

## Annual Report 2020



# Our Strategic Direction 2018-2021

## Our Clients

We will deliver services to our clients in ways that represent our values, promote the rights of people and ensure the best possible housing outcomes; prioritising for the most vulnerable in our communities.

We are committed to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander self-determination and culturally competent practice. As such, we will seek guidance from Aboriginal peoples and consult with Aboriginal services to deliver culturally appropriate services.

## Our Community

We will provide leadership, advocacy, and influence on the issues of homelessness and affordable housing within our catchment and beyond.

## Our Team

We will be a values based organisation, with a positive team culture that promotes safety and well being; and supports each other in the pursuit of achieving our vision to end homelessness

## Our Systems

We will have robust systems that enhance the experience for all stakeholders, drive strategic improvements and provide for an objective basis for decision-making and accountability.

## Our Environment

We will minimise our environmental impact through the adoption of financially viable initiatives to improve resource efficiency, reduce waste generation and reduce the consumption of natural resources.

## Our Assets & Growth

We will use evidence of demand to grow, recognising that it requires the courage to take some considered risks and the resources to develop concepts that, when tested, may not proceed.

## Vision

All people to have a safe, secure, affordable and appropriate housing

## Purpose

BeyondHousing is committed to ending homelessness. We will work in partnership with Government, business, communities and individuals to develop and provide the full range of quality housing and homelessness services.

## Our Values

**RIGHTS** Housing is a Human Right

**FAIRNESS** Housing Justice for all People

**CREATIVITY** Seeking solutions

**QUALITY** Striving to be the best

**COLLABORATION**

We cannot solve homelessness alone

## Acknowledgement of Country

BeyondHousing acknowledges Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and their rich cultures. We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands and waters upon which we rely.

We recognise their continuing connection to land, waters, and culture. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

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# Welcome



**Sue Paini**  
Chair



**Celia Adams**  
Chief Executive Officer

**It seems fitting that the theme for this year's annual report is "Resilience" as 2020 has been a year in which we have seen people tested, often to their limits, by bushfires and smoke and then a global pandemic. A time when people and communities have needed resilience more than ever.**

I congratulate our CEO, Celia Adams and the people who work at BeyondHousing for their ability to respond quickly as issues arose this year, and particularly since March. Ensuring the health and safety of our staff at a time when some of the most vulnerable people in our communities needed our help was not a simple task. However, our commitment to digital transformation over the past two years meant that the move to remote working was mostly seamless and effective. Making the transition was the first step. Maintaining service delivery and staff morale in the following months has required leadership and resilience. We have found new ways to provide services to people and new ways for staff to stay connected to the organisation and each other. I congratulate every-one in the BeyondHousing team for again showing their commitment to the work we do.

The Board has also faced some challenges as Directors have learned new ways to meet and attend to the business of the Board. This has not always been easy, but I thank our Directors for their patience and willingness to find solutions.

As happens most years, some of our Directors have resigned and new Directors recruited. I would like to thank Teigan O'Grady, Darran Stonehouse and Owen Webb who provided their knowledge and time to the Board and to our vision. During 2019-2020 we welcomed Alan Arthur, Ann Telford (who returned after a short break from the Board), Ben Ruscoe and Carly Martin. With skills that include governance, finance and architecture, our new Directors will continue to lead BeyondHousing with integrity.

There have been a number of highlights this year for the organisation. The partnership with Peter and Lyndy White Foundation to build affordable housing across the region continues into its second year. The Housing Registrar's annual review report was exemplary. Additional resources in the private rental support programs ensures that we will continue to provide a suite of services for all people in housing crisis. The Board recognises that these achievements haven't come easily but are the result of hard work and dedication by many people in BeyondHousing.

There have been a few focus areas for the Board and its committees this year, including redrafting the Constitution and most of the Board's policies, cash forecasting and ensuring the financial sustainability of the organisation as we continue to grow. We also engaged a consultant to facilitate a review of the Board and how we might improve our collective performance. Despite some of this work being delayed by COVID-19, it has been a valuable experience for all Directors.

I am looking ahead to the coming year with some excitement. The development of a new strategic plan (2021-2024) is always a time to reflect on achievements and set new challenges. Board induction and succession planning will also be key objectives to ensure that knowledge and expertise is shared between long-term and new Directors, building on our resources and increasing our resilience.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge and thank all the people who contribute to the achievements of BeyondHousing – Directors, CEO and Management Team, and staff; but also our partners and stakeholders who share our vision of ending homelessness.

**I am proud to share this year's annual report with our stakeholders and to acknowledge the significant progress we have made in the past year, in spite of the extraordinary circumstances that we, and people in our communities, have found ourselves in, as a result of the Covid-19 global pandemic.**

Our ongoing investment in digital transformation has served us well throughout the pandemic, enabling us to mobilise our workforce swiftly and efficiently to minimise disruption to services. When offices closed in March 2020, more than 50 staff moved to working remotely within 2 weeks. I am confident that this investment will continue to provide flexibility for our team and greater choice for the people who access our services, whilst also increasing the protection of data and personal information.

Digital Transformation has also enabled our Board to meet remotely and participate in online committee meetings. It has been challenging at times but I thank our Directors for their willingness to adapt, and for their ongoing commitment to our organisation, throughout challenging times. Significant work has been achieved at a governance level which would not have been possible without the commitment of our Board of Directors.

We have made significant progress against our organisational review from 2017 and Growth Strategy endorsed by the Board in August 2019. To strengthen our capacity for growth we added new positions to our team in the areas of Asset Management, Project Management and Finance.

We ended the year with 100 properties approved for construction, with the support of the Peter and Lyndy White Foundation and the Victorian State Government. Our partnership with the Peter and Lyndy White Foundation is critical to the growth we have achieved to date and plan for the coming year. We continue to be grateful to the Foundation and look forward to continuing to increase the supply of affordable housing in our catchment with their support.

We participated in over 140 media articles across print, television, radio generating many media releases ourselves to highlight the issue of homelessness and lack of affordable housing. In particular, we are thankful for the support of Hit FM Goulburn Valley, for their campaign in Homelessness Week 2019, which raised much needed awareness of the realities of homelessness in regional Victoria and as always, the lack of appropriate crisis options and affordable housing for people. We also used social media extensively to promote our work.

We made progress against our environmental goals by installing solar units on 25 of our affordable housing properties, reducing paper usage by over 50%, and continuing to power our offices using 100% renewable energy sources. Our 8 star energy rated homes in Wodonga, funded by the Victorian Property Fund are well under way and we are proud of this development. It is important to us that our homes are not only affordable to rent, but also affordable to live in.

Significant preparation was made towards our DHHS Service Standards review scheduled for September 2020. A particular focus was work towards the Aboriginal Addendum of the Standards, and ensuring we provide services in a culturally safe and competent manner. Continuous Quality Improvement will always be a focus of our organisation and I am proud of the work we have done in this space.

Whilst it is tempting to think that soon we will continue much of our business as usual, we must learn lessons from our experiences of COVID-19. In particular we need to continue to focus on effective communication with our workforce, clients and stakeholders and to continue to find ways to stay connected despite being geographically apart. As an organisation we are looking for ways we can learn from COVID-19, such as flexibility in working arrangements and service delivery, by offering more opportunities for remote appointments, whilst maintaining face to face contact when we can.

I am incredibly proud of our team for the way they have maintained their positive approach to the work we do, for their high levels of motivation, the agility they demonstrated in the significant challenges of COVID-19. They continue to care very passionately and professionally for the people we work with. What started as a temporary pivot from usual work practices, could potentially become the new normal and I thank every one of our team for their ongoing commitment, knowing that whatever the future holds for us, we are prepared.

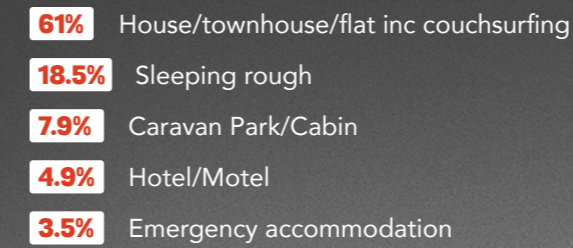
# Our Impact



# Homelessness in our region



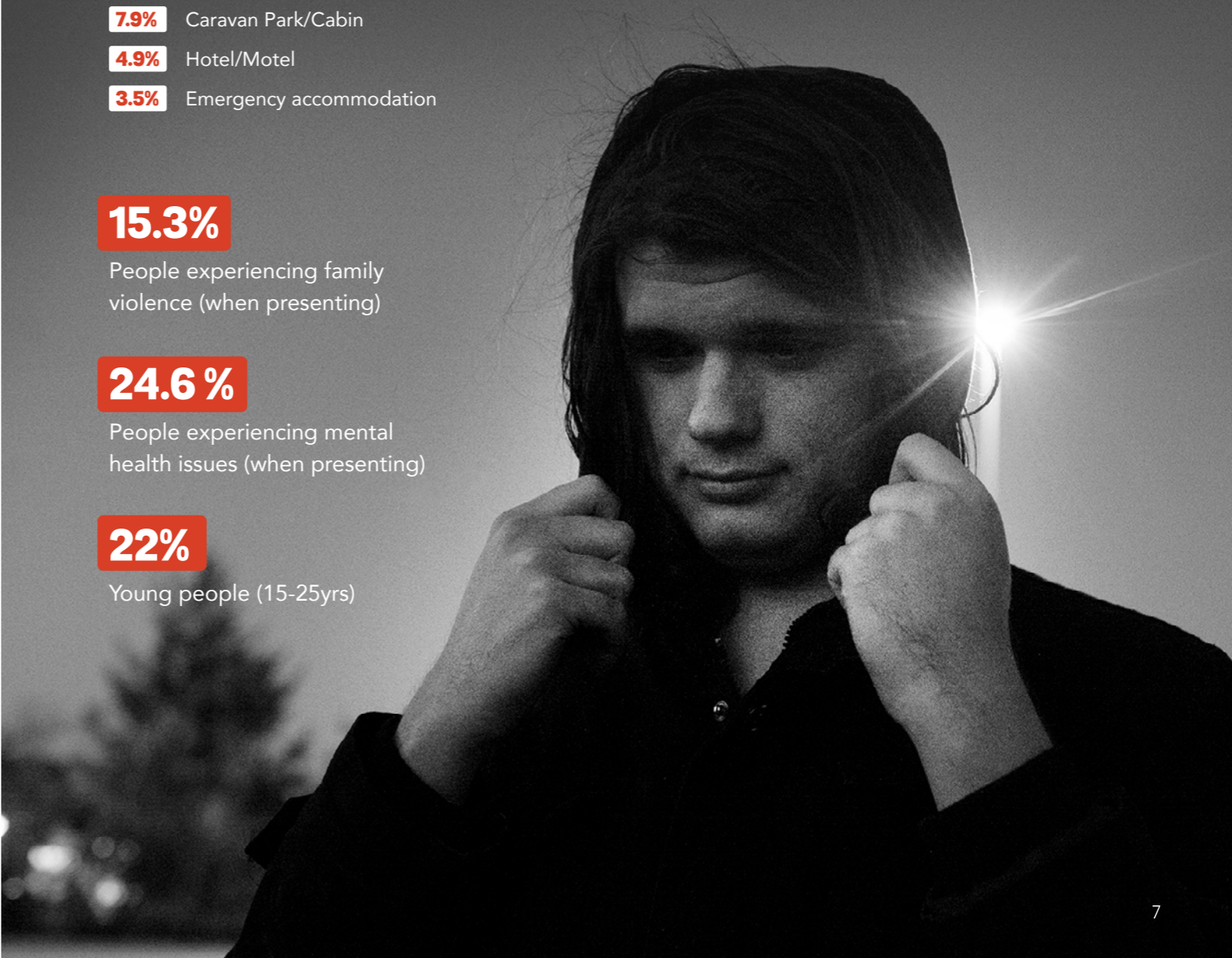
### DWELLING WHEN PRESENTING - TOP 5:



**15.3%**  
 People experiencing family violence (when presenting)

**24.6%**  
 People experiencing mental health issues (when presenting)

**22%**  
 Young people (15-25yrs)



# Delivering Resilient Services

## Homelessness and housing in a pandemic

The COVID-19 crisis brought a wider recognition of the importance of stable housing as critical to public health.

