

# EVOLVEHOUSING

ANNUAL REPORT 2019–2020





# WHAT WE DO

At Evolve Housing, we aim to do more than put a roof over our residents' heads. We offer them a place in a thriving and inclusive community, with access to support programs to enhance every part of their life.



## A HOME

Our social and affordable housing residents are offered a home that is well suited to their needs and budget. Our properties are of a high quality. We are highly responsive to maintenance requests and manage our residents' tenancies fairly.

Every new social housing resident is offered a needs assessment with a Specialist Support Worker when they sign their tenancy agreement. A Personal Support Plan is then drawn up which addresses personal health, wellbeing, education, training and employment needs, and includes referrals to external support partners if required.

## A PERSONAL SUPPORT PLAN



## A NEW SKILL

We offer support for residents who wish to up-skill or change careers by providing access to an Employment Support Officer, exclusive job and training opportunities, and workshops relating to digital skills and money management.

We aim to create thriving and inclusive communities where people feel a sense of belonging. We regularly hold free and low-cost social events and activities that cater to the needs of our residents. These events are an opportunity to meet neighbours, feel part of a community, and enjoy new experiences.

## AN EXPERIENCE



## A VOICE

Residents have the opportunity to advocate on behalf of their communities through the Resident Advisory Group, which provides input into Evolve Housing programs and initiatives. There are also opportunities to volunteer, such as by joining our resident phone service called the Friendship Aged Network.

Residents have access to a variety of exclusive grants to help them get active within their community or improve their lives. We offer grants to support secondary and tertiary students, and to support young people to access sporting and physical activities.

## A GRANT OR FINANCIAL HELP





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November, 2020



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Evolve Housing acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land where we deliver our housing and services. We acknowledge and pay our respects to all Elders past, present and future. We welcome all First Nations People to our services, as we walk together towards reconciliation.

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 evolvehousing

## ENVIRONMENT

Evolve Housing cares about the environment. This Annual Report is printed on FSC® certified paper traceable to certified sources.



COVER PHOTO: Miajan, Evolve Housing resident

# **EVOLVE**HOUSING

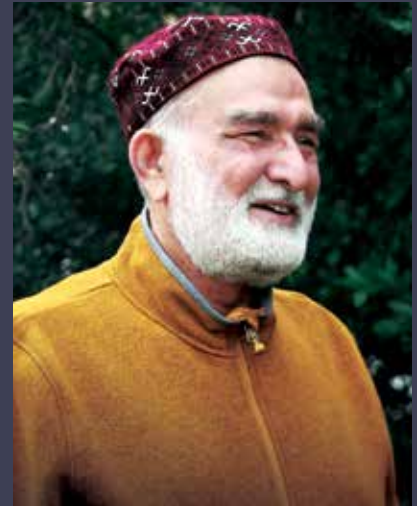
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## CEO MESSAGE

LYALL GORMAN

I am pleased to present to you our FY 2019–2020 Annual Report. While this year has been an impactful and challenging one for all of us, it bears a special significance to me as the end of June marked my first full financial year as CEO of Evolve Housing.

When I came on board in May 2019, I was fortunate enough to be taking over an organisation that was already financially strong, equipped with robust business practices and resources, and staffed by a team who are passionate and dedicated to their mission.

Reflecting on the past 12 months, I can confidently say that working collectively, our Evolve Housing team has improved on this solid foundation even further and continued to achieve outstanding results across our Evolve family and broader.

We have successfully completed a new affordable housing project in Newcastle, and increased our affordable and disability housing portfolios.

In the span of six weeks, we refurbished 142 social housing units in Arncliffe to be used as emergency accommodation, and are now managing these tenancies. Through our Opportunity Pathways program, we have worked with 219 participants in the past year, helping them as they pursue their employment goals. We restructured our Resident Advisory Group to be more effective and representative. We facilitated an independent review of our Work Health and Safety management system and also embarked upon a digital information transformation project.

We laid the foundations for our future growth by building our Strategic Plan 2020–2023, which directs our actions for the next three years to pursue and deliver attainable

and clear outcomes and targets. This plan will keep us on track to achieve our goals despite the tumultuous COVID driven external environment we are currently working in.

These achievements are just a small fraction of the hard work that was completed by our wonderful team in the 2019–2020 financial year, despite the difficulties that COVID-19 posed. The risk management policies that we had in place, along with a strong and tight-knit company culture, meant that even while physically separated, we were still able to work effectively as a team to support clients and each other.

