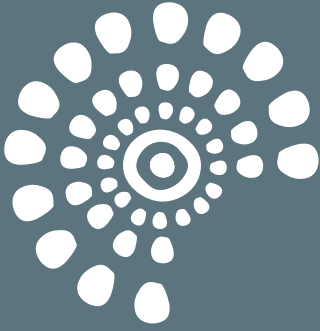




2023

Year in review



Acknowledgement of Country

We at Churches of Christ acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands on which we stand and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging for they hold the memories, traditions, cultures, hopes and aspirations of First Nations People.

We acknowledge and recognise the resilience of generations of First Nations People and stand with you now and always.

We are committed to walking alongside First Nations People to establish a foundation of trust and to taking meaningful action to preserve, affirm and promote the world's oldest living culture.

Stakeholder contributions

The *Churches of Christ Housing Services Year in Review* annual report highlights our achievements and spotlights our people, partnerships and projects over the past financial year. Without those who have shared their insights and experiences, this publication would not be possible.

We thank the Queensland Government for its ongoing financial support through housing programs and capital investment, as we work together to address housing affordability and supply.



Churches of Christ Housing Services Limited is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee, with Public Benevolent Institution and Deductible Gift Recipient status, and is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Churches of Christ in Queensland. We are a tier one provider under the National Regulatory System for Community Housing and have been operating as a Community Housing Provider for over 40 years.

Front cover: Latoya and Noah from Ipswich. See page 15 for their story.

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About us.

We have a long and proud history of care

In 1980, Churches of Christ first partnered with the Queensland Government to manage three houses for people requiring emergency accommodation. This response to the community's need for emergency housing was the start of Churches of Christ Housing Services as we know it today.

Over 40 years later, we are one of Queensland's leading Community Housing Providers delivering services across the full spectrum of housing needs, from homelessness programs to social and affordable housing products.

We provide quality housing solutions for over 2000 people each year and work with partners who share our belief that housing is a basic human right, fundamental to individual and community wellness.

Message from our Interim CEO



For over 40 years, Churches of Christ Housing Services' mandate has been to deliver quality housing solutions and support those who require assistance to access safe and secure housing.

Now more than ever, Australians want to see us excel in this commitment, emphatically endorsing the pivotal role social and affordable housing providers play in meeting our nation's housing needs.

As one of Queensland's largest Community Housing Providers, Churches of Christ Housing Services currently supplies the equivalent of more than 814,000 nights' safe and affordable accommodation to over 2000 people each year through a range of housing and homelessness programs.

The demand for services that provide a social safety net like ours continues to grow as external pressures including the cost of living increase, and we are committed to continuing the same sustainable growth that has helped us meet housing demand since the inception of Churches of Christ in Queensland's Housing Services stream in 1980.

To this end, we are actively pursuing new opportunities to address housing supply with the infrastructure of the Queensland Government's Housing Investment Fund and Commonwealth Government's Housing Australia Future Fund. These two funding sources have been explicitly tailored to prioritise the creation of further social and affordable housing and recognise the unique position and expertise of organisations that operate in this space.

In 2024, two projects that are already well under way will be completed, increasing the size of our portfolio by a figure of 91 dwellings. These units are long-term homes built to meet the needs of seniors and will give both dignity and security to those who may otherwise have no alternative housing options.

We acknowledge and thank Government as they continue to work with agencies across the housing, homelessness and social services sectors to develop

new and innovative solutions to meet the challenges currently facing our country. It is our partnerships like this along with a willingness to innovate that underline our success and will be necessary to meeting Australia's future housing needs.

This year, we have taken great pride in the delivery of a new Queensland Government initiative, the Immediate Housing Response for Families, which directly addresses housing shortages impacting families. By making use of short-stay accommodation to temporarily house those who would have no alternative than to live in their cars or on the streets, we are working to ensure no child is forced to sleep rough in Queensland.

Beyond physical bricks and mortar, a housing service like ours also focuses heavily on tenancy sustainment initiatives that empower people with skillsets to live independently. We provide more than just access to a safe physical place to call home because we understand the importance of supportive infrastructure.

I acknowledge the hard work of our 44 housing and eight chaplaincy staff, whose support and commitment will continue to be needed for the foreseeable future. Our staff truly embody the mission and values of Churches of Christ and I am certain that it is because of them that we can help create such positive outcomes for the clients we support.

Churches of Christ Housing Services is proud to walk alongside Australians in some of their most vulnerable moments as they seek out the safety and security of a place to call home in 2024.

I thank you for your continued support as we work to meet the housing needs of all Australians.

Mike Folland

Interim Chief Executive Officer
Churches of Christ in Queensland

General Manager's Report

The 2022–2023 financial year has been an opportunity for Churches of Christ Housing Services and the broader social and affordable housing sector to focus service delivery as we experience even greater demand for our services.

Factors including population growth, rental market stress, increases to building costs and shortages in both labour and materials all play a significant role in what the future of housing provision looks like. While we acknowledge these challenges, our goal is to provide more social and affordable homes for Queenslanders and we will continue to strive to do so with the support of all levels of Governments and our partner agencies.

We are proud to have proposed two comprehensive projects to the Housing Investment Fund and collaborated with a partner agency on another during the 2022–2023 term. Each of these leverages Churches of Christ Housing Services' experience as a developer and provider of quality homes for over 40 years. While still the subject of further discussions with the Queensland Government, proposals like these represent a sector that is poised to meet the challenge of increasing housing supply and affordability.

The Queensland Government's draft South East Queensland regional plan (ShapingSEQ) has outlined our state's expected population growth through to 2046 and underlined the important role that social and affordable housing will play in our state's future. This forecast will challenge planners and developers to imagine how housing provision, a sense of community and the environment all integrate. As managers of freestanding homes through to high-density apartment blocks, we know how buildings that are carefully crafted and consider the needs of those who will live in them can enrich people's lives.

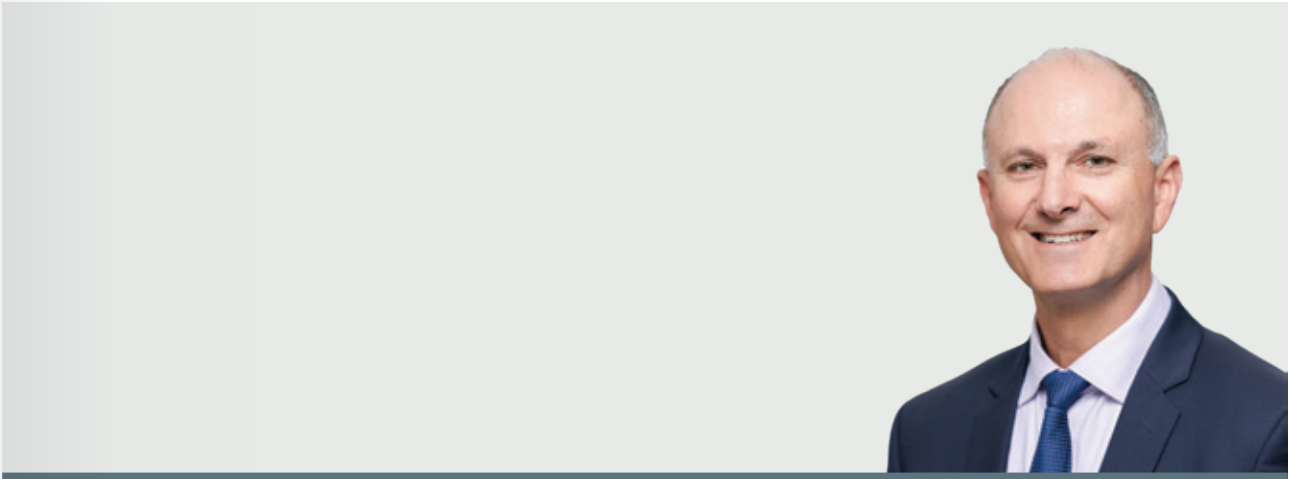
We are looking at innovative ways to increase housing supply within the city limits where transport, services, jobs and schools already exist, as well as in

