



Annual Report 2015-2016



Acknowledgement

The Housing Trust head office is located on, and we conduct business on, Country that the Dharawal people and their ancestors have been custodians of for many centuries. The Housing Trust is committed to honouring Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, water and sea and their rich contribution to society.

We acknowledge their living culture and their unique role in the life of the region and pay our respects to ancestors and Elders both past, present and future.

We would also like to acknowledge and thank our residents and customers, our local communities, the Local, State and Federal Governments, our partners and suppliers, our community investors, our funding agencies, the media and of course our staff for their support over the last year.

Thank you to our residents, staff and others who contributed to the content and design of this report.



About us

The Housing Trust is the largest not-for-profit community housing provider in the Illawarra. We have been supported by and supporting our local community for more than 30 years.

We prevent homelessness by providing over 1,000 quality homes to more than 2,000 people on very low to moderate incomes. We believe that a decent, affordable home is one of the foundations on which we build our lives.

The Housing Trust is a Tier 1 Registered Community Housing Provider. This means we meet the highest level of performance as a large scale organisation. We provide quality housing and property management services, as well as access to support services.

We put our customers first, and have a track record of listening to our tenants, proving responsive and caring customer service, and working in partnership with others in the community.



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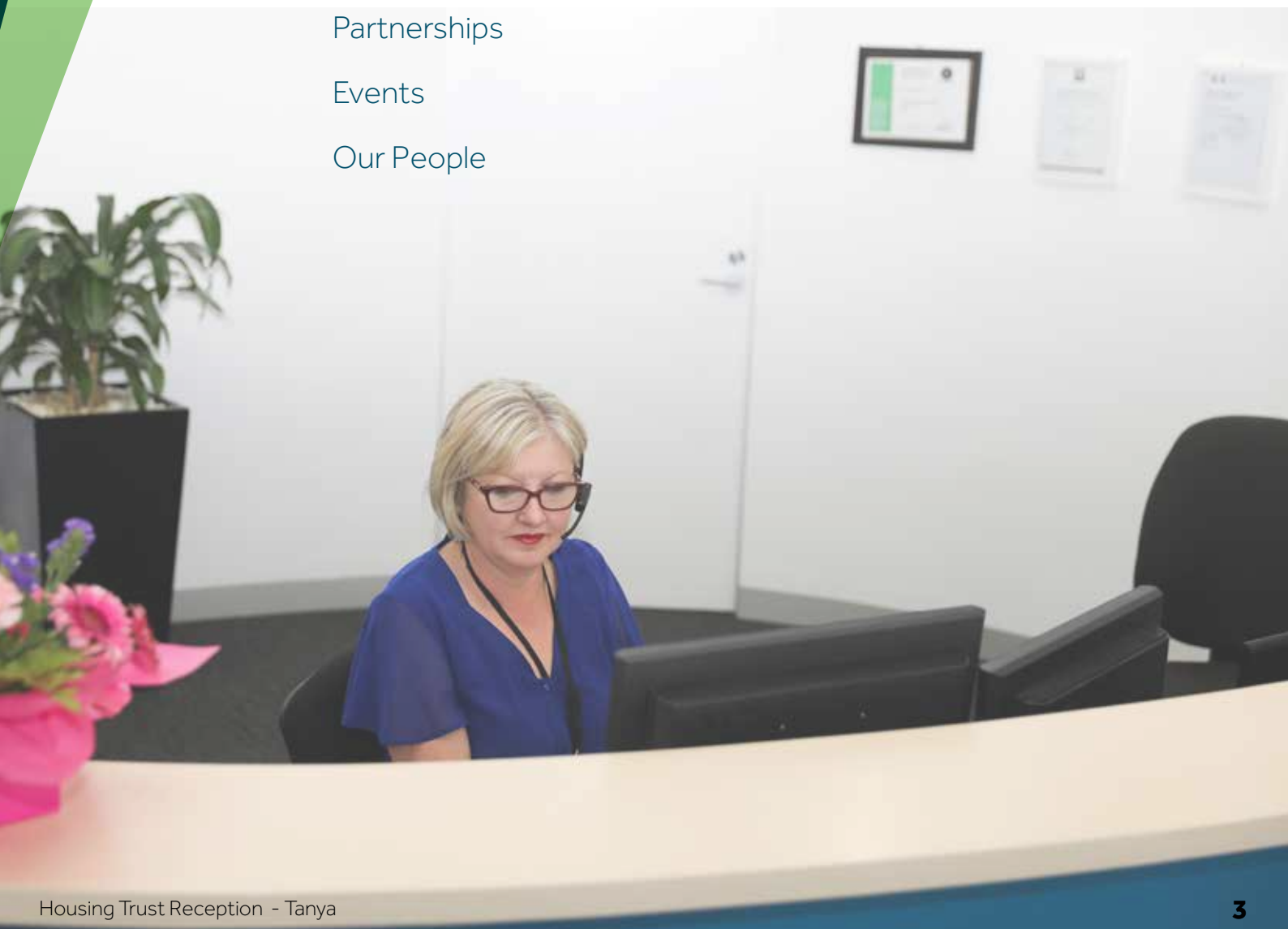
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Chairperson's Report



Hon. David Campbell ***Chairperson***

I am delighted to report on behalf of the Board that our company has maintained its Tier 1 provider status under the National Regulatory System for Community Housing. This important achievement indicates security for our tenants and also demonstrates strong governance to our members, funders and strategic partners. This continued level of registration reflects on the hard work and focus of our staff, CEO, Executive and my Board colleagues. I acknowledge very warmly that sense of team work.