The success of our service capacity is reflected in the annual Resident Satisfaction Survey results, which showed that 86% of tenants were satisfied with our service. We also generated an annual total surplus of over \$4M with a view to re-investing this back into community housing and expanding the range of support programs on offer to our residents.

As we enter a new year, uncertainty abounds, but the one thing I am sure of is that our housing and social support services will only become more in demand. I am confident that our team will be able to rise to the challenge and improve our services even more in 2020–2021 and I greatly look forward to sharing that journey with you.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'L. Gorman', written in a cursive style.

Lyall Gorman, CEO, Evolve Housing



# CHAIRMAN MESSAGE

## PAUL HOWLETT



The turbulent events of 2020 have demonstrated that safe, secure and affordable housing is absolutely vital to securing the health and wellbeing of every Australian. Here at Evolve Housing, our team works tirelessly to create more housing and support our residents, and I am very proud to present our recent achievements to you in this report.

There has long been a pressing need for more community housing in Australia and the global outbreak of COVID-19 in early 2020 has exacerbated this need and highlighted underlying weaknesses and inequalities in our country's housing system. While this is a difficult time for all Australians, I am confident that Evolve Housing will be able to play a meaningful role in stimulating the economy and creating more suitable, reasonably priced housing in response to the crisis.

In February 2020, we updated our Strategic Plan to ensure that it remains relevant to our operating environment. Our four main goals are to achieve sustainable growth, enhance business practice and capacity, provide quality homes and services, and improve social outcomes for our clients. We are aiming to provide housing assistance to more than 10,000 people by 2023.

While our goals are ambitious, they are backed by a solid, detailed and realistic plan that outlines the actions we must take to achieve our objectives. One of the main drivers of our growth is our expansion outside the metropolitan Sydney area into regional NSW and even interstate.

We also recently completed a housing project in Newcastle. We have been able to achieve this expansion due to productive, mutually beneficial partnerships with other organisations who have resources and knowledge that complement our own.

Our membership in Centacare Evolve Housing (CEH) in Tasmania has enabled us to extend our reach and provide more housing in a state that desperately needs it. CEH was established in 2014, and since then has acquired a portfolio of 1377 properties and \$81M in equity. It has become one of Tasmania's most successful community housing providers, regularly being chosen to manage state government housing and programs, and has an excellent Strategic Plan in place to facilitate even more growth.