more regional areas where a growing population will naturally expand into. Community housing providers understand the value of developments that are settled in their communities. Access to public facilities like parks, libraries and schools, transportation options and job opportunities, as well as Australia's picturesque natural environments, are things we should all have the opportunity to enjoy.

Work is progressing on two new developments that will deliver 50 and 41 new safe, secure and affordable homes for seniors on the Sunshine Coast and in Ipswich respectively. These medium density developments will be tenanted by seniors who are currently under-occupying large public housing properties. With over 25,000 households currently listed on the Queensland Social Housing register, homes left vacant by seniors who choose to move to one of our new developments will be made available for families on the register who are without secure housing.

To support those families who are experiencing immediate need, Churches of Christ Housing Services is delivering Specialist Homelessness Services and brokerage through the Immediate Housing Response for Families (IHRF) funding package and Crisis Accommodation Program. These programs allow us to work with families to find long-term accommodation and establish themselves within communities. Through these programs, we work with 23 families in crisis properties and support many more in other temporary accommodation. We have been providing crisis accommodation for over 20 years and welcome the IHRF as a new, innovative housing solution to support families who are without a home.

Our new developments and our delivery of housing and homelessness services are made possible by the support of governments, with whom we continue to work with as some of our most significant partners. I am particularly proud of this ongoing collaboration and the short-term and long-term housing solutions it has created for Queenslanders. This approach remains an important gauge by which we can measure our success.



Importantly, our work extends beyond the individual. We work proactively with residents, other social service providers and wider neighbourhoods to create supportive communities. Alongside Bric Housing, Brisbane City Council, Mission Australia, the Salvation Army and Q Shelter, our Community Engagement team saw the second Spring Hill Community Day come to fruition and deliver on its goal to connect residents and clients with local support services where they live for free. This is one of many partnerships that speak to our belief that while housing is the foundation by which people thrive, they can succeed in even greater ways when the provision of a safe place to live is part of an approach that emphasise the importance of other supports. We continue to offer tenancy sustainment initiatives for this reason and understand the pivotal role appropriate support and the connection to community plays in people's ability to maintain tenancies.

In 2023, we saw new legislation introduced regarding new minimum housing standards in Queensland. These standards will ensure that rental properties are safe, secure and functional. We pride ourselves on not only our ability to provide homes, but also to ensure their ongoing quality. Our Asset Management and Quality and Compliance teams are well-placed to meet these new legislative requirements as well as our own high standards.

As we look forward, we continue to improve our business practices, ensuring our service delivery is streamlined and prepared to meet future demand. We have started the implementation process a new customer relationship management system, Zavanti, and hope to deploy this for use in 2024.

Each day, Churches of Christ Housing Services' staff and chaplains continue to deliver a high-quality service with commitment and passion. Every day our staff speak to people in significant housing stress and every day I see them embody professionalism and hope as they give dignity and respect to those who are often facing the biggest challenge of their lifetime.

The work of our team requires a special type of commitment that those who work in social service personify.

Thank you for your continued support as Churches of Christ Housing Services continues on our journey to create more safe, secure and affordable homes in South East Queensland, and as we deliver quality housing and homelessness services to those who most need them.

I hope you enjoy reading the Year in Review 2022-2023.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gus Taddeo". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Gus Taddeo
General Manager
Churches of Christ Housing Services



Our services

Crisis accommodation

for people with children experiencing hardship or Domestic and Family Violence.

.....

Social Housing

for people who are eligible and listed on the Queensland Social Housing register.

.....

Affordable housing

for people on low and moderate incomes who struggle to find and maintain private rentals.

.....

Disability accommodation

for people who require specialist support and homes with greater levels of accessibility. This includes Specialist Disability Accommodation which are available to approved participants under the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

.....

Community development

initiatives to build skills that empower tenants and promote community integration.

.....

Pastoral care

to support the emotional, physical and spiritual wellbeing of tenants.

.....

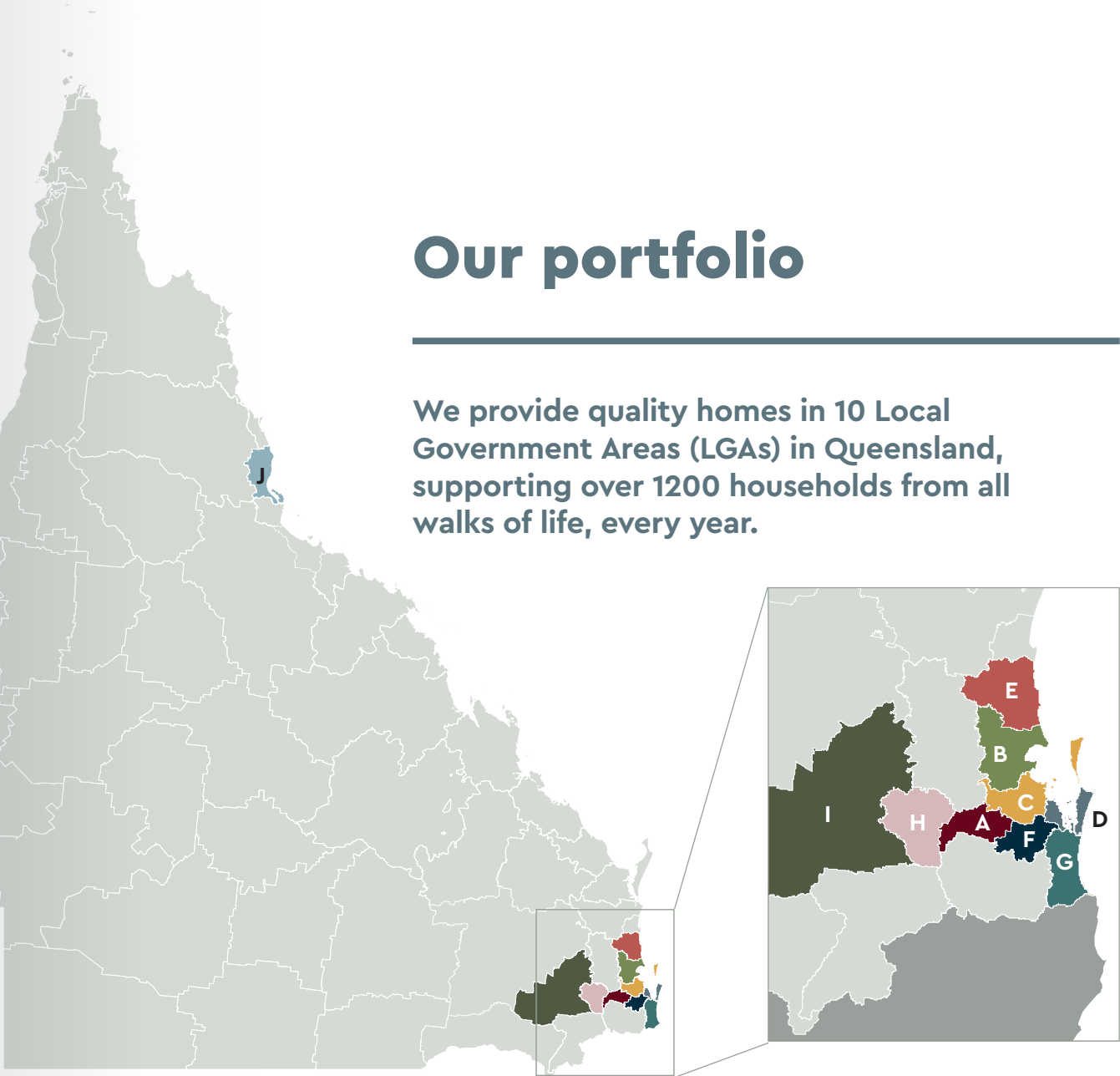
Top: Emily and Arlette at the Gold Coast Neighbourhood Day we held in 2022. To read more about the multi-agency partnership our Neighbourhood Day model has culminated in, see page 32.