The year under review has seen some challenges turned into opportunities. To use the "jargon" we have seen a "deal of disruption" from the government sector with new policies announced, new programs named and very short turnaround times to bid or tender.

In terms of growth our property portfolio has grown strongly with the completion of construction and more importantly the occupation of our 71 homes at Central Gardens Shellharbour, the spot purchase of 4 units at Corrimal and the final vesting of 160 Nation Building Homes. Our portfolio of owned and managed homes is now valued at almost \$350 million. As this report is written we are waiting for

confirmation of an additional 4 opportunities that we have bid for. Each of those opportunities sit well within our forward looking strategic plan. We have also kept a focus on establishing asset plans for our dwellings and ensuring regular maintenance to give the best home possible to tenants but also to ensure economic viability of the asset.

I reported last year that the board had commenced an EOI process for a strategic partner to get cracking with new homes on the company's property at Byamee St, Dapto. That process has concluded, and we have a contract in place that will see us work collaboratively with EBD Park Lane Projects Pty Ltd and add 31 new homes to our stock. A Development Application has been lodged with Wollongong City Council.

The Housing Trust continues to look forward. Our five year strategic plan along with a detailed business plan continues to focus and deliver on three key business areas:

- Customers and Communities
- Homes
- Organisation

The Board, CEO and the senior management team use these plans to measure performance and plan new activities to focus resource allocation. The Housing Trust measures performance in a



Housing Trust Board (L-R)

Michael Szafraniec, Scott Bridgement, Angus Dawson, Hon. David Campbell, Jennifer Macquarie, Judy Valic, John Storer

number of ways and given that our customers, our tenants and their families, are the key reason we exist, I am happy to report that our most recently published independent customer survey has revealed that 95% of our tenants would recommend our service to friends and family and that 92% of tenants were satisfied with our overall service.

Partnerships with the community continue as we build relationships with aged care providers, other agencies, University of Wollongong, and the Aboriginal community. Our activities during Seniors Week, NAIDOC, and engagement with culturally and linguistically diverse communities are tangible examples of the strength of effort in this regard. I am proud to report that our team has made a particular effort in raising awareness and completing training around the issue of Domestic Violence.

The board maintains a rolling review of its role and governance responsibility to promote best practise and demonstrate an engaged board of directors' intent on building on recent good governance initiatives. Board Member Gareth McKeen stepped down from the board in order to concentrate on his role as CEO of Cram. We thank him for his board contribution. The Board also welcomes Scott Bridgement as a director, and we

look forward to his contribution to our dynamic decision making.

I reported last year that the board and the CEO implemented a new Organisational structure with the intent to have the business plan as a strong point of difference for the Housing Trust. As with all new structures and in accord with what seems best practice, minor tweaking has occurred with strong results. Our leadership team is very much appreciated. I extend my thanks to Joan Ferguson for her leadership in this aspect of managing the Housing Trust.

The Board has an expectation of sound targets, realistic performance measurement and continuous improvement to ensure respect for our customers and staff and value for money. The company's financial result is sound and we have a strong balance sheet to provide a platform for continued program diversification and housing growth.

My thanks go to my board colleagues for their personal contribution and to Joan Ferguson for her patience and wisdom. It is a privilege to Chair the board of a company which makes a difference every day.



CEO's Report

Joan Ferguson

"There are risks and costs to action. But they are far less than the long range risks of comfortable inaction." John F. Kennedy

At the Housing Trust, our customers truly are at the heart of our business. We believe in what we do, and our purpose drives our actions. This means that sometimes we take on work which is challenging and difficult, because when we succeed the benefits for the people we serve are truly worthwhile. Successful or not, we always learn from experience and apply this learning to our future work. Our organisation strives for a balance between courage in decision making and strong risk management.

I am deeply grateful for the support of our Tenant Advisory Group (TAG) during the last year. The TAG has provided very useful feedback and contributed ideas that have led to changes in how we do things. They have been tireless in their advocacy for their fellow tenants and in their support of the Housing Trust. I was particularly impressed when members of the TAG debunked some myths about the extent to which our customers and older people use social media and mobile technology. As a result of this very clear feedback we will be embarking on a project to improve internet access for tenants.