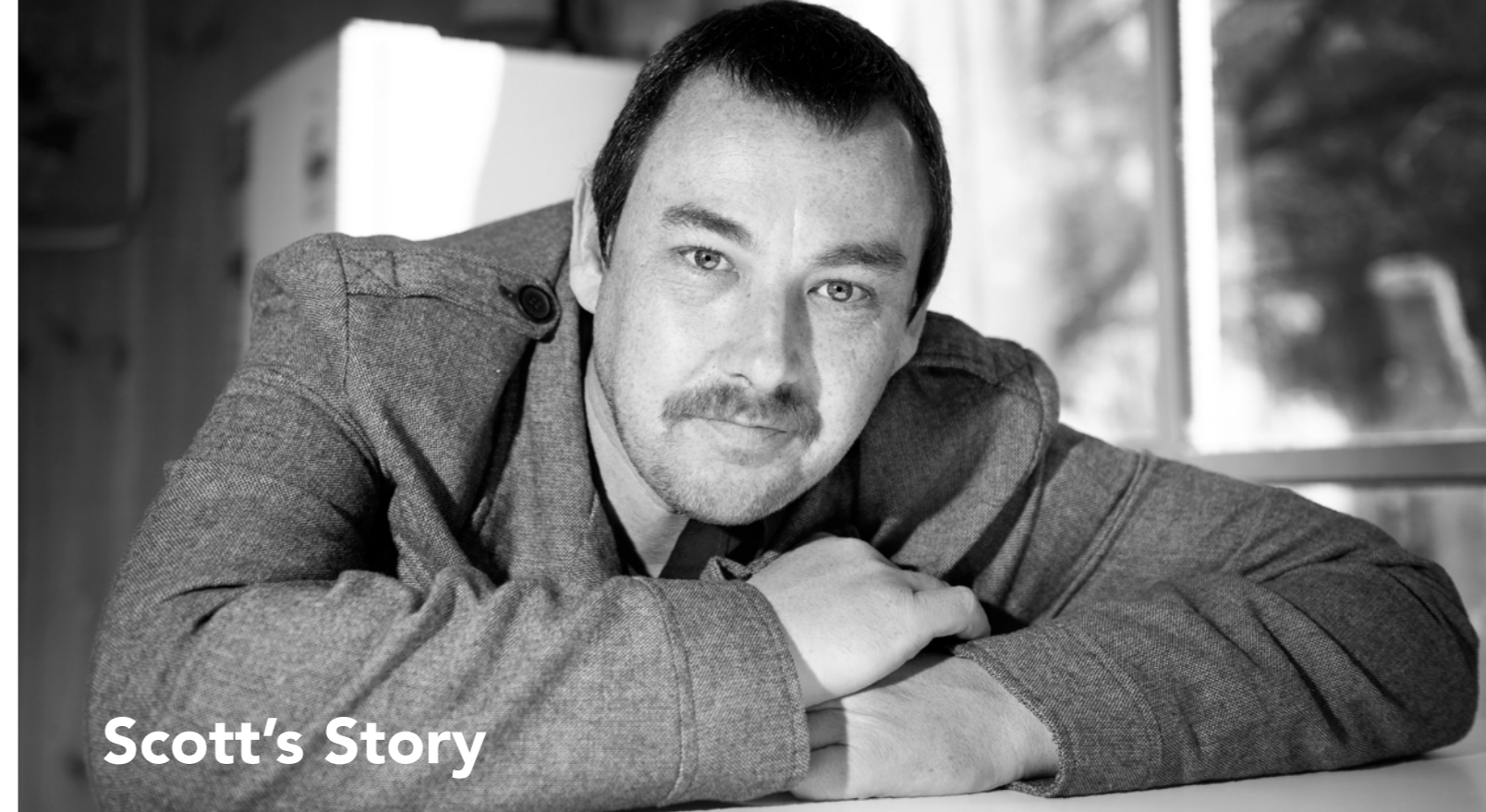
We know that people who are experiencing homelessness are already vulnerable and at a higher risk of experiencing the severity of COVID-19 because of existing poor health. Finding safe and secure places for people to stay temporarily is always challenging in regional areas, but the pandemic environment made it a priority to protect people experiencing homelessness, particularly those sleeping rough.

Housing - and its quality, stability, affordability, and location - acts as a safeguard for health and wellbeing. You cannot separate your health from where you live. Though social factors like food security, housing instability and healthcare costs are often talked about in isolated terms they are interconnected, and the pandemic is highlighting those connections.

The COVID-19 crisis delivered a generational threat of unemployment which will have lasting effects not just on housing security but on mental and physical health, family violence and many other social factors.

Individuals and families on a low income faced particular challenges around their ability to purchase and afford enough basic supplies to ensure they were prepared during the crisis. And they did not have the means to buy extra, particularly after the Federal Government's reduction in the Coronavirus Supplement.

Coupled with a reduction in income from illness, loss of employment or a reduction in hours worked meant their ability to pay the rent and sustain a tenancy was at risk during this pandemic, and this was not a time to be without a home.



### Scott's Story

"It is hard to explain how I became homeless, it happened so gradually. Part of it was because my relationship with his partner of 12 years dissolved. Suddenly I was on my own, and I searched desperately for a rental, but failed to find anything affordable and I didn't have a strong rental history.

"I was faced with sleeping rough, but my friends saved me from being on the street offering for me to couch surf at their houses. They got me going again. I owe them more than I can say.

"But I knew I couldn't stay there forever, it was only a short-term solution. Eventually, you wear out your welcome.

"I knew I needed to do it on my own.

"When I found myself homeless during the coronavirus, I knew finding a home to rent would be even harder now. But I knew I needed to get a stable home, not just for myself but for my kids.

"I have three children and a stepson who I love dearly and then three children I never got to bring home from hospital. They are still so much a part of me, the grief goes on every day, I'm never going to get over it.

"I have struggled with my mental health and had been diagnosed with bipolar, but by the time I was 35 it got to the point I had a relationship break down, and a nervous breakdown. This led to me being diagnosed with schizophrenia. After three months in hospital getting help, I was discharged into a boarding house in Broadmeadows.

"It was a nightmare, both the housing itself and what was going on there. Another boarder moved in, and just a few days later took his own life in the shed. I was the one who found him.

"I couldn't stay there, I had to get out but again had nowhere to go. I've struggled with homelessness for over five years, mostly couch surfing and sometimes in crisis accommodation.

"It's been a common theme in my life, battling to secure housing but I am determined to find somewhere suitable to live in the long-term so I can have my kids with me, there is nothing more important.

"During the coronavirus I had to leave where I was staying, couch surfing, because I couldn't have my kids there and also the Coronavirus restrictions since I wasn't actually a tenant. I need to be named on a lease.

"This is when I turned to BeyondHousing and they found me some crisis accommodation, first at a motel then at a Caravan Park where I had a cabin where I could cook and look after myself. I continued paying for the accommodation myself after BeyondHousing's initial support. The Coronavirus Supplement made a huge difference to being able to stay there.

"Even better, after my application for the Victorian Housing Register was approved, I got to move into a transitional home with BeyondHousing where I am getting support for my tenancy and getting a good rental history. For what feels like the first time in years, my dreams of having my family stay with me under one roof seems possible.

"Hopefully, now I've laid these foundations, I can get back on my feet."

# Supporting people during COVID-19

In the COVID-19 pandemic period, specialist homelessness services like ours received a boost to funding from the Victorian Government that assisted us to extend stays in emergency accommodation, provide funding for people to immediately access the private rental, and provide ongoing support to stay housed.

The funding for rental housing and support for people experiencing homelessness staying in temporary accommodation made a significant difference to the people currently staying in crisis accommodation in our catchment.

The funding package came as a relief to BeyondHousing, with our concerns about the long-term outcomes for people in crisis accommodation.

People we have been supporting to stay in caravan parks and motels were anxious about what comes after their stay ends, not having certainty they could remain in crisis accommodation as the pandemic continued and whilst we support them to find long-term housing.

This funding helped keep people in crisis accommodation, fund a much-needed level of wrap around support and provided a financial pathway into private rental for some households.

People who look for homes on the private rental market when they check out of crisis accommodation received assistance with bond and initial expenses from BeyondHousing's Private Rental Assistance Program, which gained extra funding from the Victorian Government.

## WHAT WE DID:

**\$172,958.33**

provided for homelessness assistance and support across our catchment during COVID-19 crisis. All paid to local hotels, motels and caravan parks.

Shepparton and Seymour	<b>\$75,211.34</b>
Wodonga	<b>\$56,424.03</b>
Wangaratta	<b>\$41,322.96</b>

Average of **\$356.62** spend per client during COVID-19 pandemic period (1 March 2020 to 30 Sept 2020)

	AVERAGE ASSIST	ASSISTS
Shepparton and Seymour	<b>\$390.87</b>	<b>192</b>
Wodonga	<b>\$373.67</b>	<b>151</b>
Wangaratta	<b>\$291.01</b>	<b>142</b>



**485**

households assisted with crisis accommodation during the pandemic



**2,495**

nights crisis accommodation provided during COVID-19 crisis period

## How does this compare to the pre-Coronavirus period?

- Average of \$236.62 spend per client in six months prior to pandemic period
- Additional funding enabled us to provide an extra \$120 spend per client during the COVID-19 pandemic period - a 33.6% average increase in crisis accommodation expenses.
- This allowed us to fund more suitable accommodation for each client – longer stays, self-contained rooms and access to accommodation providers with higher rates where there was availability or access issues, including being unable to refer clients across the NSW/VIC border.

# Peter's Story

Peter experienced homelessness for nearly 6 months, starting with the bushfires and through the peak of the coronavirus pandemic.

"On the 31st of December the fires hit Corryong and I had to evacuate so I jumped in my car and took off. I came down to as far as Killara and camped at the river for a few weeks then found out that I could go to the Showgrounds in Wodonga, where I lived in a tent for a good while then We got kicked out of the Showgrounds and then through BeyondHousing I finally got myself a unit.

"Life's awesome, things have got a whole lot better and life's good now. Before, it was a struggle, it was just fight or flight and I fought. I didn't have time to think about anything else – just surviving – and I was just fortunate enough to get in with the right people who set me on the right path."

Peter was referred to BeyondHousing's Private Rental Assistance Program (PRAP) by the Department of Health & Human Services.

PRAP worker Cazz supported Peter to find a private rental home. He has lived there for almost 6 months. This is the first time they have met face-to-face due to COVID-19 restrictions.

"We battled along and got a unit. I've got my security back now. Before, I didn't know where I was going to wake up, but just to know that you've got somewhere, a base, that you can go back to in the evenings and everybody needs that security.

"I got hope back again. I wasn't going to go anywhere without my dog and where I went my dog had to come. Cazz fought for that one too and got me a place with a good backyard. Dozer's happy and we keep each other going. I was there for him and he was there for me, every day."

Peter has struggled with PTSD and alcoholism. He had already sought help and was sober when the bushfires hit. Experiencing homelessness had a big impact on his mental health.

"You get really desperate but I didn't fall back to having a drink and relying on that to cover everything. You've just got to keep on going if you hit that brick wall – get back up and keep going because good things will happen if you're persistent. There comes a time where you do have to ask for help. It might seem like you're not a strong person if you've got to ask for help but there's times everybody has to ask for a bit of help.

"Knowing that there is someone out there or organisations like BeyondHousing that can help you is awesome. In this day and age, there just shouldn't be homeless people. There's awesome people out there everywhere, but you don't see that when you've got everything. It's when you've got nothing that you appreciate every little thing."



### Quiet Generosity

Thanks to the generosity of an anonymous donation by a local organisation, we were able to provide a greater level of support for people experiencing homelessness in the Shepparton region during the peak of the pandemic in April – July 2020.

**\$22,494.36** spent on crisis accommodation and support for homelessness

Additional **67** assists provided    Average of **\$335.74** per assist

## Housing Services: A resilient response to COVID-19

Our Housing Services team demonstrated their resilience, quickly pivoting work processes to ensure we could continue supporting our tenants through the crisis. An agile workforce enabled us to respond quickly to the changes and to continue delivering vital services to disadvantaged and vulnerable households, despite the social distancing challenges.

### Q Data Snapshot



**497**

Individuals/households rent our long-term housing



**30**

New Education First Youth Foyer tenancies



**1548**

Responsive maintenance requests attended to (Community Housing)



**176**

Tenants and their families moved from transitional housing to long-term housing.