Middle: Matthew has been able to move from an aged care facility to Special Disability Accommodation at Marblewood Apartments.

Bottom: Chaplain Graham and tenant Sanying.

Our portfolio

We provide quality homes in 10 Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Queensland, supporting over 1200 households from all walks of life, every year.



Number and type of housing we own and manage, by LGA

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA	NUMBER	CRISIS	SOCIAL HOUSING	AFFORDABLE	DISABILITY
A Ipswich City	407	●	●		●
B Moreton Bay City	346		●	●	
C Brisbane City	217	●	●		●
D Gold Coast City	100		●		
E Sunshine Coast	66		●		
F Logan City	40	●	●		●
G Redland City	9		●		
H Lockyer Valley Regional	8		●		
I Toowoomba Regional	6				●
J Cassowary Coast Regional	4		●		

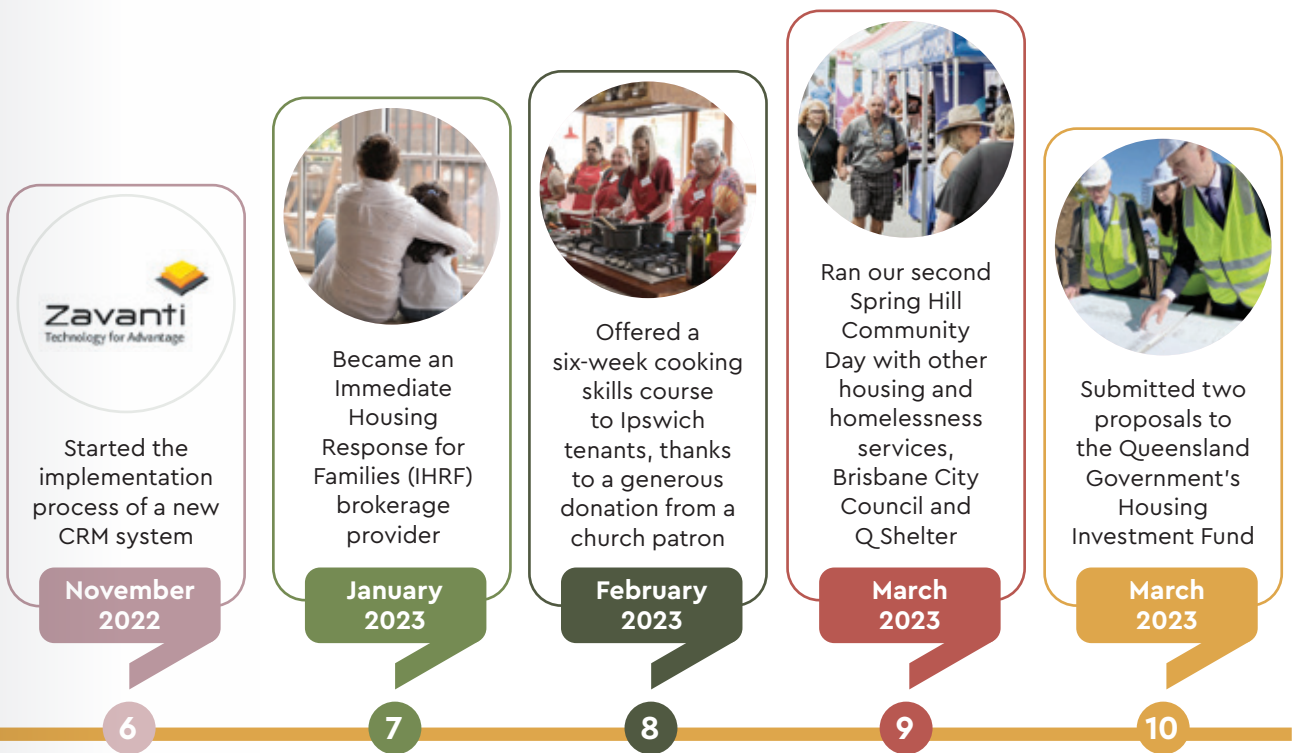
Our highlights 2022–2023



What our tenants say...

"I am grateful for my house and love every minute of the community here. Staff are amazing."

"I now have less stress in my life and I feel like part of the community. Thank you for the opportunity of a home. My children are happy and no longer homeless."



"Good people who have shown me nothing but kindness and consideration, any serious problems have been dealt with quickly."

"The Chaplains are working extremely hard to get all the tenants involved in the various BBQs and other activities as they are always ready to lend a helping hand or a sympathetic ear in times of need."

Changing lives through quality housing solutions.

Through various housing programs, Churches of Christ Housing Services provides a range of solutions to meet different needs.

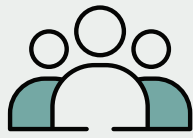
Between transitional and long-term Social Housing, affordable, disability and crisis housing products, we support people from all walks of life with the security of a safe, secure and affordable home.

Tenants Chris and Yvonne from Marblewood Apartments in Logan.