As the Chairperson mentions in his report, our Strategic Plan positions us well with the strategic goals guiding our work. In February this year the NSW Government announced the Social and Affordable Housing Fund, with the prospect of 3000 new homes in three years across NSW. We

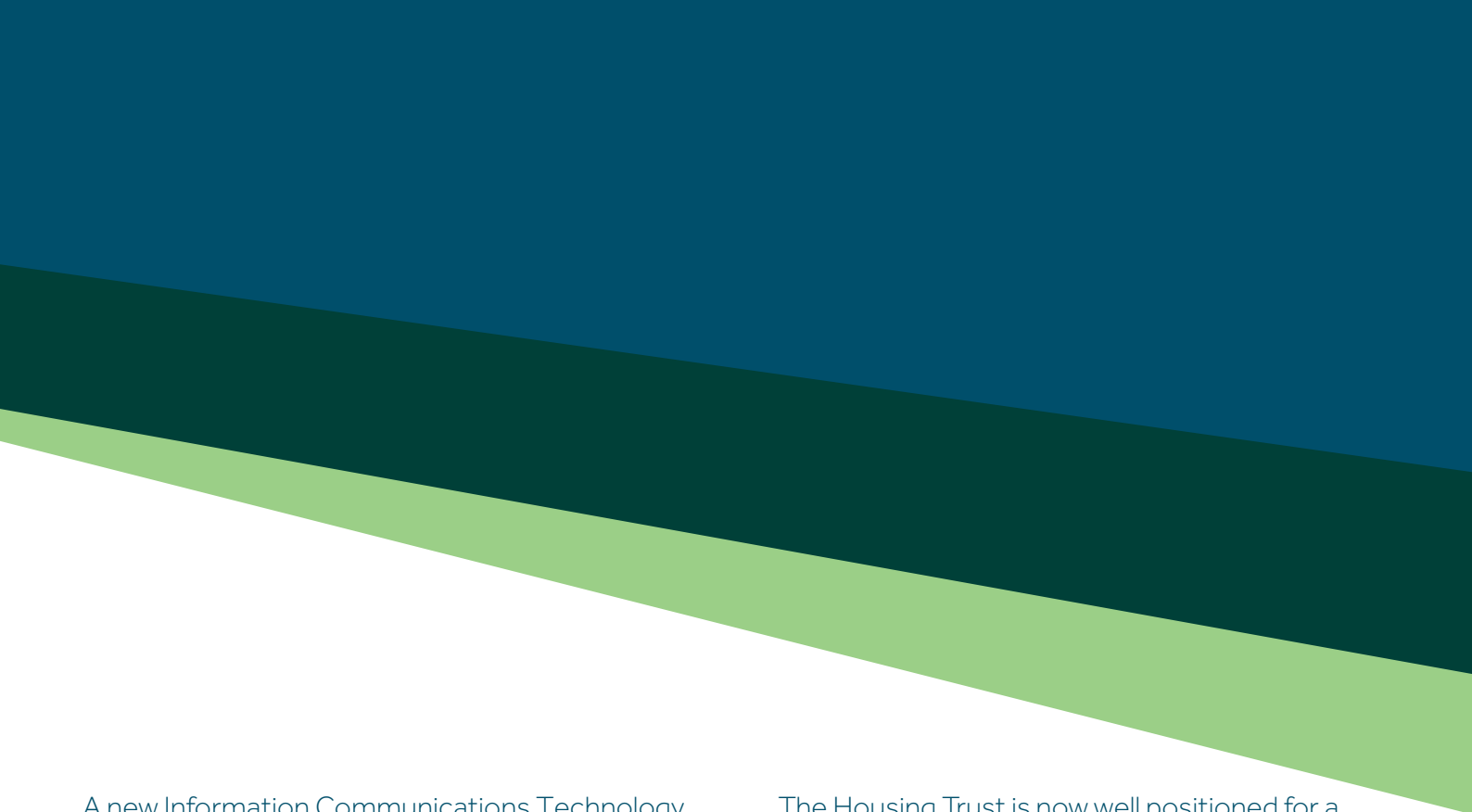
are one of five community housing providers partnering with a major equity firm to bid for funds under this program. The exercise has been truly beneficial for us. As a result we have significantly sharpened our approach and heightened our focus on improving social and economic outcomes for our customers.

Our people are key to building a stronger business. They are firmly aligned with our purpose - always going the extra mile for our customers and for each other. This has been reflected in the stories received from our staff internally through our Awesome Awards program, as well as through the great feedback from tenants recorded on our Facebook page.

We are recruiting new staff with the range of skills and experience that we need now and into the future. We support staff with a learning and development program which helps them improve their technical skills and enhance their career prospects. We are particularly proud of our Trainee Program, a partnership with the Illawarra Aboriginal Corporation – please see details on page 24 of this report.

For the last four months of this financial year the Executive has led a major program of business improvement.

A new Finance Strategy has helped us develop a clear picture of what we can do now and what we need to do to strengthen our financial position into the future. Our financial position is strong and a three year budget aligned to our strategy will see our position strengthen over time.



A new Information Communications Technology Strategy is helping us shape customer service and business process improvements. Our major focus this financial year has been to purchase and implement new business software. We are making sound progress on this implementation and are very proud of the fact that we are still within budget and on time with this major piece of work.