**\$3,926,312**

Total rent charged to tenants

→ **1.1%**

Rent outstanding from current tenants as % of total rent charged



**97.1%**

Average Occupancy rate

### INCOME

The impact on rental revenue has been largely unaffected because most tenants' main income source was welfare benefits, which were unchanged. Less than 1% of our long-term community housing tenants reported loss of employment or reduced work hours, rents were adjusted for those that did. Longer-term effects will emerge if tenants currently on JobKeeper are unable to return to work or find a new job.

In line with government advice, we cancelled the March rent review, which was reflected across the community housing sector. This was aimed at allowing tenants to meet extra costs related to the COVID-19 lockdown period, such as buying cleaning products and food.

Vacancies remained low in both Transitional Housing Management and Long Term Community Housing, due restricted movement in the rental market.

### MAINTENANCE & INSPECTIONS

Inspections of all types were suspended unless there was an urgent need. Vacant inspections continued only after the property remaining vacant 72 hours.

As we were unable to do more than urgent maintenance and inspections, we connected with people in other ways - pivoting to conducting property inspections and welfare checks on video calls or other digital platforms.

New work practices and precautionary measures were implemented for maintenance services, including social distancing. We asked tenants screening questions to ensure compliance with COVID-19 restrictions and ensured tradespeople adhered to social distancing and sanitation requirements.

There was no negative feedback received from tenants regarding any of the measures put into place to avoid the spread of COVID-19.

## Jennifer's Story



"I am an Aboriginal woman, who had to leave another state because of domestic violence. I came to North East Victoria, and after problems with my housing got help from BeyondHousing's Indigenous Tenancies at Risk program."

Jennifer lived in a number of rental properties across North East Victoria.

She experienced ongoing issues with maintenance of the properties as well as negative behaviour and threats from neighbours.

"I ended up getting two letters put in my letterbox by neighbours to say that I'm not welcome to live there, that Aboriginals have their own accommodation and that I don't belong there. Then my backyard got demolished and all the plants got smashed up so I contacted BeyondHousing for some help to solve it. I was at breaking point. I was in tears all the time. I couldn't sleep or eat. So they put my name down for a BeyondHousing property within two months I got this property."

Jennifer has been in her new home for three months now, providing safety and privacy. She no longer fears what might happen if she leaves the house.

"I never left my unit unless my son was with me. I was feeling I was watched all the time and judged. Here I can sit outside, I have a backyard of my own. Here, I can go and catch a bus and go wherever, I don't need him to go shopping, to hold my hand. I'm actually free for the first time in eight years, I'm free."

Jennifer's life has been turned around since moving into her new home. She feels like a much happier person, a home has restored her dignity and confidence.

"Having a home is the most important thing. If you've not got somewhere that you feel safe and can call yours, you've got no point in living. Until I moved here, I didn't feel like I belonged anywhere and I thought "What's the point of being here?"

"Up until I moved here, I honestly thought that it was gonna end badly and I don't want other people to have to feel that.

"BeyondHousing is wonderful! If it wasn't for people like BeyondHousing, I don't know where we would be or what would have happened. I was suicidal. I don't know where I would have been. BeyondHousing saved my life."



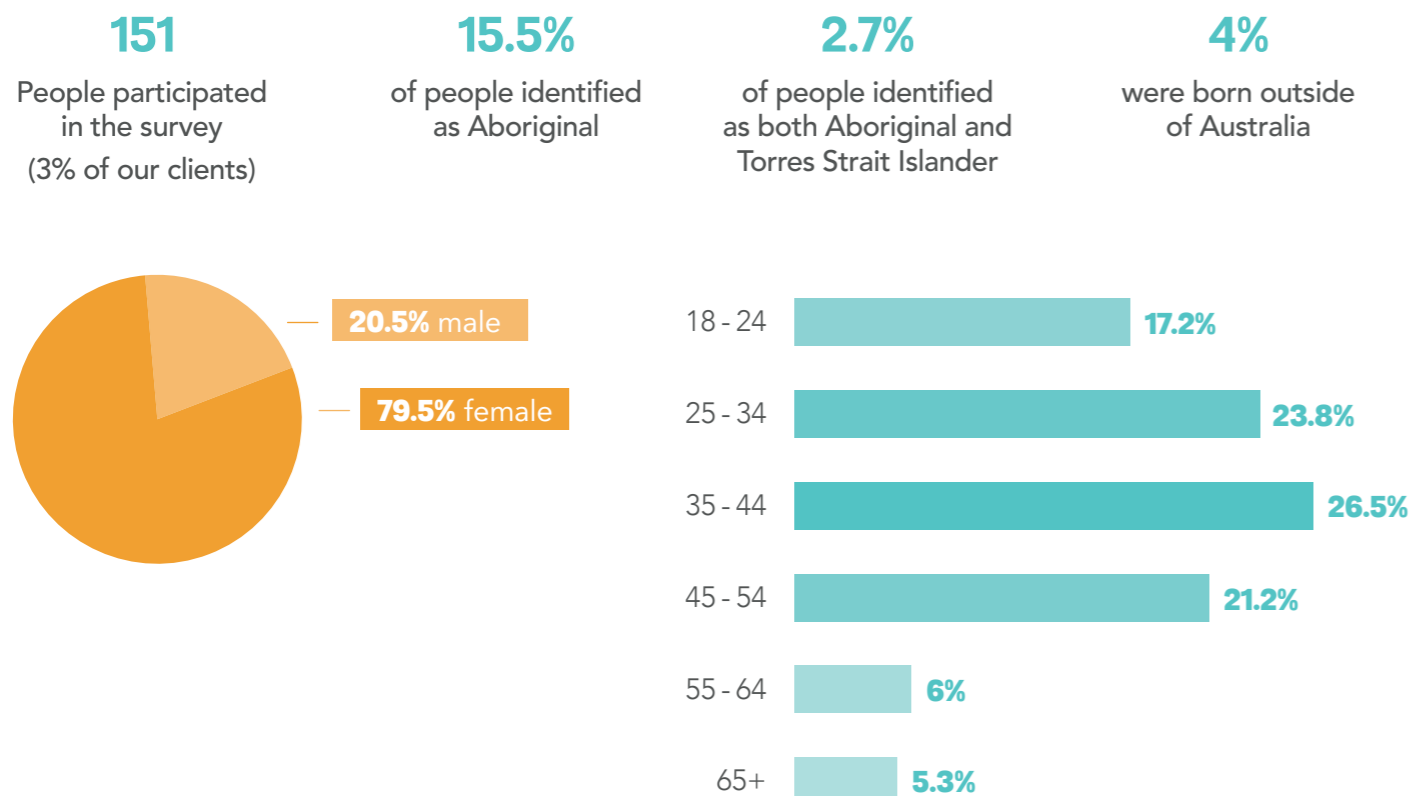
# Client Satisfaction Survey 2019

## What?

Client Satisfaction Surveys provide clients with an opportunity to share their experience with our service. This helps us to compare their expectations when engaging with BeyondHousing against the service we actually deliver.

I would just like to say how thankful I am for the help BeyondHousing gave me. I am now in permanent accommodation. Because of their help, my life and health has improved immensely.

## Who?



## Collaboration



**90.5%** of clients said that they were offered a referral to a support service



**98.1%** said that the service gave them the help they needed

## Highlights

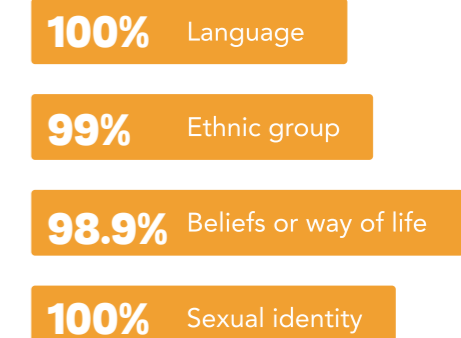
### Cultural Competence for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples



Artist: Kevin Atkinson, Moiradu Tribe, Bangerang Country

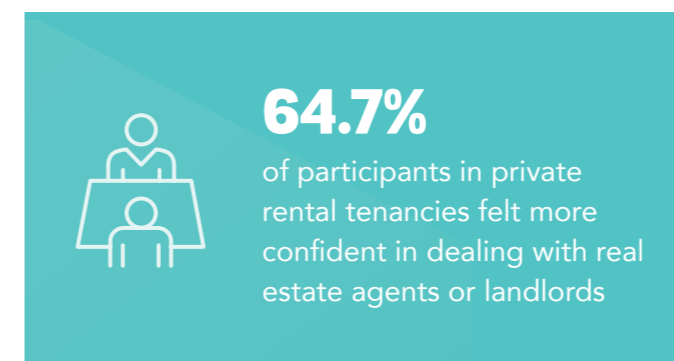
### Culture & Diversity

In responding to diversity, clients said that staff were respectful of their:



## Impact

After working with BeyondHousing:



## How can we improve?

- Use our Keeping Home program to help clients with information and training on how to present to real estate agents.
- Undertake Cultural Competency Training to help staff understand more about the different cultural/spiritual models we work from.



# Client's Focus Groups 2019

## What?

Client focus groups are held biennially and are designed for client input and feedback about targeted areas of our support and service. The 2019 client focus group theme was communication and culture.



I feel safe because staff allow our story to happen in parts, disclosing what is comfortable for us. Our story will be added to over time as we build trust.

## How can we improve?

- We will organise training for Client and Housing Services staff to improve engagement with young people and how to work with them in a personalised response
- We will undertake Cultural Competency Training
- We will achieve Rainbow Tick standards
- We will continue to engage all people within their own communities and environments
- We will join communities of practice
- We will improve appointment processes including how and when we ask questions. For example, ensuring we ask about culture and gender identity for every individual and ask Victim-survivors of family violence if they feel safe at every appointment
- We will continue to improve our communication for culturally and linguistically diverse people including on our website and printed material
- We will improve our office and reception environment to ensure it is welcoming, accessible and inclusive.

# Highlights:

## ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLES

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants conveyed their appreciation of BeyondHousing staff – an exceptional service.
- The Indigenous Tenants at Risk role in Shepparton is essential in assisting participants to connect with a mainstream service.
- How we ask questions: Ensuring that when we provide information about Aboriginal Housing Victoria (AHV), that we state why proof of Aboriginality is needed and this proof is not for us but AHV

## WHO?

- 44 Clients participated across 4 sites
- The clients who participated were selected due to the increase in the numbers of their cohorts presenting to our client services. Their participation was an opportunity to have a say about issues and decisions that affect them, and to ensure our programs and services will better reflect their specific needs:
  - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
  - Culturally and Linguistically Diverse people
  - Victim-survivors of Family Violence
  - LGBTIQ+ community
  - People with a mental health condition
  - Young People
  - Generalist

## LGBTIQ+ COMMUNITY

- BeyondHousing needs to be seen at local LGBTIQ+ events – supporting the community. The community rely heavily on word of mouth and will build trust with BeyondHousing as we are seen more regularly supporting local events
- The importance of gender diverse training and removing gendered language from our communication and documentation
- Using imagery to connect the community with BeyondHousing, ensuring representation of gender diversity in our communication.

## CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE – ARABIC COMMUNITY

- The Arabic community is the largest CALD community seeking assistance from BeyondHousing, however according to 2019-2020 program data, ranks as 0.6% of total clients presenting to Client Services.
- The Arabic community were happy with the services that BeyondHousing provide. At times, the community struggles with the difference between BeyondHousing and 'Department of Housing' (now Health and Human Services), so the difference between services must be incorporated into information available to the community.
- Participants appreciated the BeyondHousing Arabic brochures, as for many, this is the only way they can understand our information.
- Participants were excited to hear that our new website would allow for translation on all website pages

## FAMILY VIOLENCE

- Victim-survivors of family violence expressed their appreciation of an exceptional service by BeyondHousing staff
- Having a family violence support worker, to attend BeyondHousing appointments and advocate for them, made Victim-survivors feel safe and reduced the amount of time they had to retell their story)
- Victim-survivors encouraged BeyondHousing staff to ask if they are safe at every appointment

## YOUNG PEOPLE

- Collaboration between BeyondHousing and youth homelessness support services, is key to ensuring young people can navigate the homelessness sector.
- There were mixed responses from young people in sub-regions. Most young people were extremely satisfied with BeyondHousing's service response. Some young people felt that BeyondHousing could improve it's understanding of young people and their needs.