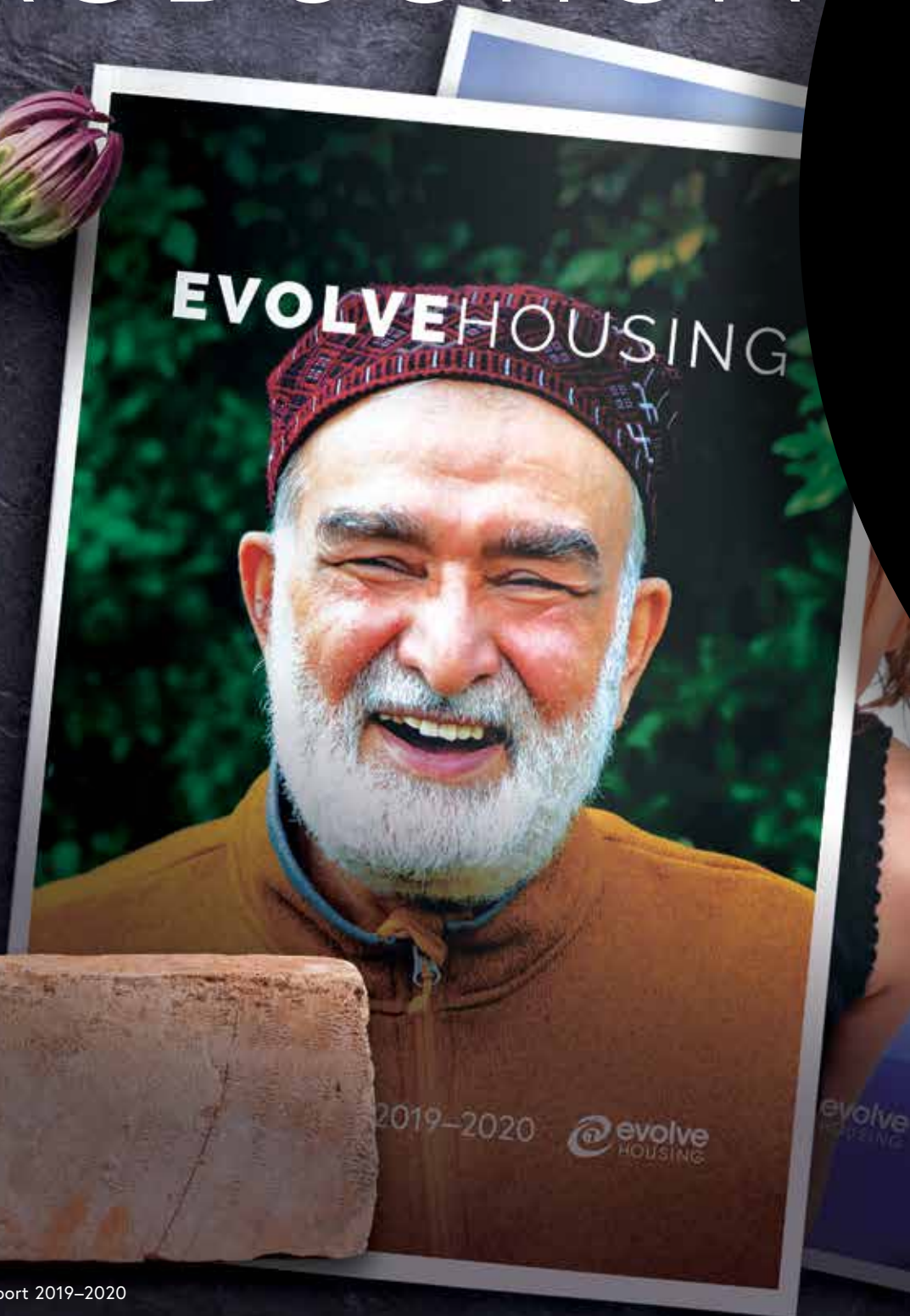
In NSW, our joint venture with fellow community housing provider Pacific Link Housing has allowed us to deliver quality homes in Roselands and the Central Coast, including a newly completed project in Canton Beach.

With a strong plan guiding our progress, great partnerships in place, and a devoted team of professionals working for us, Evolve Housing has been able to achieve a lot during the past financial year. I have no doubt that this success will continue in 2020–2021, and I look forward to working hard alongside my fellow Directors and Evolve Housing staff to deliver more homes and support for those in need.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Paul Howlett', written in a cursive style.

Paul Howlett, Chair, Evolve Housing

# 01 INTRODUCTION



# ABOUT EVOLVE HOUSING

At Evolve Housing, we believe in everyone's right to a home — somewhere to feel safe and secure and to be part of a community. Although our core service is providing housing to those in need, we do more than simply put a roof over our residents' heads. We also offer programs, activities and services that enrich our residents' lives and help them feel connected to their community.

## OUR VISION

Thriving communities for all people.

## OUR PURPOSE

To enable more people to live in quality homes in thriving and inclusive communities.

## WHO WE ARE

Evolve Housing is one of the largest not-for-profit community housing providers in Australia. As of 30 June 2020, we managed 4,054 properties housing 8,419 residents. We have a presence in 32 local government areas across the Sydney and Hunter regions, as well as the NSW Central Coast and Mid North Coast. We manage key worker housing in Victoria\*, and also have a presence in Tasmania through our membership of Centacare Evolve Housing.

## WHAT WE DO

At Evolve Housing, we provide:

- Safe and secure housing for people experiencing homelessness or those on lower incomes experiencing housing stress,
- Support services, programs, financial grants and activities that empower individuals, build their capabilities, and provide pathways to greater independence, and

- Quality, accessible, affordable housing developments that build strong, integrated and sustainable communities.

We provide subsidised housing to people living on very low to moderate incomes who are unable to pay for appropriate housing in the private market.

Through alliances with governments, developers and investors we create new community housing stock to help meet a growing demand. Our properties cater to a diverse range of needs, household sizes and incomes, so we can offer a variety of options to our residents.

We help people to reach their potential by providing support services and programs. These include education and training programs that provide opportunities for residents to participate in their communities and pursue their career aspirations. We also offer tailored support plans to address certain areas of need in residents' lives including physical health, mental health, education and job readiness. Our regular social activities bring people together, which helps residents to feel welcome and part of a local community.