Our asset management and tenancy management systems and processes have been reviewed, and we are implementing a program of improvements. These include our new process for raising orders and planning scheduled maintenance, our quality assurance process for completed works, and the website additions that allow our customers to report and track maintenance requests. It is now easier for our customers to report maintenance issues and give feedback on our contractors and the work that they have completed.

A large part of the recent successes in our maintenance space is due to the implementation of our own Internal Maintenance Program (IMP), and the feedback about the quality of work and customer service provided by our IMP team has been extensive and very positive.

The implementation of portfolio management has enabled our Community Housing Workers to build rapport with our customers and the local support services in specific geographic areas. We have also improved our handling of neighbourhood complaints. Our quality and holistic service provision has enabled our customers to link into support services and successfully maintain their tenancies.

The Housing Trust is now well positioned for a dynamic future. We will continue to deliver great outcomes for our customers and we will do all we can to help people improve their lives.

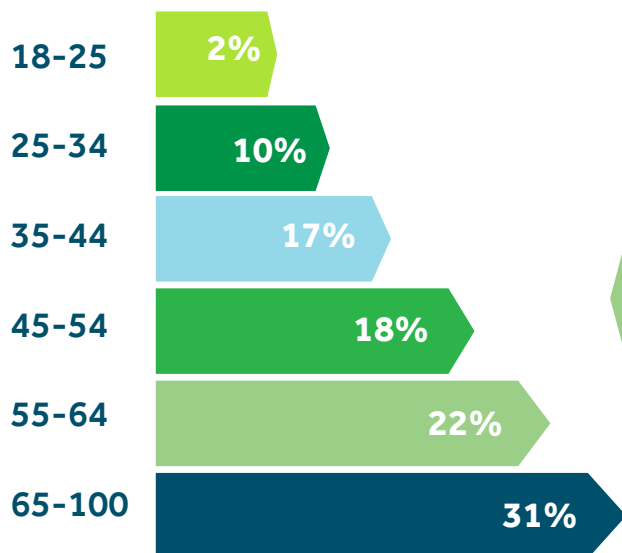
I would like to take this opportunity to formally thank a few people. Our Chairperson, David Campbell, has been a tower of strength, and the other members of the Board have shared their wisdom with me and helped me tackle some significant challenges. Jaymee Beveridge and Jim O'Shea are to be thanked for their authentic leadership in bringing about significant change in the organisation. I would also like to thank our staff who have worked their hearts out in sometimes difficult situations to make sure we provide the best possible service for our customers.

We are a very fortunate organisation in the depth and strength of our partnerships. I would like to thank a few organisations who have made a real difference for us during the year: Catholic Care for their assistance at Market Street; Illawarra Aboriginal Corporation for their commitment to our Trainee Program; Warrigal for supporting our older tenants especially at Central Gardens; Grand Pacific Health for their support in facilitating access to mental health services; Southern Youth and Family Services for their tireless work for young people; and of course to the NSW Government and in particular the Department of Family and Community Services.

Finally, I would once again like to thank our customers. You are a joy to work with.

Key Facts

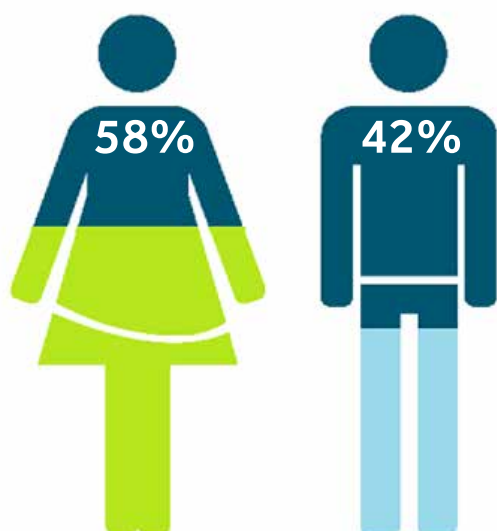
The ages of each primary tenant



More than 60% of our primary tenants are aged over 50, and many of our customers live in 1-2 person households.

We are working towards supplying properties that match the changing demographics of our customers so we can provide them with appropriate, well-maintained homes.

Percentage of female and male tenants



over
TEN%

of our tenants identify as having Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage.

Tenant nationalities

Our customers are from more than



different nationalities

over
30%

of our tenants identify
as having a disability

Length of tenancies



The majority of our tenants have been with the housing trust for more than 5 years, showing that we provide stable and secure housing for vulnerable people in our community

We own and manage a property
portfolio worth almost

\$350m

More than **20%**
of our tenancies
are **single
parent families**

99%

occupancy rate

shows that we run an
efficient business and utilise
our stock to allow the
maximum number of
vulnerable people to be
housed.

Seven%

of our staff are of
Aboriginal and/or
Torres Strait
Islander origin

Strategic Plan Highlights

The Housing Trust continues to be guided by our strategic plan, and we have made progress on our strategic goals as part of our commitment to providing excellent service to our customers and the community.



More customers were able to access safe and affordable homes, with new homes in Corrimal and at Central Gardens increasing the size of our portfolio.