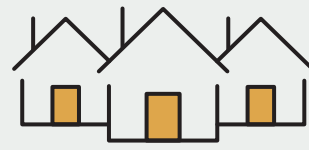


Who we serve...



2232

Tenants



1203

Tenancies

Tenant demographics

60%

Over the age of 55

55%

Identify as women or girls

6%

Come from a non-English speaking background

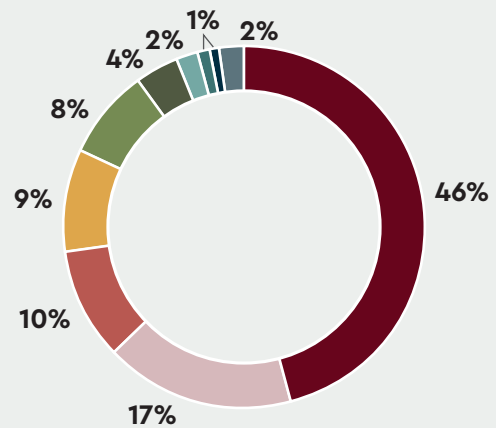
67%

Report living with disability or a serious medical condition

11%

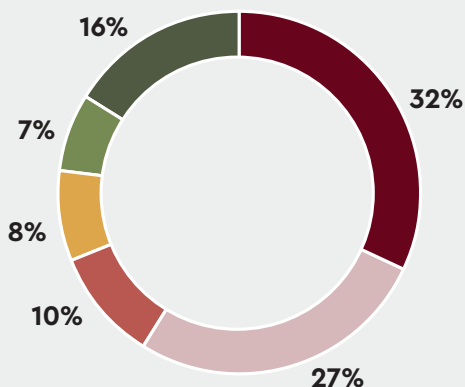
Identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

Household by program



- Long-term Community Housing
- Affordable Housing
- Community Managed Studio Units
- Caravan Park
- Community Rent Scheme
- Affordable Living
- Crisis Accommodation Program
- Disability Housing
- Short-term Lease
- Other

Household – primary source income



- Disability Support Pension
- Aged Pension
- JobSeeker Payment
- Parenting Payment (Single)
- Wages
- Other

Tenant engagement

4

Editions of resident newsletters

12

Resident Engagement meetings

128

Facebook posts

Latoya and Noah's story: home in the nick of time

After three months of living in a motel while pregnant, a young Ipswich family has finally found a place to call home.

Latoya, Noah and their three-month-old are now settled in a long-term Social Housing unit at East Ipswich.

A week before Christmas in 2022, the expectant parents found themselves living in a motel. Both aged 19, they were no longer able to stay where they had been renting for six months.

During record high cost-of-living and a tight rental market, the pair were facing the prospect of not finding a home before their first baby arrived. Latoya was familiar with inCommunity, an Ipswich Specialist Homelessness Service, having received their support previously. She turned to them again during her and Noah's time of need.

"We supported Latoya and Noah using brokerage available to us from the Immediate Housing Response for Families funding package," Latoya and Noah's inCommunity Case Manager Cath said.

"inCommunity utilises the money allocated through this funding to support families in Ipswich with motel accommodation and case management support to find long term sustainable and suitable accommodation."

With a temporary roof over their head in the motel, Latoya, Noah and Cath turned to updating their Social Housing application and looking for rental opportunities.

With their due date quickly approaching, "time was running out."

In Ipswich, Churches of Christ Housing Services owns and manages over 400 properties, including an eight-unit complex in East Ipswich that Latoya and Noah would soon call home.

The couple received the keys to the unit the day after Latoya gave birth to their first child, a son whom they named Emmerson.

"This was an excellent outcome for them. I know they had concerns about having to take their new baby back to the motel and how that would work, so



offering them a property just days before he was born and getting the keys to them the day after he was born was so uplifting," Churches of Christ Housing Officer Dwanette Smith said.

"I think the best part about it is that we have our own space now. I think that's what's made it all worthwhile. Our son has his own house, his own space to be himself in," Latoya said.

"It really showcased the wonderful housing outcomes we are able to achieve with a multidisciplinary approach," Cath from inCommunity said.

The young couple are thankful for the support they've received from family, community organisations and housing providers. Now, with the stable foundation of Social Housing under their feet, they are excited to see what their future holds.

See the next page for more information about how Churches of Christ Housing Services uses our own Immediate Housing Response for Families (IHRF) funding to support families.



Immediate Housing Response for Families

Families can face unique challenges while seeking the security of a stable and affordable home. Issues including proximity to services like schools and childcare, overcrowding and affordability can contribute to difficulty finding and maintaining housing.

In June of 2022, the Queensland Government announced the Immediate Housing Response for Families (IHRF) funding package, which empowers housing and homelessness services to support families in crisis situations to overcome barriers that prevent them from securing or sustaining a home.

Churches of Christ Housing Services' IHRF brokerage is managed by our Family and Individual Support

Service (FISS) team, who also manage our Crisis Accommodation Program (CAP). To be eligible to receive IHRF support from us, participants must be within the Brisbane area and part of a family unit, which can include siblings, expectant mothers and parents or carers with children.

A FISS team member will support the family to overcome short-term barriers to finding and maintaining a home. This can include temporarily housing the family in short-stay accommodation (e.g. hotels, motels and Airbnbs), where they contribute to the cost of their stay.

We commenced this program in January 2023, and over the six months to June 2023, we have provided 12 households (consisting of 13 adults and 21 children) with the equivalent of over 450 nights' accommodation.

3

Households secured new Social Housing

1

Household secured new private rental accommodation

4

Households continue to receive support

4

Households had alternative outcomes



IHRF assistance for Ivy's family in a time of need

Ivy* was a participant in our IHRF program whom we were able to support using IHRF brokerage from March to July 2023. She and her four children have now transitioned into crisis accommodation, with the goal of eventually taking over the property's lease.

Ivy had previously rented privately in Toowoomba for two years however, her life was disrupted when she and her children left Australia to return to Ivy's native Libya for personal reasons. Not able to come home to Australia when she had planned to, Ivy had to borrow \$7000 so that she could return.

Upon arriving home in Australia, Ivy had no income, housing opportunities or formal support, which resulted in her being forced to couch surf—a recognised form of homelessness. With children in her care, this was not only unsustainable, but potentially detrimental to her family's wellbeing.

In March of 2023, Ivy contacted our organisation. The family was temporarily housed in an Airbnb using IHRF brokerage as we worked with the family to find more stable housing.

While being assisted by Churches of Christ Housing Services, Ivy has been able to finalise her JobSeeker

Payment application, reengage NDIS support for one of her children and reenrol the children into school.

During this time, our support worker also helped Ivy's household by securing food parcels, feminine hygiene products, school supplies, clothing and bed linen.

The Crisis Accommodation Program property that Ivy and her family now call home is in the perfect location, close to a train line that gives her quick access to the kids' school and medical services for Ivy's daughter who is on the autism spectrum.

We have also been able to connect Ivy with mental health support to help her maintain her own wellbeing while caring for children with high needs. The provision of household items, including a washing machine, has also helped Ivy and her family settle in to their new property.