# Providing sustainable, mobile support through technology

BeyondHousing supports an increasing number of clients each year and has seen a rise in the complexity of support required. The increasing administrative requirements of our work has the potential to impact on the amount of time we spend with people, delivering services and support.

With less available face-to-face time in client appointments and additional environmental impacts from increased paper usage and gray data, we wanted to improve our work practices.

So, we developed and implemented digital forms coupled with touchscreen technology to revolutionise client interaction. The project streamlined client forms with real time analytics built in via business intelligence. The innovative packages enable our client services team to support clients in inclusive, safe and accessible ways.

All change management, training and support was provided internally.

Whilst this was initiated prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, it meant we were ready and able to deliver uninterrupted, responsive client services during a crisis that changed from face-to-face services in an office environment to a digital and telephone service provision.

## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

 **85%**

reduction in client services worker administration times.

 **33%**

more time spent with clients in appointments due to less worker administration time.

 **100%**


of appointments can be completed outside of the office or in-person, giving clients increased accessibility, and ensuring seamless client support during COVID-19 crisis.

 **15**

pages of paper saved at each initial appointment

 **50.85%**

reduction in actual paper printouts in 2019/20 (pre COVID-19) compared to 2018/19.

 Expanded document security and protection of privacy.



## Resilient systems and networks

In 2019-20 we continued to upgrade our systems and technologies to ensure our organisation is more robust and resilient, and future ready.

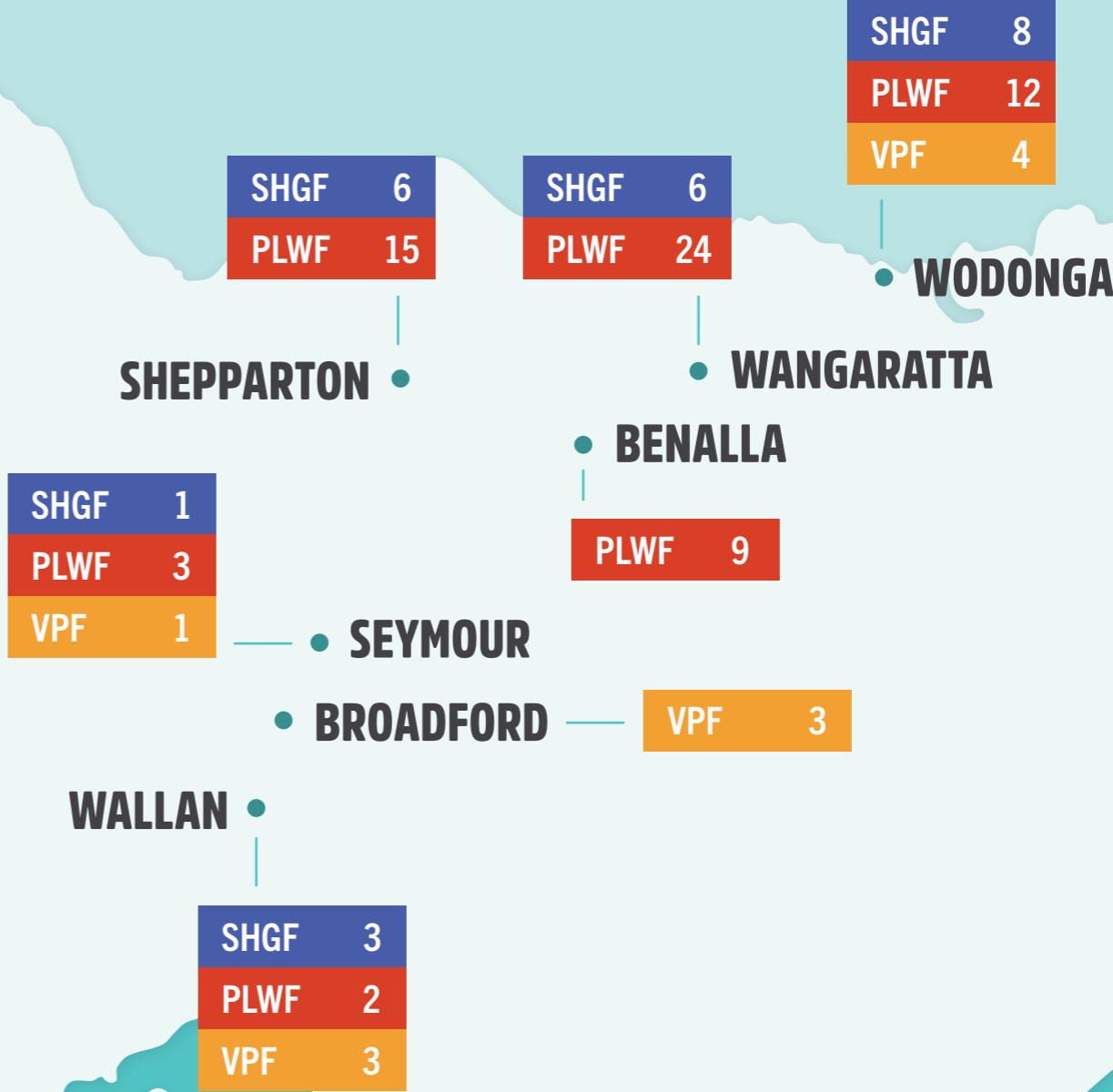
### ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Email system migrated to Office 365 on cloud based Azure platform
- Complete elimination of the outdated Citrix environment
- All BeyondHousing sites have had infrastructure installed to allow for the fastest available NBN connections
- Optus service for all landlines plus new office phone system with dedicated fixed NBN
- Dedicated phone & network NBN 4G fail safe
- Automatic 4G internet supply for NBN connections across the network
- Complete upgrade of server to Server 2019
- Commenced BeyondHousing cloud-based platforms - Board Portal and Debit Card Portal
- Shepparton Education First Youth Foyer migrated to BeyondHousing network
- System penetration testing - network vulnerability testing, multi factor authentication implemented
- Upgrade to the existing Housing system to allow for mobile operations

# Building Resilient Communities

## New homes completed, approved or under construction

AT 30 JUNE 2020



- SOCIAL HOUSING GROWTH FUND (SHGF)
- PETER & LYNDY WHITE FOUNDATION (PLWF)
- VICTORIAN PROPERTY FUND (VPF)



100 new homes are currently being planned, have been completed or are under construction at 30 June 2020, with funding from the Peter & Lyndy White Foundation, the Victorian Government's Social Housing Growth Fund or Victorian Property Fund.

### VPF MITCHELL SHIRE SOCIAL HOUSING PROJECT

Five of seven new homes in Seymour, Wallan and Broadford have been completed as part of a \$3.1 million partnership between BeyondHousing, the Victorian Property Fund and Mitchell Shire Council. The remaining two properties will be completed by June 2021.

Mitchell Shire is already experiencing rapid population growth, with further extreme population growth forecast - increasing 190.32% from 2018 to 2041. With housing and homelessness client rates 8.42% greater than metropolitan Melbourne, the delivery of new social housing in Mitchell Shire will ensure rates do not worsen in future.

The homes in Wallan and Broadford were constructed by Sessions Builders, the home in Seymour was constructed by Metricon.

As a business employing many people locally and building locally, we are acutely aware of the challenges faced by many disadvantaged individuals and families in the region; increasing rental costs, the rising cost of living and the knowledge that for many, a single event can topple an otherwise stable household.

Metricon is thrilled to work in partnership with BeyondHousing to increase the supply of social and affordable housing in an efficient and cost-effective manner, reducing the discrepancy between the number of homes and those who need them.

- TANIA TONKS,  
MANAGER REGIONAL NORTH,  
METRICON

### VPF 8-STAR HOMES PROJECT

Two properties completed as part of a project to construct 8-star energy rated homes, have welcomed new tenants. The homes were made possible by funding secured from the Victorian Property Fund, to construct four two- and three-bedroom properties in Wodonga. The final two properties will be completed at the end of 2020.

Each of the properties will meet an 8-star energy rating, a first for any social housing property in the Ovens Murray and Goulburn regions.

It is our goal to increase the amount of affordable housing properties that also address energy poverty. Our aim is to provide homes that are not only affordable to rent, but are affordable to live in.

One of the important ways we can do this is by reducing energy costs as we know the cost of heating and cooling a home has a significant impact on the household budget. The funding we have received from the Victorian Property Fund has allowed us to build properties that significantly reduce energy bills for our tenants.

Alatalo Bros have been working with BeyondHousing in the North East Victorian region for the past three years. We have enjoyed planning, designing and building these developments with BeyondHousing. They have the best interests of their tenants in mind.

They want practical, high quality, efficient homes for people to live in and want their tenants to be comfortable and safe at home. It is great to be involved in projects that help people have a roof over their head no matter what circumstances they are in.

- MICHELLE BROWN, ALATALO BROS



## PETER & LYNDY WHITE FOUNDATION SINGLES UNITS PROJECT

Four one-bedroom properties in Shepparton are now completed, as part of our \$2.7 million singles project with the Peter & Lyndy White Foundation, which will deliver a total of eleven affordable one-bedroom homes in Shepparton, Wangaratta and Seymour.

Eight one-bedroom properties have been completed so far, with the remaining three currently under construction.

One-bedroom units help address a shortfall in affordable and appropriate housing for single people. In 2019-20, half of the 3,331 households experiencing or at risk of homelessness supported by BeyondHousing were single people, on low incomes.

Sessions Builders constructed the Shepparton units.



Sessions Builders and its employees have been able to gather a further understanding of the needs of people who require social housing, and the circumstances in which they find themselves.

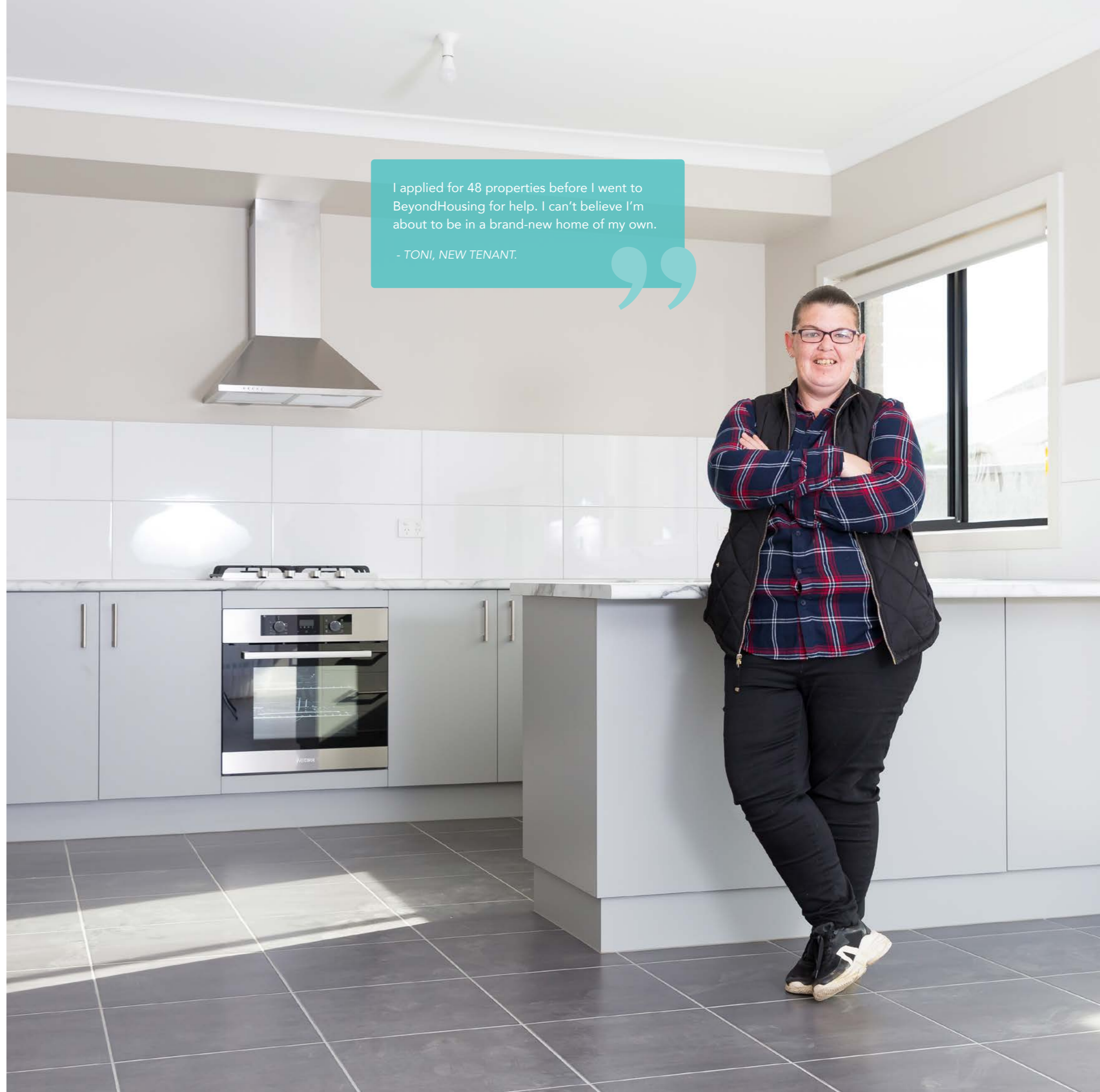
We pride ourselves in delivering quality workmanship, and this has presented a special opportunity in designing homes to suit specific blocks, as well as specific housing needs.