Our customers benefited from our partnerships with support providers including Catholic Care, Warrigal and Grand Pacific Health that have increased access to wellbeing, aged care and mental health services.

Customers who required extra support were identified and provided targeted referrals to appropriate services through our sustaining tenancies approach, in order to tackle issues before they became problems.

Our older customers at Market Street participated in a health and wellbeing program with Catholic Care, assisting them to remain active and healthy in their homes.

Our customers benefited from the community's support of the Housing Trust. Bunnings worked in partnership with staff and residents to renovate the common area in Stewart Street to help create a sense of pride amongst residents, and customers had the opportunity to enrol in fee-free courses through TAFE.

Our customers were able to apply for a bursary fund to support the further education of their children, thanks to Butler HR's generous donation. This is one way to assist customers to break out of poverty.

Our customers engaged with the Housing Trust, each other and the wider community, participating in events that formed part of our Tenant Engagement Strategy. These events assist customers to remain socially active, encourage healthy behaviours and provide the Housing Trust with valuable feedback as well as helping to create supportive, safe and secure neighbourhoods.

Our customers experienced fast, efficient maintenance services through our Internal Maintenance Program. The savings generated were also used to support our customers through other programs.

Customers with specific needs, such as older customers and those with a disability, were able to remain safely in their homes following modification and adaptations that met their needs.

Our customers are receiving even better maintenance services following a review of processes, the ability to complete maintenance requests on our website, and the improvement in our quality assurance process to make sure customers are satisfied with both the repair and the service received.

Implementing a new financial strategy and a comprehensive Human Resources and Performance Management system allows us to continue to run an efficient and effective business that better supports our customers

Our customers continue to receive specific, fair, transparent and accurate service, and this has been assisted by the implementation of new business software and server architecture.

Our customers were able to build greater rapport with Community Housing Workers following the implementation of portfolio based management.

Our customers have a choice of how and when they interact with us following the redevelopment of our website and brand.

Training and recognition programs for staff have increased their skills and confidence, helping them to provide even better service to our customers. We have also maintained a high percentage of Aboriginal staff members.

Affordable Housing

Housing affordability is a major issue in our community. Rent rises have exceeded inflation over the last 5 years, and there are a significant number of people in private rental spending more than half of their income on housing costs. Home ownership is even less affordable and many young people with good jobs simply cannot afford to buy.

The provision of affordable housing provides a pathway for people to transition from Social Housing into affordable rental housing and then on to the private market. The National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS), through incentive payments, allows rents to be pegged to 80% of the market rate. The Housing Trust participates in this scheme through the Central Gardens development. We are looking at providing even more affordable housing, to help meet the need in our community and reach our vision of a decent home for everyone.



Central Gardens Communal Garden

Central Gardens

The Central Gardens complex was completed and occupied by April 2016, and through this development the Housing Trust has increased the supply of much needed affordable housing in the Illawarra.

The 71 dwellings are home to older customers and those with a disability. Central Gardens received the Gold standard for Livable Housing Design, as it was designed and built to meet the changing needs of occupants across their lifetime. This development has given stability and security to people on moderate incomes who require affordable housing, and will allow them to age in place.

The Central Gardens development is one way that the Housing Trust is enacting our purpose – to provide homes, build vibrant and inclusive communities, create opportunities and enrich lives.



Start 2014

Central Gardens aerial photograph taken at the start of the development



Finish 2016

Central Gardens aerial photograph taken when the development was completed

Central Gardens - Tenant Stories

Ann & Tom



Ann and Tom, along with their dog Molly, are enjoying living at Central Gardens. Their unit has a great view and is well designed and spacious. "We are over the moon – we waited nearly 12 years for something like this, and it was worth the wait".

They have had great interactions with staff at the Housing Trust, and find Tanya in reception "really nice and so good to talk to".

According to Ann and Tom, "There is a fantastic sense of safety and security here." They really enjoy the community and spending time with their neighbours, including a generous neighbour who Ann refers to as "my chef" thanks to all the delicious food they receive.

Ann and Tom feel the development is well built and they enjoy having access to the gardens. "Central Gardens is beautiful and peaceful...it's a real blessing".



Graham & Vicki

Graham and Vicki chose to move from a private rental to Central Gardens for the security of knowing that if one of them passes away, the other will be able to stay and pay reasonable rent.

They are enjoying living in a new apartment, and having the beach and Shellharbour square in walking distance.

"It's really nice to move into a new place. You can take pride in the place, and put your stamp on it. It makes you feel happy to come home to."

Graham and Vicki have better neighbours now, and find Helen, the Community Housing Worker, very



helpful. They appreciate the convenience and security of having an underground garage, and the view of the gardens.

"It's nice to look out the window and see something pretty – it's a lovely surroundings".

Geoff

Geoff and his wife were on the public housing waiting list for 12 years, and had previously had their home "sold from under us".

Moving to Central Gardens gave them a sense of security. "The amenities were perfect for our needs considering our health and age."