\* In association with Jens Veal Byrne Pty Limited ABN 56 608 923 646 trading as EchoRealty in Victoria under licence from Evolve Housing Limited ABN 16 127 713 731



# YEAR IN REVIEW

ACHIEVEMENTS OVER THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2019–2020



## AWARDS WON 2019–2020

- Social and Community Service Program of the Year Award, Real Estate Business Awards 2020, awarded for our profit-for-purpose real estate agency EchoRealty
- Silver Award, General Award category, Australasian Reporting Awards 2020
- Winner, Project Leadership and Innovation category, PowerHousing Awards 2020, awarded for our Guildford development Tetris Village
- Highly Commended, Rising Star category, PowerHousing Awards 2020, awarded to Project Officer Madeleine Kelly
- Business of the Year, Western Sydney Awards for Business Excellence 2019
- Excellence in Business, Western Sydney Awards for Business Excellence 2019
- Commendation, Affordable Development category, Urban Development Institute of Australia (UDIA) NSW Awards, awarded for our Guildford development Tetris Village
- Exceptional Social Enterprise within Western Sydney, ZEST Awards 2019, awarded to EchoRealty
- Leading Housing Development, NSW Australasian Housing Institute Awards, awarded for our Penrith development Harts Landing
- Excellence in Social Housing, NSW Australasian Housing Institute Awards, awarded for our Personal Support Plans program
- Inspirational Team Member, NSW Australasian Housing Institute Awards, awarded to Charlie Souma, Senior Manager at EchoRealty.



## FORMED PARTNERSHIP WITH NSWALC HOUSING

Evolve Housing has taken the first steps in an exciting new relationship with NSWALC Housing Ltd, with the two organisations signing a Memorandum of Understanding in late 2019.

NSWALC Housing Ltd is a newly formed independent company established by NSW Aboriginal Land Council to achieve its goal of providing more housing to Aboriginal people.

The MOU contemplates the possibility of Evolve Housing working collaboratively with NSWALC Housing Ltd to pursue opportunities that will generate better service outcomes for the people our organisations help.



## COMPLETION OF NEW ENERGY PROJECTS

Evolve Housing completed Stage 2 of its sustainability program, Evolving Green, in January 2020. We partnered with the NSW Government and Allume Energy to trial new, cutting-edge solar energy technology at a social housing apartment building occupied by predominantly senior residents.

The technology, which at the time had never before been used in NSW, enables a centralised solar photovoltaic (PV) system to be shared by multiple residents in an apartment building. This lowers residents' energy bills by providing energy in a more efficient, cost effective manner.

Two other social housing apartment buildings had traditional solar PV systems installed, and a total of 57 residents are benefitting from these upgrades. Evolve Housing has

installed a real-time monitoring tool on all its solar PV systems to enable remote monitoring of system performance, identification of operational issues, and results-tracking of achieved energy and cost savings.

Residents are forecast to benefit from savings of between \$405 and \$782 per year on their energy bills.

Other upgrades include replacing 20 aged hot water systems across various social housing buildings with more efficient heat pump systems (estimated to deliver savings of \$410-\$520 per year for each residence) and installing energy-saving LEDs with motion sensors in the underground car parking areas of five apartment buildings.

In total, Phase 2 of Evolving Green is anticipated to save 398,930 kWh

per annum, reducing CO2 emissions by 395 tonnes per year, which is equivalent to removing approximately 116 cars off the road annually.

## 2019–2020 YEAR IN REVIEW

CONTINUED



### MANAGING PROPERTIES FOR THE SYDNEY OLYMPIC PARK AUTHORITY

In November 2019, Evolve Housing took over management of 46 affordable housing properties in Sydney Olympic Park for key workers on low to moderate incomes who are employed locally. As of 30 June 2020, we are now managing 62 properties for the Sydney Olympic Park Authority.

The properties are spread across multiple developments in Sydney Olympic Park and are all high quality, light-filled and located nearby amenities, eateries and public transport. They are being managed by EchoRealty, our profit-for-purpose real estate agency.

“We were thrilled that we were awarded the tender to manage these properties by the Sydney Olympic

Park Authority, and I think our success can be attributed to the experience, knowledge and strong reputation of our affordable housing division, EchoRealty,” Evolve Housing CEO Lyall Gorman said.

“Our involvement in this property portfolio reinforces EchoRealty’s position as the market leader in affordable housing management in New South Wales, and we will bring our usual high standard of professional, supportive property management to this project to ensure that both the residents and Sydney Olympic Park Authority are satisfied with our services.”