The contribution we are making to our local community and to reducing homelessness here in Shepparton is something that we have taken great pride in.

- TIM SESSIONS,  
DIRECTOR SESSIONS BUILDERS

I applied for 48 properties before I went to BeyondHousing for help. I can't believe I'm about to be in a brand-new home of my own.

- TONI, NEW TENANT.



# Benalla Solar Homes

We have always said that our community housing properties should be affordable to rent as well as live in. This year we installed solar power systems in fifteen BeyondHousing properties in Benalla to help social housing tenants in the fight against rising energy costs.

The project was delivered with assistance from the Victorian Government, through Solar Victoria's rebate scheme for community housing providers, which provides a rebate for the installation of solar panel (PV) systems.

Installing solar panels is an important step in reducing living costs for our tenants whilst also contributing towards a reduction in our organisation's carbon footprint. In 2019 Benalla had one of the highest rates of electricity disconnection in Victoria. We worked with local company Solargain Wangaratta, who are a Clean Energy Council (CEC) approved solar installer.

"Installing solar PV ticked a lot of boxes for us in terms of our strategic plan to increase our sustainable use of resources and to reduce costs for our tenants who are vulnerable to rising costs of living," said Leisa Makszin, Housing Services Manager.

"So, this is a great way to bring down their costs, provide tenants resources that give them resilience against the effects of climate change and reduce our carbon footprint.

"Good, regular communication with tenants was really vital. We talked to them about the solar installation and what it meant for them. The tenants were all on board and excited.

"There has been such great feedback from tenants about the professionalism of everyone working on the project and many saying how thankful they are that BeyondHousing cares about their financial wellbeing beyond just a roof over their heads."

David's home was fitted with the Solar PV system.

"It is great not having to worry so much about energy bills now, which have always stayed high even in winter because I've got both electric heating and cooling.

"To know I am going to have some relief from high energy bills and to also have a more energy efficient but still comfortable home is a really great feeling.

"Having more room in my budget to spend on basic things like healthcare and food is very welcome.

"BeyondHousing saved me when the home I had lived in for over 10 years was sold and I couldn't find anywhere else to live despite having a great rental history and good references. I already feel so lucky to have a home of my own that I know I can stay in for life but that they have gone a step further and helped ease the pressure of big bills is just incredible.

"I'm really grateful for BeyondHousing taking the initiative to do this for me and the other tenants here in Benalla."



“ I already feel so lucky to have a home of my own that I know I can stay in for life, but that they have gone a step further and helped ease the pressure of big bills is just incredible.

# Wattletree Grove Benalla



Architecture & Access' promotion of a co-design and client-centered design philosophy fitted well with BeyondHousing and Yooralla's customer focused approach.

This resulted in two homes with very happy residents, homes that the residents can share with their families and friends and are the bricks and mortar to build a community.

- CLAIRE OLIVER, ARCHITECTURE AND ACCESS

## Snapshot

We invested over \$1.7 million of our own funds to build Wattletree Grove

We worked with the six residents to co-design their home

Built to meet the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Specialist Disability Accommodation standards

The project was initiated in 2014, construction was completed in December 2019. Residents moved in during February 2020.



Wattletree Grove is our new purpose-built accessible home for people with disability in Benalla. Keeping strong friendships together was important when designing and building Wattletree Grove, with the six residents moving together from another residential site in Benalla.

We are pleased to partner with Yooralla, which provides support to residents.

The 'dream home' was envisioned and co-designed by residents in consultation with Architecture and Access and made real by our \$1.7 million investment. This home provides residents with dignity, opportunity, and independence, and as one of the tenants was quick to point out – the space to play AC/DC very loudly without upsetting others.

The residents were involved in the decision-making process from the very beginning, and provided input on design, layout, colour scheme and amenities for their own rooms and for the entire home.

The progressive building design includes six personalised rooms, spacious shared living spaces, tailored outdoor areas, and individualised technological supports in two independent living townhouses. Consideration has been given to environmental and financial sustainability of the property through solar power systems, low-water gardens, water tanks and passive solar design.





# Safe Places, supported spaces.

BeyondHousing will partner with family violence specialist services to construct three crisis accommodation facilities in the Mitchell Shire, Goulburn Valley and North East regions of Victoria for women and children fleeing family violence.

BeyondHousing is the recipient of three of seven grants awarded in Victoria as part of the Federal Government's \$60 million 'Safe Places Emergency Accommodation' program to keep women and children safe from family violence across the nation. We received a total grant of \$1.17 million towards construction costs.

This significant project will offer short-term accommodation in fully furnished one- and two-bedroom units. Existing family violence refuges across the catchment are constantly utilised, leaving the increasing number of victim survivors in crisis to access often unavailable or inappropriate caravan parks, motels and serviced apartments.

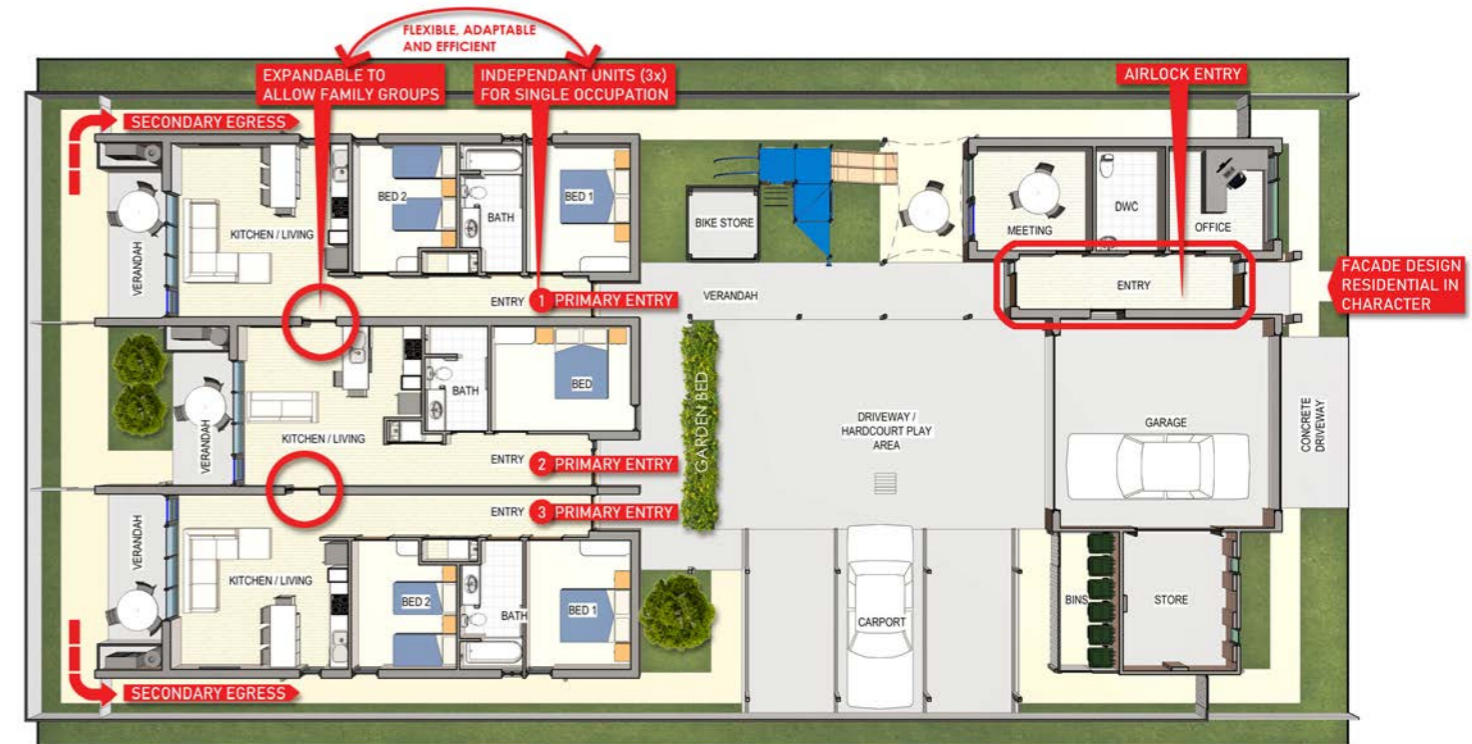
Safe Places provides immediate housing safety for women and children impacted by family violence, enabling access to ongoing supports, and planning for long term housing. This will be an essential resource for people in our community and helps the organisations involved to address one of the most pressing challenges facing our society by not only offering safe, short term housing but providing access to appropriate and specialist support.

Safe Places accommodation will house an estimated 135 families per year across the catchment, depending on each family's specific circumstances and needs.



Together, our pooled skills and resources will provide a service response that is a first of its kind across our catchment. This project highlights the importance of fostering opportunities for women and children to make their own decisions in a secure and supported environment

- CELIA ADAMS CEO



## Snapshot

### MITCHELL SHIRE

Family Violence Specialist Partners – NEXUS Primary Health & VincentCare

**13.4%**

of clients told us they were experiencing Family Violence when presenting to our homelessness services in 2019/20.

▲ 1.5% increase on 2018/19

Incident rates for family violence in the Mitchell Shire are up to 2.3 times the state average

### GOULBURN VALLEY

Family Violence Specialist Partner: VincentCare

**13.5%**

of clients told us they were experiencing Family Violence when presenting to our homelessness services in 2019/20

The incident rates for family violence in the Goulburn Valley region are the eighth highest in Victoria, and twice the state average.

### NORTH EAST

Family Violence Specialist Partner: Centre Against Violence

**20.4%**

of clients told us they were experiencing Family Violence when presenting to our homelessness services in 2019/20

The incident rates for family violence in the North East are up to 1.64 times the state average

Over a tight timeframe with effective communication with stakeholders, we have collectively resolved a template for adaptable housing that can be applied to multiple sites, satisfying the short to long-term needs of those seeking a safe place.

We hope our staff and their families never need to access such a service, but we feel safer in the knowledge that we can assist BeyondHousing in delivering such projects with some considered thought for accommodation requirements and design integrity.

- LEIGH RIZZATO, JWP ARCHITECTS

# Resilience Building



## PLWF Partnership

Up to 45 homes will be built and up to 100 people will have new safe, secure and affordable homes to live in each year, after a significant philanthropic investment in social housing construction was secured by BeyondHousing in November 2019.

We welcome the commitment by the Peter and Lyndy White Foundation to a long-term 10-million-dollar annual partnership that provides certainty in the supply of new community housing for vulnerable regional Victorians.

We are proud of the positive social impact this partnership will have for low income and disadvantaged regional Victorians and the communities we support. Everybody deserves a home, and we are a big step closer to achieving this in the Goulburn and Ovens Murray regions.

We know that we cannot solve homelessness alone, this partnership with the Peter and Lyndy White Foundation is a huge boost in our capacity to develop social housing for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness in our region. This is an investment in social impact.

The funding commitment from the Peter and Lyndy White Foundation will give hundreds of people access to safe, secure and affordable housing, and provide an opportunity to thrive. This will change many lives and nurture the general wellbeing of whole communities.

Our challenge is to deliver affordable housing swiftly and efficiently, however working with local builders means we can not only deliver quality, tailored homes, but also generate economic prosperity in our communities.

Despite the challenges faced by our building partners and related services in the construction industry due to COVID-19 crisis restrictions and the impact of lock-down periods, we have pushed ahead with more than nine sites in the 2019-20 financial year.