Geoff speaks highly of the staff at the Housing Trust. "They were particularly helpful when my wife passed away in August. They allowed me space to adjust before sorting out the paper work. I would like to thank Bianca & Helen for help at that time."

Geoff feels that the community at Central Gardens doesn't lack for anything. "All the people I have spoken to are pleased to be here, which makes for a pleasant environment."

According to Geoff, "I am happy camper, thank you for making it possible".

Central Gardens - Tenant Stories

Dorothy



Dorothy in her new kitchen

Dorothy needed to leave her private rental as the owner wished to move in. She is now living in Central Gardens and enjoying the modern look and feel of the new development.

"I have very nice neighbours", says Dorothy. "The community is better here".

Dorothy also enjoys the peace and quiet at Central Gardens. "I used to only sleep for 5 hours, but now I can sleep for 8 to 10 hours".

Her blood pressure has also lowered since moving in, which she attributes to reduced anxiety and getting plenty of rest.

Dorothy has recently adopted a dog, Charlie Brown, after getting approval from the Housing Trust. She is looking forward to setting up a garden on her balcony and continuing to write stories.



Valerie & Kevin

Valerie and Kevin feel that their villa in Central Gardens is "terrific" and "worth waiting for". The Housing Trust previously moved them to Woonona to prevent them being homeless. They are enjoying being back down south and closer to friends and family.

Valerie is able to get through the whole house with her walker due to the wide doors and walkways – part of the Gold standard Livable Housing Design. Both Valerie and Kevin say that "the house is excellent". They are also able to access help through services such as Home Care, which makes life easier.

Valerie and Kevin have found the staff at the Housing Trust very helpful, especially through the transition period as they waited for Central Gardens to be available.



Valerie and Kevin enjoying their home at Central Gardens

Customer Service

Our customers are at the heart of all we do, and feedback consistently shows that they speak highly of the Housing Trust. We provide responsive and caring service to a wide range of vulnerable customers, including people who are homeless, older people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people with a mental illness or disability and single parents.

Community Engagement

The Housing Trust is committed to working with others to build vibrant, inclusive communities and deliver real outcomes for our customers. As part of this commitment, the Housing Trust has continued our program of community development initiatives. We have come together with customers and other organisations to generate solutions through various forums, to celebrate our diversity and to create enjoyable memories together.

Some of our activities focused on connecting with our older customers through healthy lifestyle and other activities, to increase their health and wellbeing and ensure they remain involved in the community. These included an exercise program at our Market Street complex as well as various activities at our Seniors Week event.

We engaged with the Aboriginal community in order to build strong connections with the whole community and to better serve our customers. Staff members including our Aboriginal trainees represented the Housing Trust at NAIDOC Week and Reconciliation Day events amongst others.

We established new community gardens as a way to engage our tenants in community activities and a healthy lifestyle. The renovation of the common area at Stewart Street, which was completed in partnership with Bunnings, focused on young people taking charge of their living environment to create a sense of pride in their home.

The Housing Trust will continue working to provide support, enhance engagement and increase well-being to deliver real outcomes for our customers.

For more photos and details on these events, please visit our Facebook page and our website.



Seniors Week Event at Housing Trust Office



Stewart Street Common Area Renovations



NAIDOC Week

Portfolio Services

As part of our commitment to put our customers first, the Housing Trust has implemented a new portfolio-based management service. Feedback shows our customers appreciate having an assigned Community Housing Worker as they only have to tell their story once. This streamlined approach allows a stronger focus on managing neighbourhood safety, and assists us in running an efficient and customer-oriented business.



Housing Trust Customers

Supporting our customers

Our Customers and Communities team completed over 950 home visits, supporting our customers in their homes and ensuring that they receive the best possible service.

We also continued our holistic approach to sustaining tenancies, providing extra support to 89 vulnerable customers.

These customers are referred to local services and organisations to help meet their needs and

secure their tenancies. This process involves the Housing Trust working cooperatively with other support organisations, including our partners, to engineer enhanced outcomes for our customers.

With these targeted referrals and their hard work, many customers no longer require ongoing assistance to sustain their tenancies. This is an excellent result that supports the Housing Trust's aim of having our customers feel more in control of their homes and their lives.

Customer Satisfaction Rates

Our customer satisfaction survey results for the 2015-2016 year are amongst the highest in our sector and reflect our commitment to our customers and to excellent service. We will continue to consult with our customers and seek feedback so we can keep improving our service. Recent feedback from our customers demonstrates that the Housing Trust continues to outperform expectations.

92% Satisfied with the overall service

95% Would recommend us to family or friends

88% Say their lives have improved since living with us

86% Satisfied with maintenance and repair services

88% Satisfied with the way we involve tenants

90% Satisfied with property condition

Tenant Advisory Group

The Housing Trust is deeply committed to our customers, and actively seeks out their feedback and input into our business processes and operations. This allows us to modify these processes and operations to best suit our customers' needs.

Our Tenant Advisory Group (TAG) is one of the formal ways we regularly encourage and receive feedback and engagement.