### EXPANSION INTO VICTORIA

In 2020, EchoRealty expanded interstate into Victoria\*, managing key worker affordable housing in association with Altis Property Partners on behalf of superannuation provider Aware Super.

A launch event was held at Moonee Ponds in February 2020, and was attended by Evolve Housing CEO Lyall Gorman and representatives from Aware Super and Altis Property Partners.

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## TOGETHER HOME PROJECT

Evolve Housing was chosen to deliver the NSW Government's Together Home program in the South Western Sydney, Western Sydney, and Nepean Blue Mountains areas.

In total, the \$36 million state-wide project will deliver stable housing and wrap-around support to hundreds of rough sleepers, and is the largest housing response dedicated to rough sleepers in NSW history. It involves securing homes from the private rental market to be used by those experiencing homelessness, who will be able to live in the properties for two years.

Evolve Housing received more than \$4 million of funding from the NSW Government to source and manage tenancies in 46 homes for people

experiencing homelessness in the regions where we are delivering the program.

During this time, we will also be offering support services to help the tenants rebuild their lives, with the aim of transitioning to community housing or a private market tenancy.



## TRANSITION TO 20-YEAR LEASES WITH NSW LAND AND HOUSING CORPORATION

Evolve Housing was one of the Tier 1 community housing providers who submitted an Expression of Interest to the NSW Land and Housing Corporation (LAHC) to transition its existing three year leases to 20-year leases.

Evolve Housing plans to transition approximately 1,100 properties that it leases from LAHC, which we use to provide social housing.

The contractual certainty afforded by 20-year leases will allow Evolve Housing to plan asset maintenance further into the future, lower maintenance costs by negotiating longer-term contracts, and leverage more secure, longer-term finance.

# 2019–2020 YEAR IN REVIEW

## EVENTS



### OPENING OF ROSELANDS

In August 2019, we launched our new affordable housing development on King Georges Road in the Canterbury-Bankstown suburb of Roselands.

The 26-apartment building was developed through a joint venture between Evolve Housing and Pacific Link Housing, supported by the NSW Government.

The launch was attended by our project partners, Mayor of the City of Canterbury-Bankstown Councillor Khal Asfour, and other dignitaries.



### STREET LIBRARY LAUNCH IN BLACKTOWN

Around 100 residents living in an Evolve Housing unit block in Blacktown are now able to enjoy free books with their new Street Library, which was installed and launched in November 2019.

A Street Library is a small book library that can be accessed by anyone within the community. Books were generously donated by Booktopia to kick off the library collection.

The launch event was held on Wednesday 6 November, with Evolve Housing staff and 47 residents in attendance. Everyone celebrated the

new library, discussed the importance of reading, enjoyed a pizza dinner and watched a movie together.

The street library was decorated with artwork by our resident Todd Darward. Todd, a skilled artist, is legally blind and used traditional Aboriginal techniques, such as dot painting.

## TOPPING OUT EVENT IN NEWCASTLE

On December 6 2019, we held a topping out ceremony at our Newcastle affordable housing development to celebrate construction having reached the highest point of the building.

A topping out celebration is a tradition in the construction industry that involves temporarily placing a tree on top of a building when construction reaches its highest point.

The event was organised by our builder GWH and attended by Deputy Lord

Mayor of Newcastle Declan Clausen. Representatives from Evolve Housing and the Hunter and Central Coast Development Corporation were also in attendance.

This project reached practical completion on 11 June 2020 and is fully tenanted. It includes 4 Specialist Disability Accommodation apartments.



## CONVERSATIONS OVER BREAKFAST

Evolve Housing was proud to participate in 'Conversations Over Breakfast: Indicators. Invest. Impact.' in mid-February 2020. The event involved western Sydney community service providers uniting to discuss the biggest issues affecting the area. It was organised by the Western Sydney Community Forum and was co-sponsored by Evolve Housing and Western Sydney University, who hosted the event at their Milperra Campus.

The conversation panel included The Hon. Gareth Ward, Minister for Families, Communities and Disability

Services and representatives from local not-for-profits.

Discussion focused on the need for increased infrastructure and social services in western Sydney, especially relating to disability, homelessness, youth, social and affordable housing and early intervention.

Evolve Housing CEO Lyall Gorman delivered the closing address, emphasising that these issues are complex and can only be solved with collaboration between all three tiers of government, the private sector and not-for-profit organisations.