Being the beneficiary of this grant will allow BeyondHousing to take substantial action to respond to homelessness.

We know this will provide life changing benefits for our community.

- CELIA ADAMS, CEO



ESTIMATED TOTAL:  
**\$10,478,941**



AVERAGE COST PER UNIT:  
**\$238,157.74**

With the number of single person and smaller family households consistently representing more than half of the 3,331 households supported by BeyondHousing's homelessness services, the focus of the funding will be on the construction of one- and two-bedroom homes, including medium density developments.

We know that housebuilding is also a sure-fire way to promote growth - getting and keeping people into work while providing badly needed homes for low income households. Construction of community housing across our region at this scale will provide a boost the construction industry and support the growing number of regional Victorians at risk of homelessness, particularly in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic.

Since its inception in 2006, the Peter and Lyndy White Foundation has sought to enhance the quality of life of Victoria's disadvantaged and vulnerable community members, in particular, the homeless, supporting them in making positive long-term changes in their lives.

BeyondHousing is grateful for the generous support offered by the Peter and Lyndy White Foundation and looks forward to an ongoing relationship to achieve more for people who are homeless or at risk.



Our Foundation has shifted its focus to be solely on the provision of social housing. Having undertaken some smaller projects with BeyondHousing we proceeded into further discussions about how we may partner in the future to achieve positive social outcomes. We are confident that they can deliver the scale of projects we were undertaking and understood the positive benefits the projects would provide to both the rural community and the local economy.

Ultimately, we hope to have people in safe and secure housing, something all Australians deserve. We hope that our collaboration with BeyondHousing will inspire other philanthropic organisations to undertake committed and long-term relationships with not for profits.

We believe there is a stigma around homelessness and if this year has taught us anything, it is that homelessness can affect people from all walks of life. We believe that in a country as wealthy as Australia, all people should have access to safe and affordable housing

- PETER WHITE, DIRECTOR PETER & LYNDY WHITE FOUNDATION

# Capable & Connected People

## Our People

At BeyondHousing our team is empowered, engaged, accountable and acknowledged for their contribution to our goals. This has been central to the successful delivery of our programs and services in a crisis period that changed the way we worked.

We transitioned staff to work from home during COVID-19 lockdowns and ensured staff who remained in the office could continue to work safely through a variety of physical distancing measures.

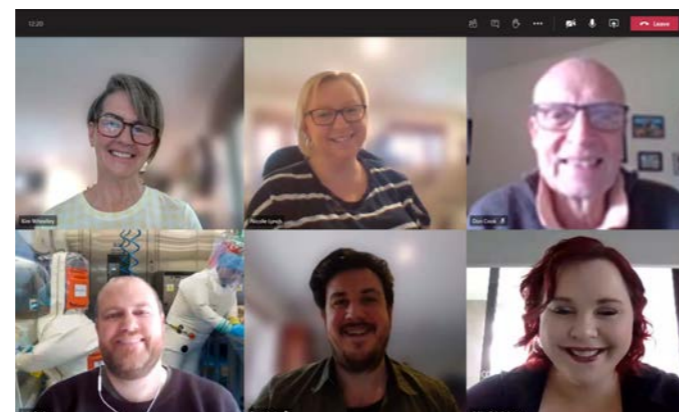
Our working arrangements when the COVID-19 pandemic started demonstrated we are a very adaptable and flexible organisation – both as a staffing group and in our systems and processes.

Since working remotely kicked off, we've been completing regular short 3 minute surveys with staff to seek feedback and find out how everyone is going, whether working from home or for those who needed to continue working from an office as required by their role.

During the early stages of the pandemic, a working from home plan was initiated, which included purchase of ICT devices to ensure staff were able to operate from home comfortably and in line with BeyondHousing's WHS policy.

The pandemic has demonstrated that BeyondHousing's ICT infrastructure has achieved its ambition of being an agile and mobile network. Staff continue to be provided with the essential business and communication tools to continue to provide a quality strategic and operational service.

Staff have received regular wellbeing updates and reminders as well as reminders about OHS and ergonomics when working from home and have been encouraged to utilise EAP for themselves and their families – particularly if experiencing significant changes during COVID-19.



## What we have learnt from COVID-19:

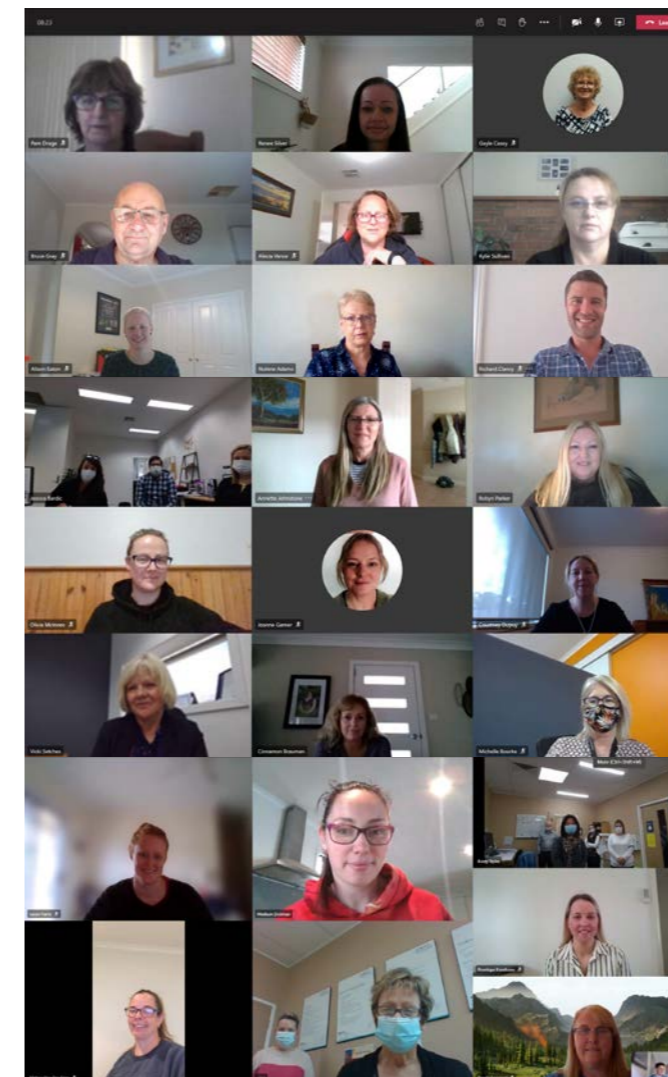
Staff felt well supported by the organisation during the transition to working remotely. The team can adapt quickly to new ways of working and new technologies.

There is a mixture of staff who like working remotely and those who are keen to get back to the office on a permanent basis. It has highlighted the need for us to consider more flexible ways of delivering our service to clients and tenants when things get back to 'normal'.

For a small number of staff whose roles were quieter, they were able to be redeployed and were keen to help their busier colleagues. Staff felt positive about internal communication during the change. Communication was viewed to be consistent, timely, helpful, and reliable, telling them exactly what they needed to know.

We've regularly checked in with others to make sure they're ok. This hasn't been left to team leaders or managers - colleagues have been great at looking out for each other and collaborating whilst working further apart. Staff have been proactive in trying to stay connected socially in a virtual way, playing trivia, celebrating birthdays, and having virtual morning teas to welcome new staff members.

We have the right processes and support in place to support our team experiencing feelings of isolation and psychological stress.



## DATA SNAPSHOT

### Staff satisfaction survey

**100%** staff satisfaction with BeyondHousing as an employer (target 80%)

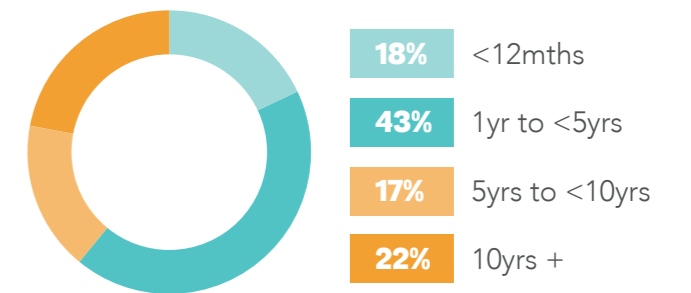
**98%** said that BeyondHousing places a high priority on the learning and development of its staff

We provide a safe working environment  
– **100% positive**

We encourage and supports employee wellbeing and good work/life balance  
– **100% positive**

**98%** of staff would recommend BeyondHousing as a good place to work

### Length of staff tenure as at end of FY



### Turnover

All staff turnover = **14.50%**

Number of staff at end of FY = **57.93 (FTE), 65 (headcount)**

Growth in staff numbers (headcount) = **4.8%**

### 2019 10,000 Steps Challenge (October - November 2019)

Total steps walked over 6wks  
= **21,177,607**

Equivalent to **16,137 Kms**

Average total kms walked per person = **343kms**

**279**  
individual training courses completed

**161**  
online training courses and internal training sessions during COVID-19 working from home period

# Keeping Home

Keeping Home is our early intervention initiative to address tenancy risk due to rent arrears or property issues, common drivers of recurring homelessness. This year more than 55% of clients in the Ovens Murray region had received previous support for housing. Of these, more than 1-in-3 experienced a repeated risk of losing their tenancies.

The goal of the program is to empower people with skills and knowledge to manage their finances so they can sustain their housing. The program transforms a participant's capacity to manage a tenancy on a low income by focusing on budgeting, financial resilience, understanding tenancy rights and responsibilities and life-skills.

We support people to build competency in the skill sets that will give them a competitive advantage when applying for private rental properties and liaising with their landlords.

Keeping Home has a particular focus on young people leaving care, prisoners, victim-survivors fleeing family violence, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities.

The program is offered in secondary schools to give young people skills and knowledge for independent living when they rent a property of their own.

"This is a valuable rural and regional initiative to support vulnerable Victorians to become empowered to manage their own financial and housing needs and avoid homelessness."

Lin Bender AM,  
Chief Executive of the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust



Helen Macpherson Smith Trust


## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Number of participants:

One on One Training **50** participants

Group Training **33** participants

**81.25%**  
retention rate

 Tenancy and Financial skills competency overall rating:

Participants were asked how they felt about their financial, tenancy and housing knowledge and confidence dealing with landlords and finding community support, prior to commencing the program and then again at completion of modules.

START **2.7 out of 5**



END **4.45 out of 5**



 Keeping Home is progressive, gets ahead of the problems and dedicates time for individuals to directly address housing skills. The multiple learning formats means no-one in rural and regional communities misses out, they can participate in a way that best suits them.

- PIP ELSE, KEEPING HOME COORDINATOR.

# Tracy's Story

"I was referred to Keeping Home during the COVID-19 pandemic and did my sessions over Facetime. I enjoyed doing the course from the luxury of my own home.

"I found out so much stuff that I didn't know and that people don't tell you, particularly about what other financial support is available for people on a low income that can really help with your budget.

"I found having your tenancy rights and responsibilities broken down, so you better understood to be a real benefit. Also actually having the tools and resources provided to you to make a more formal budget has made such a difference too.

"I'm still working towards where I want to be with my budget and savings goals, but I feel more confident that all of the big costs like rent, bills and food, my basic costs of living, are going to be met without stressing where I am going to find the money on a low income, and particularly as the Coronavirus Supplement is reduced and we go back to a rate that is really challenging to live on.

"Im proud of myself for completing the program, I ended up really enjoying it and I think anyone on a low income would find it really valuable.

"My trainer was really easy to learn from, it was a pleasure to talk with her every week and I love that I got to keep the manual afterwards as a resource so I can keep going over it, particularly the things I had highlighted that felt important for now and to look at again if I need it down the track."

Tracy – Keeping Home participant



# Advocacy

## Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into Homelessness

The persistent and continued growth of homelessness is unacceptable. But it is eminently solvable and preventable, given the right policies, programs, and the political and community leadership to make this happen.

In our role advocating for people experiencing homelessness in our catchment, we made a submission to the Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into Homelessness. Our submission centred on evidence and experience of what works and where further investment and improvement is needed.

### Our Submission

There is an urgent need to invest in social housing – Victoria has the lowest level of social housing stock in Australia (3.5%). We cannot end homelessness without more homes.