The TAG meets quarterly and focusses on;

- Providing feedback to improve a range of business processes
- Reviewing the role and responsibility of the TAG
- Communicating issues or items they would like the Housing Trust to review
- Meeting the Housing Trust staff



Tenant Advisory Group - TAG (L-R)

Top row: Albert, Leonie, Bert, Douglas, Wendy, Marianne, Helga, Bob, Samantha (HT Staff)

Bottom row: Faye, John, Joanne (HT Staff)

Interview with Helga, TAG member

Q: How long have you been with the Housing Trust?

A: 18 Years.

Q: How long have you been part of the Tenant Advisory Group (TAG)?

A: At least 6 years – and I've been making the lolly bags for Christmas with Janette for 11 years.

Q: How would you describe the TAG?

A: I love it! Everyone knows me, and they are all kind. Going to TAG meetings makes you think about possible improvements. I have made some good friends from being involved in the TAG.

Q: What would you say to other people interested in being in the TAG?

A: Come along – you meet people here and get company. If you don't come and talk, the Housing Trust can't help. Just have a look and give it a try.

Q: What achievements has the TAG made as a group?

A: We bring up issues and suggest activities for the Housing Trust. For example, we reviewed and approved the colour scheme at Central Gardens.

Q: How do you find working with the Housing Trust?

A: It's an eye opener, going to TAG meetings. You get to hear the staff members talk. It is interesting hearing what is going on, and meeting the staff. Every meeting we hear that things we brought up before have been done by the Housing Trust. If you bring something up and it is necessary, you have help.

Q: How can the TAG be improved?

A: It would be great to have more people coming along.



Crisis Accommodation

Paddy's Place is a unique approach to the provision of emergency accommodation, and is the only staffed crisis accommodation in the state. The Housing Trust runs Paddy's Place in partnership with FACS, and we pride ourselves on providing a supportive alternative to motels and caravan parks for our vulnerable customers.

Paddy's Place is a safe space to seek help and to find a home. Our customers come in crisis, and many have added challenges of addiction, domestic violence and health issues. Customers have little family support and live on limited financial resources.

A formal service evaluation of Paddy's Place was completed in October 2015, and it found that Paddy's Place has benefited many people from all walks of life in the Illawarra. Paddy's Place has played a key role in bringing about positive housing outcomes for a range of complex needs customers, customers who had previously had difficulty re-entering social and private market housing, and in circumstances where all other temporary housing options have been unsuccessful.

The staff at Paddy's Place assist customers with their immediate practical welfare needs, help identify new support needs and liaise with specialist support services. The focus is on providing excellent service and helping people who are looking for secure accommodation. After a stay at Paddy's Place, many go into social housing or find private rental accommodation.

CUSTOMER STORY

Cheryl* arrived at Paddy's place following a diagnosis of lung cancer. Almost 70, she was homeless and was about to begin chemotherapy. Paddy's place was able to provide her with supported accommodation as she completed her daily chemotherapy. During this time, she was also assisted by an IRT worker and staff at Paddy's Place to attend appointments and resolve her homelessness.

Cheryl was placed on the priority housing list, and after 4 months at Paddy's Place she was offered a property through Housing NSW. She now has a backyard that her grandchildren can play in when they visit her. Cheryl's story is an example of how having access to Paddy's Place can give our customers the space they need to find a home.

*not her real name

The Housing Trust is currently upgrading some areas at Paddy's Place. There is a new inside play area for children, and plans are being finalised for an outdoor playground. Grant funding is being used to purchase a BBQ and run a program to encourage nutritional eating.

In 2015-2016, almost 300 customers accessed the services at Paddy's Place. More than 30% of these customers were children, and more than 20% disclosed having a mental health issue.

Properties

The Housing Trust manages over 1000 properties across the Wollongong, Shellharbour and Kiama local government areas. We own properties outright, build properties and lease properties from Government, other organisations and private individuals. Over the past year we have worked on growing the organisation and providing better outcomes for customers through our properties.

An example of this is the completion of 71 new homes at Shellharbour, providing affordable housing to over 100 customers. All homes received the Gold Standard for Livable Housing Design and will allow our customers to remain in their homes as they age.

A new master planned estate was also commenced in partnership with EBD Park Lane Projects Pty Ltd. This new estate located in Dapto will provide the Housing Trust with another 31 properties. This estate will be mixed tenure with many privately owned houses and units in addition to a lovely park for all to enjoy.

Another exciting achievement is the establishment of our Internal Maintenance Program. This program has seen a reduction in the cost of maintenance, meaning our money can go further and assist more customers. Employment opportunities with a real career path have been provided and learning opportunities are also available for our customers through this new program. The Housing

Trust has recruited an Aboriginal trainee to be part of this program. Customers have told us they are very happy with the additional attention they receive and the excellent levels of service provided through our Internal Maintenance Program.

We have also been working to keep our customers' homes in good condition through both our responsive maintenance service and our planned maintenance service. Approximately 95% of urgent repairs reported by our customers were completed on time, ensuring they receive a high level of service.

