

> JAM News

Olive Way honoured by the City of Moreland

Recently the [Olive Way](#) was nominated for a [Community Award from the City of Moreland](#). Shortly before the presentation night we were contacted to check whether a representative would be attending – but no firm indication that we might win an award. On Tuesday 1st October a number of us attended the ceremony at Coburg Town Hall and to our surprise we were announced as winners of the Collaborative Partnerships Award.

Congratulations to all people involved in the [Olive Way](#) – the participants, volunteers, our staff Pastor Peter Blair and Peter Murphy, and to the whole congregation for its prayer and financial support.

The text of the application is included below:

Olive Way is about creating a place in which community and a sense of belonging can flourish for those who live or visit in Brunswick. Located in Brunswick Uniting Church on Sydney Rd, it offers a warm and safe place to sit and chat, have a meal or participate in a range of activities. Its primary focus is hospitality and other creative activities.

Founded in 2007, the Olive Way offers meals and refreshments on the days it is open. There is access to computers and phones for people who need them and staff and volunteers can also help direct people to services to help with material aid or accommodation when it is needed.

Alex is one of the regular participants of Olive Way and was recently seen in an article that appeared in The Age. He describes the support he found at the Olive Way.

<https://www.smh.com.au/national/no-lights-no-linen-how-alex-survived-for-six-years-on-newstart-20190717-p5284q.html>

There is also an Art Program in conjunction with Arts Access, a writing program and Sydney Road Opera Company. Piano lessons have also been much appreciated, and those with music skills can utilise the Church instruments.

The [Olive Arts project](#) encourages visitors to explore artistic mediums and learn skills from professional artists in an encouraging environment. One of the Olive Arts participants, Giovanni describes his experience thus;



Ian Ferguson, Mike Denison, Richard Arnold, Alex Phillips, Leanne Salau

"My encounter with Arts Access at Brunswick's Olive Way was fortuitous. I thought I had stepped into a pond but it was an ocean. I was part of an exciting and vibrant network of artistic people. It brings my mates out of their lonely rooms and into the community where they can find companionship and warmth. We have somehow created a multi racial, non-judgemental, mutually supportive community."

[The Sydney Road Opera Company](#) is a grassroots musical theatre in which participants are guided in creatively telling their stories, writing them into plays that are performed during the Olive Way times.

Visitors and participants each find the Olive Way meets different needs and this is vital to ensuring inclusion, social connection, and in building capacity, confidence and strengthening relationships. Volunteers and visitors to the Olive Way have a chance to connect through this meeting place as well. The Olive Way is overseen by a steering committee that is made up of a mix of staff, volunteers and Olive way participants which ensures different voices are heard in management of the Olive Way.

Chandra's voice perhaps sums up what makes the Olive Way unique... *"I find this place like a Doctor's prescription...Because of Olive Way we are enriched, we are happy, we have made new friends and moreover we have found kindness, feel welcomed and more."*



[The Respect project](#), with postcards created by [The Olive Arts Collective](#)



In the Waiting Room - with [SROC](#)
25th October 2019