stay Connected

- 4. Encourage employees to **actively seek treatment and support early**
 - Worked closely with EAP provider on more strategic and focused features of our services
 - Invested in our Contact Officer network to step up as ‘Wellbeing Champions’ representative of the organisation, our people and emerging needs
 - o Trained to provide impartial help and support
 - o Informed about support services and mechanisms available
 - o Play an increasingly important role in ensuring Darebin staff feel supported



CONTACT OFFICERS

















Stay Well Stay Connected **Health and Wellbeing**

Darebin City Council is committed to providing its employees with an open, friendly and harmonious working environment that is free from discrimination, sexual harassment, workplace bullying or occupational violence.

Contact Officers are employees you work with, who have been trained to provide impartial support, usually related to a alleged discrimination, harassment and bullying, and help the person make decisions about their preferred approach to resolving issues, consistent with the Council's policy and procedures.

Contact Officers are well versed in relation to support services and mechanisms that are available (e.g Employee Assistance Program) and play an important role in ensuring Darebin employees feel supported.

Who are the Contact Officers?
Your Contact Officers are located across the organisation. Feel free to contact them how you most feel comfortable.

 Ania Sieracka Ground Floor, Gower Street Preston Phone: 8470 8327 or 0435 197 401 Email: Ania.Sieracka@darebin.vic.gov.au	 Kerry Howett High Street, Northcote Phone: 8470 8925 Email: Kerry.Howett@darebin.vic.gov.au
 Bronwyn Ryan-Marcen DAEC, Rail St Preston Phone: 8470 8638 Email: Bronwyn.Ryan-Marcen@darebin.vic.gov.au	 Mark Prince Operations Centre Phone: 0427 508 468 Email: Mark.Prince@darebin.vic.gov.au
 Courtney O'Donnell Reservoir Civic and Learning Centre Phone: 8470 8006 Email: Courtney.O'Donnell@darebin.vic.gov.au	 Matt Hamman Reservoir Leisure Centre Phone: 8470 8058 Email: Matt.Hamman@darebin.vic.gov.au
 Craig Waters Operations Centre Phone: 0408 571 560 Email: Craig.Waters@darebin.vic.gov.au	 Robyn Mitchell First Floor, Gower Street Preston Phone: 8470 8639 or 0409 063 283 Email: Robyn.Mitchell@darebin.vic.gov.au
 Janet Hahn Ground Floor, Gower Street Preston Phone: 8470 8535 Email: Janet.Hahn@darebin.vic.gov.au	 Stephanie Daniels First Floor, Gower Street Preston Phone: 8470 8403 Email: Stephanie.Daniels@darebin.vic.gov.au
 Janette Carabott First Floor, High Street Preston Phone: 8470 8562 Email: Janette.Carabott@darebin.vic.gov.au	 Stuart McFarlane High Street, Preston Phone: 8470 8366 or 0427 797 668 Email: Stuart.McFarlane@darebin.vic.gov.au
 Josie Good High Street, Preston Phone: 8470 8274 Email: Josie.Good@darebin.vic.gov.au	 Tory Bird Operations Centre Phone: 0457 097 333 Email: Tory.Bird@darebin.vic.gov.au
 Kelly Canoso High Street, Preston Phone: 8470 8540 Email: Kelly.Canoso@darebin.vic.gov.au	 Sabine Nasidu-Roberts High Street, Preston Phone: 8470 8203 Email: Sabine.Nasidu-Roberts@darebin.vic.gov.au

Stay Well Stay Connected

5. **Ensure compliance** relating to mental health, wellness and changing way of work
 - Incident reporting processes clearly accessible and understood
 - Applicable protocols (e.g. Infection Control) readily available on intranet (as informed by ICT for COVID-19 specific issues)
 - Work from Home practices clear and embedded

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Stay Well Stay Connected

6. Support and enable social connection

- Multiple virtual chat groups set up for staff to stay connected and interact with each other while not working at the office
- Idea initiated and co-moderated by staff
- Groups include:

[Makers](#)

[Back to School](#)

[Bike Spin](#)

[Darebin Tracks](#)

[Backyard Harvest Stories](#)

[Let's Get Physical](#)

[Darebin Pets](#)

[Fight for Planet A](#)

+ Darebin Social Club

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Stay Well Stay Connected

7. **Redeployment Program** which aims, where possible, to redeploy those staff whose usual jobs have been negatively impacted by Covid-19 to suitable temporary assignments
 - Helped plant more than 50,000 trees, plants and grasses to rewild Darebin's parks and gardens
 - Also helped across Rates Support Hotline, City Clean-Up, Policies and Procedures and supporting the rollout of Darebin's Community and Business Resilience and Recovery Package

"The silver lining of all of this has been my redeployment. I'm so grateful for this opportunity"



Paige Voss

Redeployed role – Communications team

Home role – Swimming Instructor -RLC

"The redeployment program has been a blessing in disguise for me. After finishing my degree, I've been trying to get into the communications sector. This opportunity is such a great way for me to learn new things and gain some experience in this field. And, what better way to gain experience than working for a council that I am already a part of."