The current resourcing of the sector, both support and housing outputs, will never meet demand. Thirteen weeks for a support period is an arbitrary amount of time, and limits flexibility and service tailoring. Clients are presenting with more complex issues and all services need to be resourced to respond to that.

An improved response for crisis accommodation is required urgently – purchasing beds from sub-standard private motels and caravan parks with poor amenities is unsafe, expensive, and further traumatises very vulnerable families and individuals.

There needs to be an examination of social policies that impact on homelessness – namely those relating to poverty. The current rates of welfare payments and a failure to increase rent assistance in line with rental affordability does not enable people to have a decent standard of living. Greater recognition that policies around mental health, family violence, alcohol and other drugs all have an impact on homelessness.

Continued and greater assistance is needed for people to sustain a tenancy – be it private or public – and prevent the spiral into homelessness.



### What is working:


**Early intervention through Education** – programs like Keeping Home, an education program developed by BeyondHousing targets people at risk of homelessness or who have recently left the system, focusing on building capacity to manage a tenancy on their own.

**Private Rental Support** – The Private Rental Access Program is resourced appropriately and is giving people an opportunity to access secure private rental. The Sustaining Tenancies at Risk program is consistently keeping people housed and preventing them from entering the homelessness systems.

**Tailored Housing options** – housing projects based on our demand data, which indicates more than half the people we see are single. We are building small, manageable units across our region. The involvement of philanthropic and private sector is boosting capacity, but still relies on the ability of Housing Associations to contribute their own capital

### Communications and Marketing

 **1,830,300+**  
households reached through the media

 **141**  
mentions in print and broadcast

 **308**  
new followers on social media

 **148,600+**  
people reached through social media

 **26,500+**  
website visitors

### Our Recommendations

**Social Housing:** Construction of new long-term housing and increase the supply of social housing including Housing First and supportive housing models for tenants needing ongoing support to maintain a safe tenancy. It is cheaper than treating homelessness after it occurs. It is the correct economic and social course to pursue.

**Crisis Accommodation:** Funding for trialling a dispersed model that is tailored to regional areas. We want to develop a model that gives households time and space to consider housing options, that is safe, that is supported and reduces the trauma people experience in this highly stressful time.

**Funding:** Flexible and increased funding for support so all people who need assistance, get it in a timely manner.

**Early intervention:** Greater funding for educational programs around tenancy and financial skills, particularly at schools and with emerging communities.

**Data Collection:** More consistent approach to data entry across the state, to help better understand homelessness, its impact on the community and the social impact of specialist homelessness services. Current data systems don't always show the narrative.

**End Poverty:** A focus from all levels of government on poverty. Unless we talk about, and put resourcing into reducing poverty, homelessness will continue to be an insurmountable problem.

**Youth Foyers:** Expand the provision of Education First Youth Foyers to provide proven pathways to vulnerable young people back into education and employment as a basis for a rich and productive life.

# Partnerships

We cannot end homelessness alone. But we can work toward that purpose thanks to the generous support of those who share our values and vision: the Commonwealth, Victorian and Local Governments, our generous and engaged donors, and the partnerships with many businesses and community organisations that continue to support our work.

BeyondHousing has maintained strong partnerships with a range of organisations and would like to thank:

## Philanthropic Funding Partners

- Peter & Lyndy White Foundation
- Helen Macpherson Smith Trust

## Victoria State Government

- Department of Health & Human Services – Social Housing Growth Fund
- Department of Treasury & Finance – Housing Registrar
- Department of Justice & Community Safety – Consumer Affairs Victoria: Victorian Property Fund

## Australian Government

- Department of Social Services

## Local Government

- Wodonga City Council
- Wangaratta City Council
- Mitchell Shire Council
- Greater Shepparton City Council
- Benalla Rural City Council

## Workplace Giving Partners

- North East Water management and staff

## Project Service Partners

- Yooralla
- Centre Against Violence
- VincentCare Marian Community
- NEXUS Primary Health

## Builders and Architects

- Alatalo Bros
- Architecture and Access
- BY Projects Architecture
- Diverse Builders
- JWP Architects
- Metricon
- Sessions Builders
- Shearer Constructions



# Finance & Governance

## Concise Financial Report

For the year ended 30 June 2020

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### Directors Declaration

Your directors present the financial statements of the Rural Housing Network Limited ('the Company') for the year ended 30 June 2020.

### Directors

The following persons were directors of Rural Housing Network Limited during the whole of the financial year and up to the date of this report unless otherwise stated:

Susanne Paini

Teigan O'Grady (Resigned November 2019)

Ronni Druitt (Appointed September 2019)

Ben Ruscoe (Appointed April 2020)

Owen Webb (Resigned March 2020)

Cade Gow

Darran Stonehouse (Resigned May 2020)

Neil Funston

Alan Arthur (Appointed November 2019)

Ann Telford (Resigned August 2019, reappointed January 2020)

### Company secretary

Owen Webb acted as Company Secretary up until 27 November 2019. Ronni Druitt was appointed as Company Secretary from 27 November 2019.

### Principal activities

The principal activity of the entity during the financial year was:

To provide housing support services to disadvantaged households; broadly grouped into the following areas: Transitional Housing Services, Long Term Housing Services and Rental Housing Support Services.

No significant changes in the nature of the entity's activity occurred during the financial year.

### Objectives

Rural Housing Network Limited's objective is for all people to have safe, secure, affordable and appropriate housing. Rural Housing Network Limited is committed to ending homelessness. Our aim is to provide the full range of quality housing and homelessness services by working in partnership with Government, business, communities and individuals.

### Strategies

Rural Housing Network Limited's strategies to achieve these objectives are -

1. To deliver services to our clients in ways that represent our values, promote the rights of people and ensure the best possible housing outcomes; prioritising for the most vulnerable in our communities. We are committed to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander self-determination and culturally competent practice. As such, we will seek guidance from Aboriginal peoples and consult with Aboriginal services to deliver culturally appropriate services.
2. To provide leadership, advocacy, and influence on the issues of homelessness and affordable housing within our catchment and beyond.
3. To be a values-based organisation, with a positive team culture that promotes safety and well-being; and supports each other in the pursuit of achieving our vision to end homelessness
4. To use evidence of demand to grow, recognising that it requires the courage to take some considered risks and the resources to develop concepts that, when tested, may not proceed.
5. To have robust systems that enhance the experience for all stakeholders, drive strategic improvements and provide for an objective basis for decision-making and accountability.
6. To minimise our environmental impact through the adoption of financially viable initiatives to improve resource efficiency, reduce waste generation and reduce the consumption of natural resources.

## KPI's

Rural Housing Network Limited monitors its financial performance by setting targets for some key financial benchmarks. Performance against these indicators for the financial year ending 30 June 2020 and prior year are set out in the Table below.

Performance Indicator	2020		2019	
	Actual	Benchmark	Actual	Benchmark
Earnings (excluding Capital Grants) before Interest Expense, Tax, Depreciation & Amortization (EBITDA) to Interest Expense, 'Interest Cover'	5.83 Times	1.35 Times	4.69 Times	1.35 Times
EBITDA as percentage of Operating Revenues	16.85%	> 15%	14.11%	> 15%
Net Assets as percentage of Total Assets	80.8%	> 75%	81.3%	> 75%
Current Assets to Current Liabilities	0.70 to 1.00	1.00 to 1.00	1.20 to 1.00	1.00 to 1.00
Total Borrowings to Total Equity	13.5%	<15%	14.2%	<15%

## Information on directors

### Neil Funston

Director since 30/08/2017

Responsibilities:

- Finance & Audit Committee
- People & Culture Committee

Occupation – Small Business Owner

### Susanne Paine

Director since 5/11/2008

Responsibilities:

- Chairperson from 30/11/2017
- Risk & Governance Committee
- People & Culture Committee

Occupation – Retired

### Ronni Druitt

Director since 25/09/2019

Responsibilities:

- Secretary from 27/11/19
- Risk & Governance Committee

Occupation – Chief Executive Officer

### Ann Telford

Director since 24/02/2017. Resigned 15/08/19

Reappointed 22/02/2020

Responsibilities:

- People & Culture Committee

Occupation – Executive Manager

### Darran Stonehouse

Director since 31/10/2012. Resigned 27/05/2020

Responsibilities:

- Risk & Governance Committee

Occupation – Lecturer

### Teigan O'Grady

Director since 31/10/2018. Resigned 27/11/2019

Responsibilities:

- Risk & Governance Committee
- Finance and Audit Committee

Occupation – Manager Governance and Risk

### Owen Webb

Director since 30/11/2011. Resigned 25/3/2020

Responsibilities:

- Secretary until 27/11/2019
- Risk & Governance Committee

Occupation – Solicitor

### Alan Arthur

Director since 27/11/2019

Responsibilities:

- Risk & Governance Committee

Occupation – Director Corporate Services

### Cade Gow

Director since 28/11/2012

Responsibilities:

- Treasurer since 28/11/2018
- Finance & Audit Committee

Occupation – Accountant

### Ben Ruscoe

Director since 29/04/2020

Responsibilities:

- Finance & Audit Committee

Occupation – Executive Manager

## Meetings of directors

The number of meetings of the Company's directors held during the year ended 30 June 2020, and the number of meetings attended by each director were:

	No. of Meetings Attended	No. of Meetings Held*
Susanne Paine	8	8
Owen Webb	2	5
Darran Stonehouse	8	10
Cade Gow	10	11
Ann Telford	6	7
Neil Funston	11	11
Teigan O'Grady	4	4
Ronni Druitt	8	9
Alan Arthur	7	7
Ben Ruscoe	3	3

\* reflects the number of meetings held during the time the director held office during the year.

The Company is incorporated under the Corporations Act 2001 and is a company limited by guarantee. If the Company is wound up, the constitution states that each member is required to contribute a maximum of \$10 each towards meeting any outstanding and obligations of the entity. At 30 June 2020, the total amount that members of the company are liable to contribute if the company is wound up is \$70 (2019: \$70).

### Auditor's independence

A copy of the auditors' independence declaration as required by the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 has been received and can be found following this director's report.

This directors' report is signed in accordance with a resolution of the directors.

### Director's Declaration

The directors of Rural Housing Network Limited declare that the concise financial report of the Company for the year ended 30 June 2020:

- complies with Accounting Standard AASB 1039: Concise Financial Reports; and
- is an extract from the full financial report for the year ended 30 June 2020 and has been derived from and is consistent with the full financial report of the Rural Housing Network Limited.

This declaration is made in accordance with a resolution of the directors.

  
Director  
Susanne Paine

  
Director  
Cade Gow

Wodonga, 28 October 2020



## Statement of Profit & Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

For the year ended 30 June 2020

	Note	2020 (\$)	2019 (\$)
Revenue	2	16,307,800	14,106,711
Employee benefits expense		(5,059,561)	(4,409,661)
Depreciation and amortisation expense	3	(1,215,524)	(831,178)
Finance costs	3	(371,224)	(361,739)
Property expenses		(1,351,941)	(1,355,732)
Client expenses		(1,244,334)	(1,156,114)
Maintenance and asset management expenses		(609,596)	(548,792)
Administrative and office expenses		(636,774)	(956,906)
Rents remitted expenses		(1,829,726)	(1,779,031)
Loss on sale of assets	3	(92,338)	-
Surplus before income tax		3,896,782	2,707,558
Income tax expense		-	-
Net surplus for the year		3,896,782	2,707,558
Other comprehensive income		-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year		3,896,782	2,707,558

## Statement of Financial Position

For the year ended 30 June 2020

	2020 (\$)	2019 (\$)
<b>ASSETS</b>		
• Current Assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	3,642,345	6,519,429
Trade and other receivables	114,481	143,159
Other assets	142,022	140,892
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>3,898,848</b>	<b>6,803,480</b>
• Non-Current Assets		
Property, plant and equipment	77,135,099	68,924,324
<b>Total Non-Current Assets</b>	<b>77,135,099</b>	<b>68,924,324</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>81,033,947</b>	<b>75,727,804</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
• Current Liabilities		
Trade and other payables	3,993,674	4,683,154
Borrowings	381,768	342,966
Lease Liabilities	300,870	-
Provisions	819,752	675,031
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<b>5,496,064</b>	<b>5,701,151</b>
• Non-Current liabilities		
Borrowings	8,481,997	8,381,604
Lease Liabilities	1,521,060	-
Provisions	59,187	66,191
<b>Total Non-Current Liabilities</b>	<b>10,062,244</b>	<b>8,447,795</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>15,558,308</b>	<b>14,148,946</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>65,475,639</b>	<b>61,578,857</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>		
Retained earnings	65,475,639	61,578,857
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>	<b>65,475,639</b>	<b>61,578,857</b>