The immediate, targeted response made possible by the IHRF funding package has made a significant impact on Ivy and her family's ability to regain and sustain their independence.

We are thankful for the opportunity to deliver IHRF support in Brisbane's south region, made possible by the Queensland Government.

*Ivy's name has been changed for privacy reasons.

Breaking down barriers as a SPER Hardship Partner

In April 2022, we were approved by the Office of State Revenue to become a State Penalties Enforcement Register (SPER) Hardship Partner sponsor.

As a sponsor, we can create work and development orders (WDOs) for our tenants with a SPER debt, allowing them to reduce if not entirely resolve their debt through non-financial means.

A WDO empowers people to attend vocational and educational courses, counselling and treatment programs or complete unpaid work, knowing that they are not only reducing their debt, but also developing new skills, improving their own wellbeing or giving back to their communities.

To be eligible to engage in a WDO with a SPER Hardship Partner, a participant must be unable to pay off their SPER debt due to financial hardship, mental ill-health, Domestic and Family Violence, intellectual or cognitive disability, homelessness, or a substance use disorder.

We primarily offer clients opportunities for unpaid work with our internal maintenance service, who tend to our developments' grounds and perform basic upkeep duties. Each WDO-eligible activity has an hourly value, with most starting at \$30 per hour.

Since becoming a Hardship Partner, we have helped tenants reduce their debts by \$1740 and hope to support many more people thanks to this opportunity.

“Our ability to provide this opportunity to our clients is fundamental to ensuring people who may already be stigmatised or discriminated against are not continually penalised because of their pasts.”

SALLY FAUX
MANAGER, PROGRAM
PRACTICE AND DEVELOPMENT



Spotlight: Housing Officer Kellea



Meet Housing Officer Kellea Siegle, who first joined our team in 2012. Below she shares insight into her journey with Churches of Christ across the past 11 years.

How did you come to work in the Social Housing sector?

I had worked in community services for seven years before joining Churches of Christ. Through this experience, I witnessed the positive influence support can have on vulnerable people's lives and their ability to overcome difficult times. However, I wanted a different challenge so I began exploring new avenues including housing.

What other roles have you had at Churches of Christ?

I started work with Churches of Christ Housing Services in September 2012 at our head office in Brisbane. Over a three-year period, I worked in business support roles and eventually became a Senior Service Support Officer.

I left in February 2015 to have my twins and did not return due to relocating to Landsborough. In June 2017, an Assistant Housing Officer role at our Bribie Island community led me back to Churches of Christ. I worked in this role for five years until I applied for the vacant Housing Officer role in August 2022.

How is your current role as a Housing Officer different to your other positions in the business?

As a Housing Officer, I really enjoy the aspect of being on-site and having more in-person interactions with tenants. My previous roles were mainly office-based, so I am really enjoying the on-site, in-person interaction with tenants as a housing officer.

Tell us about the community you manage at Bribie Island.

The community I manage at Bribie Island is a vibrant and close-knit neighbourhood which consists of residents over 55 as well as a nearby caravan park. With the help of an Assistant Housing Officer, Housing Chaplains and the Caloundra Housing Officer, our office manages over 250 tenancies.

Recently, we had a new tenant move in who didn't have many possessions. A few tenants came together and donated household items to help her settle in comfortably, which is an example that embodies the spirit of generosity our community has. In doing so, two other tenants discovered a common connection they had from their younger days.

There is also a buzz of activities that keep our tenants engaged and entertained. I think the atmosphere is what makes our community at Bribie Island a special and enriching place to live.

What would you say to someone who is interested in working in the Social Housing sector?

Working in the Social Housing sector is incredibly rewarding. It provides an opportunity to make lasting and meaningful impacts on people's lives. It takes a lot of passion and empathy, so it is also important to work on your own self-care and to prioritise your own wellbeing.

44

Housing Services staff as at 30 June 2023

38

Full-time staff

6

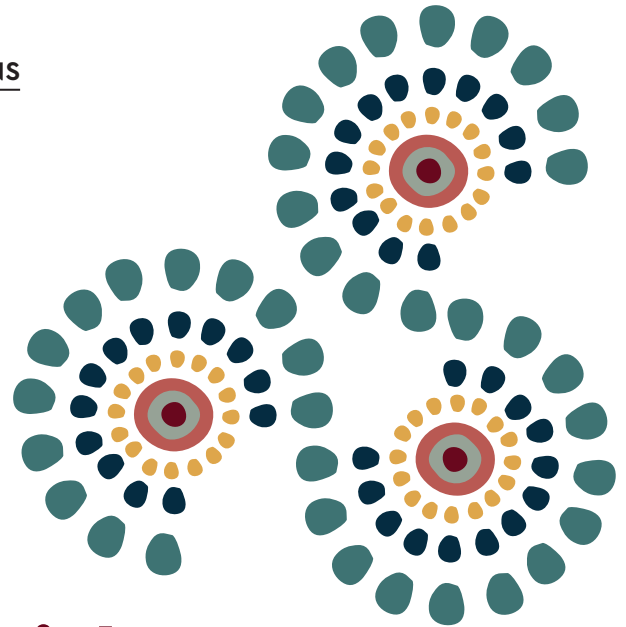
Part-time staff

27

Female staff members

17

Male staff members



Celebrating NAIDOC Week in Ipswich

During NAIDOC Week, events are held all over Australia that acknowledge and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' cultures, achievements and history.

In Ipswich, 26 per cent of our tenancies identify as Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander or both. Approximately 35 per cent of applications on the Queensland Social Housing register list at least one person who identifies as Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander or both.

We acknowledge that this figure exceeds population distribution, with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples over-represented in housing and homelessness

services. We see the barriers—both historic and current—that impact their access to sustainable housing and work daily to help Close the Gap.

NAIDOC Week events—in addition to being celebrations—can facilitate discussions at a grassroots level with a cohort that is disproportionately impacted by housing insecurity and homelessness. These conversations often outline pathways to accessing our services.

At Ipswich's NAIDOC Week event in 2022, we partnered with Churches of Christ's Children, Youth and Families foster and kinship services, which are forms of care where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are also overrepresented.

Churches of Christ's 2023–2025 Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan was released in September 2023.

To read about the steps we're taking to support the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients we support, scan the QR code.



Scan the QR code to access Innovate RAP 2023–2025



26%

Of our tenancies identify as Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander or both

35%

Of applications on the Queensland Social Housing register list at least one person who identifies as Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander or both



GET UP!
STAND UP!
SHOW UP!

3-10 JULY 2022



Effective asset and property management.

Churches of Christ Housing Services currently owns and manages 1203 properties throughout Queensland.

Our product offering ranges from houses and townhouses to high-rise units and caravan park lots.

We are entrusted by governments, organisations and individuals across the state to responsibly manage their assets, in addition to our own.