Paige has been working at the Reservoir Leisure Centre for the last 3 years while studying a Bachelor of Media and Communications (Public Relations) at La Trobe University. She has recently been redeployed into the Communications team and couldn't be happier to take on the opportunity.

3 July 2020

Communication and engagement

Developed a framework of ‘**Stay Well, Stay Connected**’ of four cohesive and interdependent streams to engage staff and enable delivery of the program of work – while being flexible to reshape and shift with evolving Covid-19 context

Underpinned by our organisational values which we launched in February 2020 after a 6-month ‘Voice our Values’ process led and designed by our staff

+ End of May Covid Check-In Survey



Health and Wellbeing

Live, interactive portals, training, resources and tipsheets to support your mental, physical and general health and wellbeing.



Changing Way of Work

We are all working in new and changed circumstances as we manage our COVID-19 response. Here you will find a range of resources to support you through this changing way of work as we deliver Council services for the community in a COVID-Safe ‘new normal’ era, while protecting health and wellbeing and promoting kindness and goodwill.



Workplace Culture and Connection

There are lots of ways to connect with colleagues and be part of the great workplace culture at Darebin.



Redeploying our People

Council has worked to redeploy people whose usual work roles were affected by our COVID-19 response, matching people’s skills to suitable temporary assignments across the organisation. This has played a major part in supporting our people as we work together through this unprecedented time.



Communication platforms

- **CEO updates** – clear, consistent, trusted voice
- **Intranet portals** – initial response phase framed as ‘Coronavirus Updates’ and thereafter as ‘Stay Well, Stay Connected’
- **Staff to Staff** – weekly email bulletin to all staff
- **On the Couch** – face to face Q&As for all staff with the Executive team
- **Manager Huddles** – channelling info and support resources through department Managers
- **Leadership Forum** – email group for distributing info and support resources to leaders
- **Print kit materials** – to reach all our staff, including those unable to readily access the intranet
- **Councillor eBulletin** – keeping Councillors informed of organisational news

STAY WELL, STAY CONNECTED



The health, wellbeing and social connection of all our people is a top priority at Darebin City Council. We want Darebin to be a great place to work.

The following programs and resources are available to support your physical, mental and social wellbeing, and your connection with your colleagues.

You can access these at any time, so please use them to stay well and stay connected, you are an important part of our team!

<p>Health and Wellbeing</p> <p>Healthy work, healthy living! Our Working Well page includes a range of information and resources.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • myCompass: An online personalised self-help tool for your mental health from Back Dog Institute • Three Live: Darebin Mental Health and Wellbeing e-learning platform – frequently updated podcasts, tips, conversation and more • Immunications for Staff • Your Physical Health and Wellbeing 	<p>Darebin Employee Assistance Program</p> <p>Darebin Employee Assistance Program is managed by Converge International. You can reach an independent and professional counsellor via phone, a Live Chat or the Converge App.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phone 1300 OUR EAP (1300 687 327) • Live Chat service via Contact us on www.convergeinternational.com.au • Download the EAP Contact App and connect through the Appointment icon • Converge International's specialist helpline services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Helpline 1300 287 432 LESTIGR Helpline 1300 542 874 Domestic and Family Violence Helpline 1300 338 465 Eldercare Helpline 1300 035 337 Disability & Carers' Helpline 1300 343 543
<p>Workplace Culture and Connection</p> <p>There are lots of ways to connect with colleagues and contribute to a great workplace culture, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Darebin Social Club • Online Chat Groups 	
<p>Darebin Values Resource Hub</p> <p>Sharing and behaving in accordance with our organisational values will make Darebin a great place to work. Our values are our common ground, guiding us in working together to be the best we can while delivering service excellence for our community.</p>	<p>Equal Employment Opportunity & Darebin Code of Conduct</p> <p>Through the Equal Employment Opportunity Policy, Council is committed to providing a workplace where employees are valued and respected.</p> <p>The Code of Conduct sets out the standards of behaviour expected of all employees. It contains our values, ethics and good governance principles.</p>
<p>Darebin Contact Officer Network</p> <p>Contact Officers are employees trained to provide other employees with information and impartial support. Located across the organisation, they will listen without judgement, maintain confidentiality and remain objective.</p>	
<p>Our Occupational Health and Safety Commitment</p> <p>Darebin City Council recognises our moral and legal responsibilities to provide and maintain a safe and healthy work environment for all our staff members. Visit the Your Safety page to see how we work safely!</p>	<p>Darebin Family Violence Commitment</p> <p>Darebin says no to family violence. Family Violence Support Services, resources to guide responses to family violence and Council's Family Violence Policy are available.</p>

Communication and engagement

Telling the stories

OUR REDEPLOYMENT STORIES

As part of Stay Well Stay Connected, we are sharing some of the fantastic stories of our people redeploying across the organisation as part of our COVID-19 response.