We have brought a smile to the faces of many customers, completing over 130 planned maintenance work orders. We installed more modern kitchens and bathrooms, which has lowered maintenance costs and ensured customers have modern amenities.

Customers who have received new bathrooms, kitchens, floor coverings and paint have also been helping the Housing Trust make the selections by choosing colours, patterns and style. This helps to give our customers pride and ownership of their homes.

The Housing Trust will continue to involve customers by providing choices where possible and working to make sure we are delivering the best possible service.



Partnerships



Joan Ferguson (CEO Housing Trust) and Mark Sewell (CEO Warrigal) officially signing partnership agreement

Warrigal

As part of our Older People's Housing Strategy, the Housing Trust signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Warrigal, a local not-for-profit aged care provider. This partnership is benefiting older tenants who require additional support in their day-to-day lives.

As a majority of our tenants are over 50 years old, this partnership is part of the Housing Trust's commitment to put our customers first, working to improve the lives of older people accessing our service.

The key partnership objectives are to support older people to remain active and healthy in their homes, and connect our customers with health and

wellbeing programs. Warrigal are offering their services for customers in our Central Gardens development. This includes transport, community care packages social and community support and more.

"We are committed to partnering with like-minded organisations, particularly in the not-for-profit space, and are proud to be able to provide older people with professional services and assistance, to enable them to lead great lives, regardless of their personal or financial situation. This will allow older tenants to take greater control of their lives and have confidence in the quality of aged care services they receive" said Mark Sewell, Warrigal CEO.

Illawarra Aboriginal Corporation - Traineeship

Racheal, our Maintenance Trainee, completed her Certificate IV in Social Housing traineeship at the end of 2015. Racheal has been able to increase her skills, especially in Microsoft programs, and get experience in a full time role while receiving a reliable income.

"As a single mum re-entering the workforce, it was great to get an entry level position with the Housing Trust. The Housing Trust has supported me to manage my work and home life commitments. I have made some great friends here as well."



Michelle from Illawarra Aboriginal Corporation and Racheal

Racheal continues to work for the Housing Trust, and represents our organisation at NAIDOC week every year. Her success is a reflection of her hard work, and the great partnership between the Housing Trust and the Illawarra Aboriginal Corporation (including Warrigal Employment).

As part of our Aboriginal Employment Strategy and our commitment to creating a dynamic organisation which is making a difference in our community, the Housing Trust will continue to take on new Aboriginal Identified Business Trainees.

Events

Over the past year, the Housing Trust has organised, facilitated and participated in events to ensure that we support our customers and the wider community.

These include events that recognise different, and often vulnerable, parts of our community, provide educational and wellbeing information, allow for customer input and feedback and help to create enjoyable moments and memories.



Joan with Mr & Mrs Hofman at the Central Gardens event



HT Tenant Christmas Party



International Women's Day & Tanya's 10 years at HT celebrations



Preparing for our Tenant Christmas Party



Official Opening of Central Gardens - Gareth Ward MP, Member for Kiama & Parliamentary Secretary for the Illawarra & Hon. David Campbell, Chairperson Housing Trust



White Ribbon Day at HT Office



Community Garden working bee event at Belinda Street



International Food & Culture Day



Photo booth fun at our Seniors Week event

Our People

We are committed to investing in our people, giving them the opportunity to contribute to a dynamic organisation which is making a difference in our community.

We provide learning, wellbeing and engagement opportunities to ensure that our staff are supported and can provide the best possible service to our customers.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- 82% of our staff are full-time employees and 18% are part-time employees
- 7% of our staff are of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin
- 9 staff successfully completed the Certificate IV in Social Housing
- Domestic and Family Violence training working towards our White Ribbon Accreditation
- NSW Government Get Healthy at Work program, providing staff with free health checks and information to ensure wellbeing
- Family friendly flexible working options including flexible working hours
- Regular engagement with staff and recognition of outstanding efforts and achievements
- In-house celebrations, including charity fundraisers, to contribute to the wider community and create the opportunity for staff to share moments

"There is a great team environment at the Housing Trust, with support for tenants, staff and the community. I have the opportunity to work with people and help them to obtain, maintain and sustain a home."

SUE

"One of the best things about this job is that we are part of the solution"

PETER

"Working at the Housing Trust enables me to help people make positive changes in their lives. I feel very grateful that we have the resources to be able to run events and workshops that brings a smile to our tenants faces. I am so lucky to have such a satisfying and well supported job."

JOANNE



"I love my job! It's a fantastic organisation to work for and a great team of dedicated people that I work with!"

"It's always lovely to see people so happy when they have been given a new home with the Housing Trust."

TANYA



"Since working at the Housing Trust I have become more confident in interacting and communicating with other organisations and people within the company"

EMMALY



"The difference with being a business trainee for the Housing Trust is, you're not only developed to meet industry standards, you're inspired to be a better human being."

SAMANTHA

"Great satisfaction supplying general maintenance services to our tenants"

GLEN



"The best part about my job is leaving a tenant's home knowing that I've gone there, fixed something and to see the customers all happy and smiling, which makes my day"

BRAEDEN



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