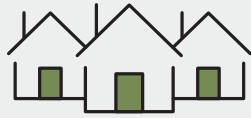
Left to right: Mike Folland Interim CEO, the Hon Meaghan Scanlon MP, Queensland State Minister for Housing and Gus Taddeo General Manager at the Basin Pocket site.





Portfolio summary

We conduct regular periodic inspections in addition to property condition surveys as part of our proactive approach to property maintenance and upgrades. It is with the trust of our partners that we continue to support thousands of people each year with access to a safe, secure and affordable home.



1203

Properties

637

Owned properties

346

Properties managed on behalf of Queensland Government

102

Properties managed on behalf of organisations and private owners

118

Managed caravan park lots



246

Property condition surveys completed



3621

Periodic inspections conducted



5

Regional offices



8

Site offices



Approaching completion of a 50-unit community and disability housing development at Little Mountain on the Sunshine Coast



Completed one major upgrade of the Coogera Apartments affordable housing development, consisting of roof repairs and community room reflooring



Received one new development approval to repurpose a site at Basin Pocket in Ipswich creating 41 new homes for seniors

Little Mountain Community

The Little Mountain Apartments are nearing completion and we look forward to welcoming the development's first tenants in early 2024.

The development will provide a total of 50 dwellings comprising 40 community housing and 10 Specialist Disability Accommodation units. The project will provide safe, secure and affordable homes in the Sunshine Coast region and expand our Churches of Christ integrated community offering.

Integrated communities facilitate continuity of care for seniors by co-locating over-55s Social Housing with a combination of retirement living, aged care and home care services at a single location.

We recognise that as people age, their needs change. Our integrated communities provide additional support to residents as they need it. This model eliminates any disruption caused by having to relocate in order to access the services they require.

When this development is complete we will offer a total of 329 social homes purpose-built for seniors across five integrated communities in Queensland.



5

Integrated communities with Social Housing for seniors

4

Co-locate with an aged care service

4

Co-locate with a retirement village

2

Offer an on-campus home care service



New development approval for social homes at Basin Pocket

In September 2022, we received development approval for a 41-unit build at Basin Pocket in Ipswich. Expected to be completed in late 2024, the project will redevelop the 3000m² site providing five-times the number of homes previously situated at this location.

The development will initially be tenanted using an under-occupancy strategy, offering seniors the opportunity to downsize from a large, detached public housing property to a brand new, low-maintenance unit. This strategy creates vacancies in houses better suited to a large family.

As part of the under-occupancy strategy, we conduct stakeholder engagement sessions with prospective tenants, local housing service centre staff and other stakeholders. These sessions are an opportunity for prospective tenants to learn about the development as they consider whether they move or remain in their current home.

This will be the fifth time we have employed the use of an under-occupancy strategy in partnership with the Department of Housing.



Top: Artist impression of the Basin Pocket redevelopment.
Inset: Little Mountain stakeholder engagement session.

Upgrade: Coogera Apartments community room

The Coogera Apartments at Caloundra provides 66-units initially completed in 2011. The development includes a community room which offers tenants a space to come together, facilitating social connections among neighbours.

After heavy rain in 2022, the Coogera Apartments community room sustained water damage and was quickly repaired using money from our planned maintenance and upgrade fund. In addition to this, flooring in the community room was replaced with hardy, vinyl flooring, ensuring the high-traffic communal area will be fit-for-purpose for years to come.



New equipment to support Internal Maintenance Service

Our Internal Maintenance Service (IMS) partly operates as a social enterprise which creates opportunities for tenants to develop new skillsets. Tenants who have worked with IMS (previously called Access Place) have been able to use this hands-on experience when applying for employment.

Our ability to offer tenants opportunities within IMS formed a key part of our submission to become a State Penalties Enforcement Register (SPER) Hardship Partner (see page 18).

Thanks to the Queensland Government's Community Social Enterprise Development Grants Program, we were able to purchase a brand-new trailer and landscaping kit to support IMS, including tenants who are completing work and development orders.

The IMS team consists of a team leader and five maintenance officers, in addition to our tenant volunteers. The team covers a large geographical area and the additional equipment purchased with grant money has enabled the team to tackle more jobs at once—and have greater scope to facilitate opportunities for tenants.



Proud award winners



Sector awards are opportunities to showcase best practice among organisations with a common purpose. In addition to this, they are opportunities to recognise what social and affordable housing providers are able to achieve while operating on not-for-profit models.

At the 2022 Australasian Housing Institute's Brighter Future Awards (Australasia), we were named the winners of the Leading Asset Management category.

This award recognises our commitment to reducing costs for tenants and sustainability through practices including the use of embedded electrical networks and EnviroDevelopment design principles.

We were also proud to be recognised as finalists in two categories at the 2022 Urban Development

Institute of Australia (Queensland) Awards for Excellence for the second stage of the Coolamon Apartments at Bribie Island (*pictured*).

This \$27.1m development was completed in June 2021 and, together with stage one, represents the largest community housing development for seniors in Queensland. Named finalists in both the Seniors Living and Affordable Housing categories, the Coolamon Apartments were commended for their ability to create a desirable and amenity-filled lifestyle for seniors while maintaining an affordable nature.

In particular, the Apartments' constituting part of a Churches of Christ integrated community, the embedded electrical network, gold and platinum Livable Housing Australia unit designs, solar-powered communal areas and spacious community centre were all highlights.

AHI: asset management masterclass

Effective asset management is a fundamental part of responsible Social Housing administration. As a not-for-profit organisation whose revenue is almost exclusively derived from rent charged to tenants at an affordable rate, we produce lower yields than for-profit rental models.

To ensure our financial viability when managing both our own assets and those of others, we must ensure that our asset and property management practices are proactive, responsible and proportionate, while continuing to ensure quality homes for over 2000 current tenants.

Churches of Christ Housing Services is a proud member of the Australasian Housing Institute (AHI), a membership-based organisation providing training, networking opportunities, mentorships, professional certifications and more for those working in the social, affordable and community housing industries. In August 2022, we were invited to present as a keynote speaker at the AHI's Brisbane asset management masterclass.

The previous year, we were proudly named winners of the Leading Asset Management category at the AHI's jurisdictional Brighter Future Awards and again in 2022 at the Australasian awards.

Our belief is that effective asset management requires a solid information base, detailed financial planning, strategic direction and appropriate delivery mechanisms. We were able to discuss our processes and strategies with other providers at this event, including:

- structure of our planned maintenance and upgrade fund
- treatment of capital investments and depreciation
- vacant property management and new property acquisitions
- risk management and environmental sustainability.

Opportunities for Community Housing Providers to share insights with other industry members is invaluable to the overall health and wellbeing of the sector. We appreciate the ongoing support and opportunities offered by the AHI.

Gus Taddeo (General Manager, Housing Services) speaking at the AHI asset management masterclass.



Working for the growth of the housing sector.

Churches of Christ Housing Services works in partnership with key stakeholders including governments, peak and industry bodies, regional networks, community groups and organisations to create more homes and opportunities for our clients.

We share our experience with fellow housing and homelessness organisations and learn from the successes of our peers for the betterment of the sector.