Rob Appleton

"I am Supervising Technician – Darebin Arts Entertainment Centre, and have been at Darebin for 7 years! I've been redeployed to support our Community and Economic Recovery package.

"My new role is to work within Inner North Community Foundation; to assist with their community development work, and also to support their promotions and economic support functions, by increasing their profile and reach.

"I am so grateful to Darebin for committing to this redeployment process. I know it is a massive undertaking, but to know that myself and my colleagues can continue to have a job, financial security, and a sense of purpose and contribution, well, this is real.

"It's been a dramatic change from working in a role that's quite inward facing, to a role that is more about the broader community, and supporting the helpers. It has taken me back to my community roots, and it's been a wonderful eye opener."



Communication and engagement

Recognising and celebrating great work

Our Maternal & Child Health team



#MakeaDifference
#Respect
#Integrity

MCH Nurse Fiona on the left, MCH Booking Officer- Deb (middle) and MCH Nurse Emma on the right. Much of the time our MCH team members are working in isolation at different locations, but here Deb was delivering donated baby equipment, clothing and toys to the nurses, who then handed it out to Darebin families in need.



Community Development and Wellbeing Team



#Collaborative
#MakeaDifference
#Creative



Leading through change reflections

LEADING THROUGH CHANGE

SUE WILKINSON - LEADERSHIP REFLECTIONS



NO ONE CAN DO THIS ALONE



SPEED TRUMPS PERFECTION



PUT YOUR PEOPLE FIRST



HONEST

TRANSPARENT

CALM... CONSISTENT... KIND... CONNECTED

SAY thank you OFTEN. BE authentic.

JESSAMY GEE '20



Q & A

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Leading through change and the path ahead

Our new values are our anchor and continued focus on Values in Action:

- Awareness of organisational values and culture
 - Engaging leaders, local level conversations and commitment
 - Embedding values and behaviours in organisational systems and practices
 - o Recruitment and Induction
 - o Reward and Recognition
 - o Performance Management
 - o Management Systems
- + emerging practices such as **transition to on-site work, flexible ways of working and use of technology**



Values in Action – Reward and Recognition

- We want Darebin to be a great place to work, delivering great services, for a great community
- A big part of that is great culture – one that builds from our shared organisational values, where people feel welcome, included, connected, supported and inspired
- Our 2019 Staff Survey told us that recognition and celebrating success is a key priority for Darebin in supporting a great culture - where people feel appreciated for the great work they do and where we take time to celebrate when great things are achieved
- Introducing new ‘**Appreciate Great**’ program that appreciates and celebrates the great work our people do to serve and support the Darebin community

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Appreciate Great

Appreciating and celebrating the Great Work our people do to serve and support the Darebin community

- Range of ways to celebrate someone's great work. From a simple thank you, to nominating them for a formal 'Extraordinary Impact Award'
- In the moment - quick ways to Appreciate Great:
Champion Moments | Praise | Thank you



- Taking more than a moment – structured ways to Appreciate Great
Values in Action Awards | Our Work Inspires Awards



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Well and connected – a closing reflection

- In one of our On the Couch sessions in the middle of 2020, someone asked all of us on the Executive Team *“What keeps you awake at night?”*
- My answer was *“What keeps me awake at night is how do we all stay connected as an organisation in the middle of all this”*
- Through a strong focus on looking after people, and driving off our values, all while never losing sight of the key thing that drives all of us to work here and our reason for being as an organisation – which is serving the community, I feel like we have come through this stronger than ever
- We have embedded our values and transformed our culture - I am so proud of our people and the great work they do for the community

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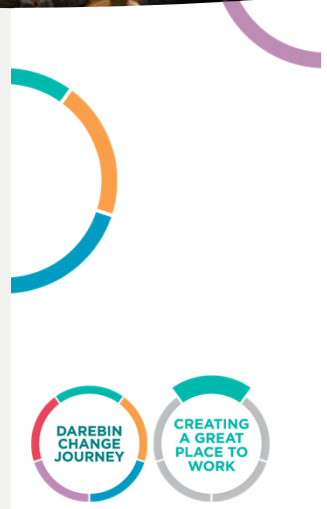




We have Integrity
We act with integrity and transparency in conversations and decision-making. Through open and clear communication, we build trust. We're honest. We walk the talk.

Stay well, stay connected

thank you
Appreciate Great



Q & A

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