

## **Social Prescribing Initiatives: HiveMind Community Apiary Ballarat Inc | Therapeutic (mindful) beekeeping and horticultural practice program**

**Service:** Therapeutic (mindful) beekeeping and horticultural practice program

### **Main Component:**

HiveMind Community Apiary Ballarat Inc. is a community enterprise established in 2019 to help connect people at risk of or living with a mental illness like depression, anxiety, PTSD or social isolation through the use of beekeeping as a complementary therapeutic intervention.

Inspired by Canadian social enterprise Hives for Humanity, an episode of Gardening Australia featuring South Australian Beekeeper and former English Army Veteran Crispin Boxhall.

Two programs available: A Season of Beekeeping Program - Spring and Summer; and Horticultural Therapy Program - Spring and Summer. These are held at the HiveMind Community Apiary and Backyard Beekeeping Ballarat.

Visit the website [here](#) for further information and referral details.

**Who is this for?:** People at risk or of living with mental illness

**Outcomes:** Psycho-social program providing small group tuition and mentoring for people at risk of or living with a mental illness, usually depression, anxiety, social isolation and veterans diagnosed with PTSD (Hives for Hereos).

A season of beekeeping program provides theory and practical skills and training alongside qualified and experienced beekeepers in a purpose built community Apiary. Meeting for 2 hours every fortnight at the Apiary new beekeepers are allocated a beehive to work with during the course of the beekeeping season. During the off beekeeping season, new beekeepers are connected into local beekeeping club, attend conferences and field days.

As a social enterprise, new beekeepers learn skills and knowledge to equip them to independently manage their own beehive following the 8 month program and/or start their journey to becoming a sideline beekeeper. Participants learn everything required to produce honey and take it from hive to market(retail) learning from local honey merchants Backyard Beekeeping Ballarat.

Participants are encouraged to stay on at the Apiary to become mentors and ambassadors for the program in a capacity building approach.

**Organisations-involved:** Ballarat Health Services (Grampians Mental Health), Ballarat Connected Communities, UFS Pharmacy, City of Ballarat, Backyard Beekeeping Ballarat, GreenFork Urban Farming

**Keywords:** therapeuticbeekeeping, mental health, socialenterprise, mindfulbeekeeping, hivesforheroes, depression, anxiety, PTSD, social isolation,

*Source: Amanda Collins*

*Email: [hivemindcommunityapiary@gmail.com](mailto:hivemindcommunityapiary@gmail.com)*

*Position: Founder & Beekeeper*

*Organisation: HiveMind Community Apiary Ballarat Inc*