We believe meaningful cooperation between service providers is essential to delivering the best for our sector and the clients whom we service.



Our partners

We would like to thank all of our 2022–23 partners for their ongoing support, including:

- Australasian Housing Institute
- Central Queensland University
- Community Housing Industry Association
- Department of Housing
- Footprints Brisbane
- Get Going Support
- inCommunity
- Ipswich Regional Advocacy Services Inc.
- PowerHousing Australia
- Q Shelter
- Regional networks, including:
 - » Brisbane Central Interagency Network
 - » Gold Coast Homelessness Network
 - » Ipswich Housing and Homelessness Network
 - » Local Level Alliance
 - » Sunshine Coast Housing and Homelessness Network
 - » Under 1 Roof
- Tenancy Skills Institute
- The Lady Musgrave Trust
- Transitional Housing Team, Metro South Hospital and Health Service
- Urban Development Institute of Australia.





Our second Spring Hill Community Day

Churches of Christ Housing Services has been running neighbourhood days at our communities for almost two years. The primary purpose of these events is to bring useful services to our tenants where they live.

By doing so in a welcoming, casual environment, we break down the many barriers that tenants may face when attempting to access these services, including:

- transportation costs and access to transportation
- lack of knowledge about the existence of certain services
- know-how and confidence navigating systems and processes
- struggles presented by the formality of offices and clinical spaces.

The 2023 Spring Hill Community Day saw over 30 services attend, including Services Australia, Carers QLD, Footprints Community, Queensland Disability Network, Queensland State-wide Tenant Advice and Referral Service (QSTARS), the Tenancy Skills Institute, Basic Rights Queensland and Thread Together.

The Spring Hill Neighbourhood Day is a collaborative venture by Bric Housing, Brisbane City Council, Mission Australia, the Salvation Army, Q Shelter and Churches of Christ Housing Services. It is a shining example of what can be achieved in the spirit of collaboration.



Services at the 2023 Spring Hill Community Day.



Reflections on the PowerHousing National Conference 2022



Mark Ferrari
 Manager, Business Development
 and Strategic Partnerships
 Churches of Christ Housing Services

Churches of Christ Housing Services proudly holds membership within PowerHousing Australia, a nationwide coalition of housing organisations dedicated to advancing our sector through advocacy, and facilitating the exchange of best practices among its members.

In 2022, I had the privilege of attending the PowerHousing Member Exchange Conference in Canberra. This annual three-day gathering presents a valuable opportunity for staff representing housing providers from Australia and New Zealand to connect, learn, and foster collaboration.

At last year's conference, a notable keynote speaker, the Paxon Group, led an engaging discussion on the classification of affordable housing as an asset class. This dialogue was particularly pertinent, given the increased attention on housing funding mechanisms in Australia, notably the discussions surrounding the Housing Investment Fund and the Housing Australia Future Fund.

The acknowledgment of affordable housing as a distinct asset class has been a recent development. In Australia, there is still no unified definition of affordable housing, with varying interpretations among providers and regulators across different regions.



It's imperative to underscore that affordable housing is not synonymous with Social Housing, despite frequent misconceptions. While Social Housing is primarily funded by governmental sources, investment in affordable housing projects has been characterised by diversity, making it challenging to establish a separate asset class.

A well-defined asset classification holds particular significance for investors. As social and affordable housing providers adapt their strategies to meet the growing demand during a housing crisis, it is crucial that we become an appealing option for investors. The growing emphasis on progressive environmental, social, and corporate governance (ESG) policies among investors is also noteworthy and will play a pivotal role moving forward.

It is essential to understand that ESG investing comes in various forms, distinct from philanthropy or grant funding. ESG and impact investors anticipate financial returns from their investments and, therefore, demand evidence that an investee can meet their expectations before committing capital.

Community housing is subject to rigorous regulations, which has made us proficient in employing reporting mechanisms to monitor the well-being of those we house. This proficiency positions us to capture and report on ESG outcomes that resonate with non-governmental organisation (NGO) investors. During the operations managers' roundtable, we delved into this focus area with international experts, including Dr Alex Gold, CEO and Head of ESG at BWD Strategic North America, who illuminated the social dimension of ESG frameworks.

International speakers at the conference, such as Dr Gold from the United States and Geeta Nanda

OBE from the United Kingdom, imparted invaluable insights into housing solutions from other countries that we can potentially draw inspiration from. Geeta Nanda, CEO of Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing in England, shared her experiences regarding the growth of Community Housing Providers, including stock transfers.

My understanding of this topic was enriched after spending 11 years in England's Social Housing sector. Typically, stock transfers involve transferring ownership of government assets to Community Housing Providers, who can leverage them as collateral for borrowing from financial institutions to ensure future growth. In many other countries, the majority of Social Housing is provided by the non-government sector; in contrast, this is not the prevailing trend in Australia, presenting significant potential for stock transfers.

Opportunities like the PowerHousing National Conference to discuss challenges and prospects with local and international experts, fellow providers, and even individuals not directly engaged in the social and affordable housing sector, prove invaluable. This is especially true in a time when the demand for social and affordable housing has reached unprecedented levels.

Chaplaincy and our partner churches

Churches of Christ in Queensland's self-funded chaplaincy program creates opportunities for our clients to access free pastoral care support in times of need.

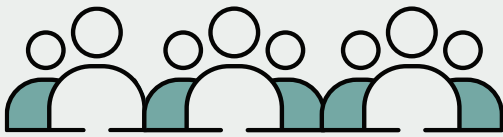
Our organisation also maintains close connections with a number of affiliated churches who support us to deliver on our mission.



Chaplaincy report

A Housing Chaplain is a Churches of Christ staff member embedded in one or more communities. They facilitate community development opportunities and provide pastoral care to tenants who request it.

Churches of Christ's chaplaincy program is self-funded and plays an important role in the ongoing wellbeing of our tenants. The housing chaplaincy program was conceived in its current form in 2010 in recognition of the prevalence within the tenant body of mental ill-health, disability and trauma.



8 full-time Chaplains

Made over 2000 pastoral care engagements with tenants
July 2022 – June 2023

Using Christian-based community development practices, Chaplains also aim to build personal capacity and community wellness by way of activities and events.

511

community development activities

102 Barbecues	83 Morning teas
19 Afternoon teas	17 Breakfasts
8 Tenant meetings	229 Miscellaneous activities

1571

Pastoral care supports

111 Proactive practical supports	159 Proactive physical supports
109 Proactive emotional supports	106 Proactive spiritual supports
129 Proactive social isolation supports	150 Reactive practical supports
92 Reactive physical supports	74 Reactive emotional supports
42 Reactive spiritual supports	12 Reactive social isolation supports

Over-55s communities received approximately

44%

of pastoral care supports.