## Statement of Changes in Equity

	Retained Earnings (\$)
<b>Balance at 1 July 2018</b>	<b>58,871,299</b>
Net surplus for the year	2,707,558
Other comprehensive income for the year	-
<b>Balance at 30 June 2019</b>	<b>61,578,857</b>
Net surplus for the year	3,896,782
Other comprehensive income for the year	-
<b>Balance at 30 June 2020</b>	<b>65,475,639</b>

## Statement of Cash Flows

For the year ended 30 June 2020

	2020 (\$)	2019 (\$)
<b>Cash Flows from Operating Activities</b>		
Receipt of grants	10,124,039	9,879,328
Receipts from other	5,305,219	5,048,186
Payments to suppliers and employees	(10,652,276)	(10,128,783)
Interest received	67,671	122,605
Finance costs	(371,224)	(361,739)
<b>Net cash inflow/(outflow) from operating activities</b>	<b>4,473,429</b>	<b>4,559,597</b>
<b>Cash Flows from Investing Activities</b>		
Proceeds from sale of property, plant and equipment	11,363	241,499
Payment for property, plant and equipment	(7,206,490)	(4,694,419)
<b>Net cash inflow/(outflow) from investing activities</b>	<b>(7,195,127)</b>	<b>(4,452,920)</b>
<b>Cash flows from Financing Activities</b>		
Repayment of borrowings	(360,805)	-
Repayment of lease liabilities	(294,581)	-
Proceeds from borrowings	500,000	668,537
Net cash inflow/(outflow) from financing activities	(155,386)	668,537
<b>Net Increase/(Decrease) in Cash Held</b>	<b>(2,877,084)</b>	<b>775,214</b>
Cash at the beginning of the financial year	6,519,429	5,744,215
<b>Cash at the End of the Financial Year</b>	<b>3,642,345</b>	<b>6,519,429</b>

## Notes to the concise financial report

For the year ended 30 June 2020

### Note 1. Summary of significant accounting policies

#### Basis of preparation of the Concise Financial Report

The concise financial report is an extract of the full financial report for the year ended 30 June 2020. The concise financial report has been prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standard AASB 1039: Concise Financial Reports.

The financial statements, specific disclosures and other information included in the concise financial report are derived from and are consistent with the full financial

report of the Rural Housing Network Ltd. The concise financial report cannot be expected to provide as detailed an understanding of the financial performance, financial position and financing and investing activities of the Rural Housing Network Ltd as the full financial report. A copy of the full financial report and auditor's report will be sent to any member, free of charge, on request.

### Note 2: Revenue

Revenue from Grants	2020 (\$)	2019 (\$)
Capital grants	3,255,553	2,090,185
Recurring grants	7,509,437	6,815,256
	10,764,990	8,905,441
<b>Other Income</b>		
Interest earned	63,190	114,198
Donations received	32,185	21,652
Rental income	5,154,122	4,950,361
Other	74,053	46,066
Recoveries	12,260	8,136
Gain on sale of assets	-	60,857
Non-monetary contributions	207,000	-
<b>Total Other Income</b>	<b>5,542,810</b>	<b>5,201,270</b>
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>16,307,800</b>	<b>14,106,711</b>

### Note 3. Profit

#### Net gains and expenses

Profit before income tax expense includes the following expenses:

Expenses	2020 (\$)	2019 (\$)
Depreciation and Amortisation		
Buildings	470,809	457,071
Motor vehicles	36,604	34,504
Plant and equipment	97,662	93,201
Furniture, fixture and fittings	229,755	209,026
Building improvements	38,778	37,376
Right of Use Leased Assets	341,916	-
<b>Total Depreciation and Amortisation</b>	<b>1,215,524</b>	<b>831,178</b>
Short-term and low-value lease payments	34,788	-
Operating lease payments	-	351,301
Interest expense	371,224	361,739
Audit services	17,650	16,670
Property, Plant and Equipment		
Proceeds on disposal	11,364	241,499
Disposals at written down value	(103,702)	(180,642)
Net gain/(loss) on disposals	(92,338)	60,857

### Note 4. Events Occurring after Reporting Date

No events have occurred since the end of the financial year that have significantly affected, or may significantly affect the operations of the Company, the results of those operations or the state of affairs of the Company in the ensuing or any subsequent financial years.

### Note 5. COVID-19 Impact

Coronavirus (COVID 19) was first reported to the World Health Organisation as an unknown virus in late December 2019, developments through out 2020 to date are causing great uncertainty in respect to both health and safety and for the global economy. The Company has not been significantly impacted by the restrictions given the Company is an essential service, however some programs that are run, have been subsidised further to accommodate the current events and potential increases to housing assistance.

Further, subsequent to 30 June 2020 restrictions have been implemented in respect to crossing the NSW and Victorian border as the result of COVID-19. These restrictions have created a minor impediment to the company's ability to provide some services given some staff reside in NSW, however given the Company operates an essential service within regional Victoria the impact on the revenue and activity generated is expected to be minimal.

### Note 6. Analysis of Financial Report

The discussions and analysis is provided to assist members in understanding the concise financial report. The discussion and analysis is based on the Rural Housing Network Ltd financial statements and the information contained in the concise financial report has been derived from the full financial report of the Rural Housing Network Ltd for the year ended 30 June 2020.

#### Statement of Profit and Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

For the year ended 30 June 2020, a surplus of \$3,896,782 has been achieved. The reported surplus was based on Total Revenues of \$16,307,800. Comparative figures for the prior year, 2018/2019, were a surplus of \$2,707,558 and Total Revenues of \$14,106,711.

Included in the current year's result was capital grant income of \$3,255,553, which related mainly to funding from the Department of Justice for the housing project designed to provide accommodation in the Mitchell Shire and to funding from the Peter and Lyndy White Foundation to construct affordable rental units in Wangaratta, Shepparton and Seymour, and a non-monetary land contributions to the value of \$207,000. This compares with the 2018/2019 year which included capital grants of \$2,090,185.

The underlying Operating Surplus for the 2019/2020 year was \$434,229 compared to \$617,373 for the previous year. Operating Income for the reporting year was \$11,955,669 which was higher than the prior year of \$11,934,017 an increase of 7.4%.

## Note 6. Analysis of Financial Report (continued)

Operating Grants in 2019/20 of \$7,509,437 is an increase of \$694,181 compared with the 2018/19 operating grants balance of \$6,815,256. The increase related to mainly \$205,479 for BPRA brokerage, \$57,580 increase from the Rapid Housing Head Leasing funding program, increases from funding provided to assist during the COVID-19 Pandemic and also a number of programs run having general index increases. Operating grants represented 59% of total operating income which is comparable to the prior year of 57%.

Rental income and other income balances received have increased on 2018/19 due mainly to the increased number of rental properties that the company operate based on new housing constructed within the past 12 months.

Operating expenses for the 2019/2020 year, (excluding interest expense and loss on sale of assets) totalled \$11,947,456 compared to \$11,037,414 in 2018/2019. The 8.25% increase in Operating Expense in 2019/2020 over the previous year, was due in part to an increase full time equivalent staff along with annual wage increases, impact in the current year being \$649,900. Administrative and Office Expenses in the current year decreased by \$320,132 from the prior year due to the implementation of AASB 16 Leases in the current year, which resulted in a decrease in lease expenses accounted for, offset set by a corresponding increase in depreciation of right-of-use lease assets as reflected in the \$384,346 increase in the depreciation expense balance from the prior year.

Interest Income in 2019/2020 of \$63,190 has decreased on the prior year amount of \$114,198 due to lower interest rates being received for term deposit investments and term deposit funds being utilised for capital works during the current year.

## Statement of Financial Position

As at 30 June 2020, Net Assets were \$65,475,639, compared to \$61,578,857 as at 30 June 2019, an increase of 6.33%. Current Assets including Cash and Cash Equivalents amounted to \$3,898,848 at the end of the 2019/2020 year, compared to the corresponding total of \$6,803,480 at the end of prior year. A decrease in the balance is mainly due to purchases of property, plant and equipment of \$7,206,490, of which \$3,255,553 was funded from capital grants received.

Property, Plant and Equipment at the end of 2019/2020 amounted to \$77,135,099, at written down value, which represented an increase of \$8,210,775 when compared to 2018/2019 balance of \$68,924,324. The increase is due \$7,507,676 of capital additions which mainly represents the construction and fit-out of new affordable accommodation. \$1,774,595 of this increase is also represented by right-of-use assets for property and motor vehicle leases which have been recognised for the first time in the current year under the implementation of AASB 16 Leases.

Current Liabilities decreased to \$5,496,064 at the end of 2019/2020 compared to the 2018/2019 closing balance of \$5,701,151. The decrease of \$205,087 is due to a decrease in the unexpended capital grants liability of \$847,391.

This decrease is offset by a \$206,440 increase in operating grants in advance, \$144,721 from the increase in employee provisions, and \$300,870 from current lease liabilities recognised for the first time in the current year under the implementation of AASB 16 Leases.

Non-Current Borrowings increased to \$8,481,997 in 2019/2020 from \$8,381,604 last year. The increase is the result of additional draw-downs from available facilities.

In the current year, \$1,521,060 has been recognised as a non-current lease liability for the first time under the implementation of AASB 16 Leases.

## Statement of Cash Flows

During 2019/2020 operating, investing and financing activities generated a net decrease in Cash Held of \$2,877,084 compared to an increase of \$775,214 in 2018/2019. The major movements in cash flow in the current year were in regard to an increase in property, plant and equipment purchases from \$4,694,419 in the prior year to \$7,206,490 this year. Property, plant and equipment purchases were funded partly by \$3.255M in capital grants. Total outflows from financing activities of \$155,386 were driven by the repayment of lease liabilities of \$294,581, offset by a net increase in proceeds from borrowing facilities of \$139,195.

Lease liability repayments have been recognised within financing activities for this first time in the current year as a result of the adoption of AASB 16 Leases. This has resulted in a decrease in lease expense payments included in operating cash flows within payments to suppliers and employees.

## Independent auditor's report to the members of Rural Housing Network Ltd

### Report on the concise Financial Report

The accompanying concise financial report of Rural Housing Network Ltd comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2020, the statement of profit and loss and other comprehensive income, statement of equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended and related notes, derived from the audited financial report of Rural Housing Network Ltd for the year ended 30 June 2020. The concise financial report does not contain all the disclosures required by the Australian Accounting Standards.

### Auditor's opinion of the Financial Report

In our opinion, the concise financial report Rural Housing Network Ltd for the year ended 30 June 2020 complies with Australian Accounting Standard AASB 1039 Concise Financial Reports.

### Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report section of our report. We are independent of the registered entity in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

### Directors' responsibility for the concise Financial Report

The Directors are responsible for the preparation and presentation of the concise financial report in accordance with Accounting Standard AASB 1039 Concise Financial Reports, and for such internal control as the Directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the concise financial report, the Directors are responsible for Rural Housing Network Ltd's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Directors either intend to liquidate the registered entity or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

### Auditor's Responsibility for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objective is to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the concise financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the concise financial report.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial report is located at the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board website at: <http://www.auasb.gov.au/Home.aspx>.

This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Johnsons MME  
Chartered Accountants

Ryan Schischka  
Director

Albury  
28 October 2020

# BEYOND HOUSING

## Office Hours

Monday to Friday  
9am - 5pm

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(02) 6055 9000

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(03) 5722 8000

54 Tallarook St  
**Seymour**  
PO Box 839, 3661  
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49 Stewart St  
**Shepparton**, 3630  
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(03) 5833 1000

For further information

**Visit our website**  
[beyondhousing.org.au](http://beyondhousing.org.au)

**Email us**  
[info@beyondhousing.org.au](mailto:info@beyondhousing.org.au)

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The history, culture, diversity and value of all First Nations people are recognised, acknowledged and respected. BeyondHousing embraces differences in gender, gender diversity, age, ethnicity, race, cultural background, ability, religion, and sexual orientation. We recognise the benefit that diversity and inclusion play in helping achieve our goals and vision of ending homelessness.

BeyondHousing is a child safe organisation and all offices are disability accessible. Interpreter services are also available. All services are free of charge.