Churches of Christ is an organisation providing seniors, children and housing services. We have a network of 62 affiliated churches who support our organisation to deliver these services, including the following churches whose support during the past financial year has benefited Housing Services' clients

- Acacia Ridge Church of Christ
- Arana Hills Church of Christ
- Boonah Church of Christ
- Bribie Island Church of Christ
- Caloundra Church of Christ
- Little Mountain Church of Christ
- Oasis Church of Christ Bundamba
- Raceview Congregational Church
- Southport Church of Christ
- Sunnybank Church of Christ
- Springwood Church of Christ
- Whitehill Church of Christ



Jamie's Ministry of Food

Jamie's Ministry of Food is an 8-week course developed by chef Jamie Oliver whose purpose is to encourage healthier eating habits.

Ipswich tenants were first introduced to the course in 2021, and the patronage of an anonymous church donor in early 2023 helped more tenants share in the joy of the class. For our tenants, the two courses have been opportunities to develop foundational cooking skills, get to know their neighbours and challenge themselves in a safe environment.

The course typically has an associated cost, but was entirely free for our tenants. Transportation and access to disposable income can be a barrier for low-income earners to accessing activities like this, support and services. Where possible, we try to reduce these barriers for our tenants; in this situation, Ipswich's two Housing Chaplains transported participants to and from the venue if they could not make their own way there.

At the end of the course, each participant received a certificate of completion, but many said they were rewarded in more personal ways with new friendships and, in some cases, new personal accomplishments.

"Travelling together helped them to grow their friendships as they were able to chat about the class and then also chat generally about life," one of Ipswich's Chaplains said.

Tenant Robert found himself more confident after attending the course. "It gives you more confidence to go out because, if you can do this, you can get out and do other things," Robert said.

Made with heart: Quilts from the Caloundra Church of Christ

The Caloundra Church of Christ is home to a group of craftswomen known as the Care to Quilt Ladies. This group meets every Friday morning to create quilts while sharing a morning tea.

Since starting their group in 2006, they have handmade over 4800 quilts. They generously donate these quilts to our organisation whose clients benefit from having something made with love to keep them warm.

We have been the grateful recipients of over 200 quilts, which we have given to people from all over our communities who are doing it a bit tough—families with children, singles, seniors and everyone in between.

This is one of the many ways our affiliated churches support the mission of Churches of Christ.



New friends flourish at Hillcrest



Churches of Christ has a large network of partner churches located all across Australia. Many staff and tenants attend a Church of Christ or have some other form of connection to them. We actively work with our churches, who often draw on their communities to support us and our tenants.

The tenant social club at Marblewood Apartments in Hillcrest has a busy schedule, from running events for their neighbours to organising fundraisers for local charities. When they purchased soil and gardening equipment to create a communal vegetable garden, they realised they would need help with some of the more physical aspects of the project.



With the support of two volunteers from the Springwood Church of Christ, Josh and Hugo, a half-day working bee helped residents and staff create what the social club had been envisioning—a shared space that both the Marblewood Apartments residents and nearby residential aged care clients could use to gather fresh herbs and vegetables.

Josh and Hugo were overseas visitors participating in the Pais Movement. Pais creates partnerships between organisations all over the world, with some participants boarding overseas with a host family for approximately a year, during which time they work within the local community.



Josh and Hugo were connected with the Marblewood Apartments community by one of Churches of Christ's Regional Engagement Partners, a staff member who is responsible for creating connections between church and organisation, helping to create outcomes like this one.

Top: Tenants Meredith and Chris preparing the garden bed for new plants.
Middle: Josh and Hugo take a break from the heavy work
Bottom: Left to right – Chris, Yvonne, Chaplain Graham, REP Kerry, Meredith, Sue, Josh, Jacob and Hugo celebrating a long day's work.

Years in the making: Chaplain John Weaver



For more than four years, John Weaver has been a Housing Chaplain supporting tenants in the Brisbane region. We sat down with John to discuss what called him to the role of a Chaplain and what he finds most rewarding about the position.

What in your history led you to where you are now?

I come from a social work background and worked for Social Services in the United Kingdom for around 18 years. After working as a general social worker, I moved to a specialist intellectual disability and mental health team. I then became the manager for that team leading up to emigrating to Melbourne at the end of 2009. In parallel to this, I was an active church member and church leader. In Melbourne I joined a mental health NGO as a Program Manager, then became Area Manager. In 2014, my family and I moved to Queensland and I took up post as General Manager for sub-acute and residential services at the NGO. These were good times, but God came a-knocking!

How did your path lead you to becoming a Housing Chaplain?

Coming from a social work background, I always had a heart for people. Although I had a degree in theology, I never worked in a Christian setting professionally and always felt at peace being a Christian working 'in the marketplace'. However, my heart began to change after working for so long with so many people who didn't know the light of Christ. This desire intensified over a couple of years, so I began looking in the Christian field professionally and found chaplaincy.

What is the role of a Housing Chaplain who provides pastoral care?

Housing Chaplains offer a vital service to residents who need support on their journey. Securing a safe place to live is just the beginning, and some people need help to settle, feel safe, sustain their tenancy, and thrive. People make communities, so another role of chaplaincy is to nurture healthy communities by providing opportunities to bring people together. We like to do this in partnership with the residents who live there. Of course, we also provide religious services and spiritual direction.

What does a typical day look like?

My day can vary but it always incorporates socially connecting with people on a one-to-one and group basis. Social connectedness promotes a sense of belonging, being cared for, and supported, particularly for those who are disconnected from their families or communities. Social connectedness can help grow a trusting relationship which is essential for when life takes a sharp turn. For some, Chaplains can be a person to turn to when there's no one else, and can help prevent a situation becoming a crisis. On a practical level, this can include being a sounding board for people to explore their own spiritual or life journey, process their life situation, and come to their own decisions. It can equally be supporting people in making referrals to agencies that can offer longer term support to maximise their independence, health and safety, and tenancy sustainment, or in making their own social connections.

What is most rewarding about your role?

Connecting with the people with whom we work, without a shadow of a doubt. It is such a privilege to be allowed to walk alongside people on their life journey and hopefully show the love and light of Christ in conversation, practical support, or community development. Meeting people where they are in life and supporting someone through a difficult chapter, signposting towards positive supports, or being a sounding board to help people process their situation is gold. Just being part of a community is very precious, as is being part of a holistic team with our housing colleagues. It's wonderful seeing people reconnect with their friends and families and lives blossom. For me, I see Chaplaincy as faith in action, and showing the love and light of Christ in a world which has given many people a rough ride. Chaplaincy can actively prevent people from slipping through the cracks and is a significant point of difference from other organisations.

God is active here, and I can't think of anything else I'd rather be doing.

The Year in Review is an annual Churches of Christ Housing Services publication that highlights our achievements and spotlights our clients, staff and partnerships.

We believe that people with lived experiences have valuable insights to share and we kindly thank those who have contributed to this publication.

We look forward to the opportunities and successes that 2024 will bring.

From left to right: Gus Taddeo General Manager, Mike Folland Interim CEO, the Hon Meaghan Scanlon MP, Queensland State Minister for Housing, Jennifer Howard MP, Member for Ipswich and Jim Madden MP, Member for West Ipswich at the Basin Pocket site.





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