## CHRISTMAS PARTY

Evolve Housing celebrated the festive season in style with a pirate-themed Christmas party held at the National Maritime Museum in Pyrmont in December.

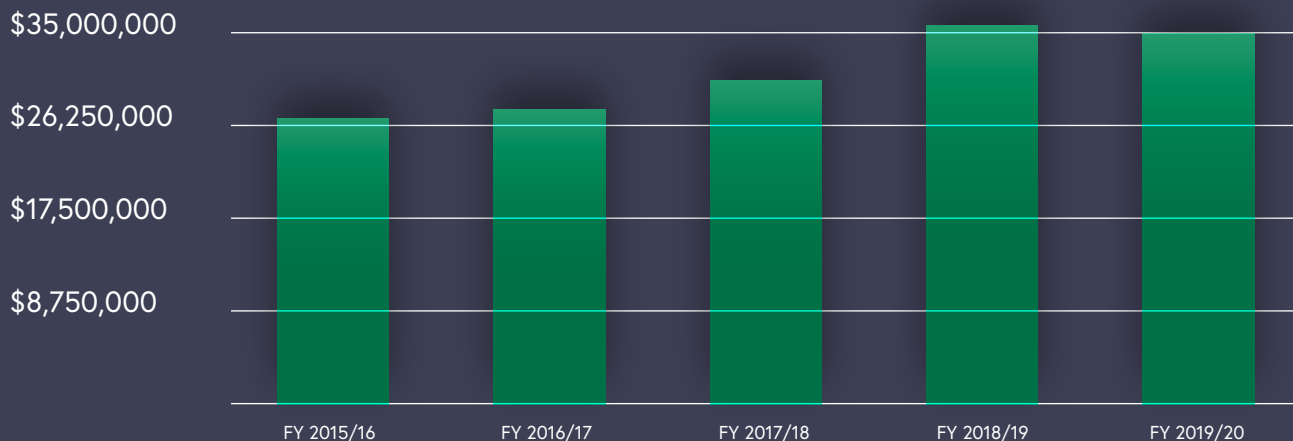
Over 150 residents of all ages and backgrounds attended the free event, which was held on Sunday 8 December. Residents were able to enter and explore the museum and ship exhibits all day.

There was also a delicious lunch and a range of activities including decorating Christmas tree shaped cupcakes, an arts and crafts station, face painting, a pirate dress-up zone and a pirate treasure hunt inside the museum for kids. Santa and his helper also made an appearance, handing out presents to all children who attended the event.



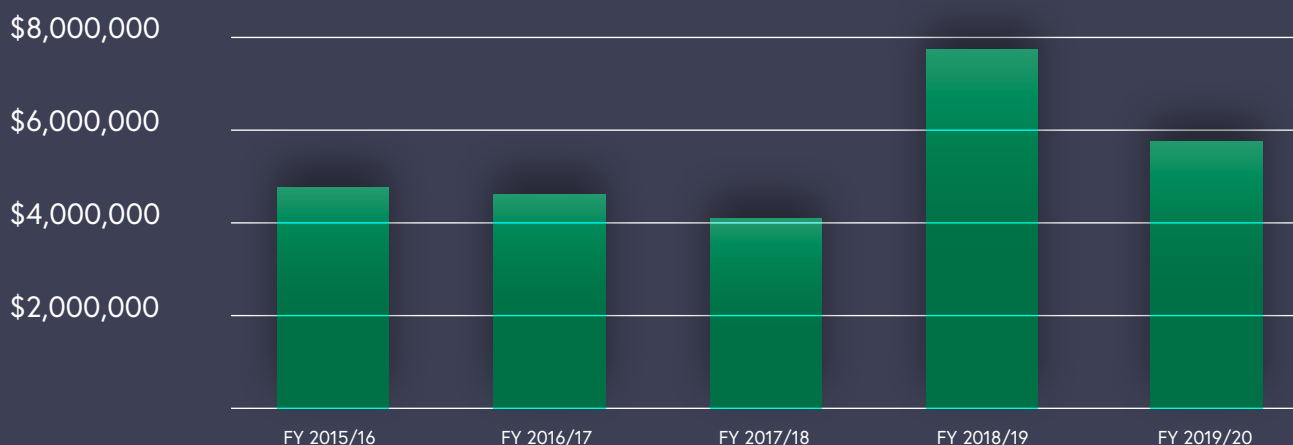
## 2019–2020 RESULTS

### RENTAL INCOME



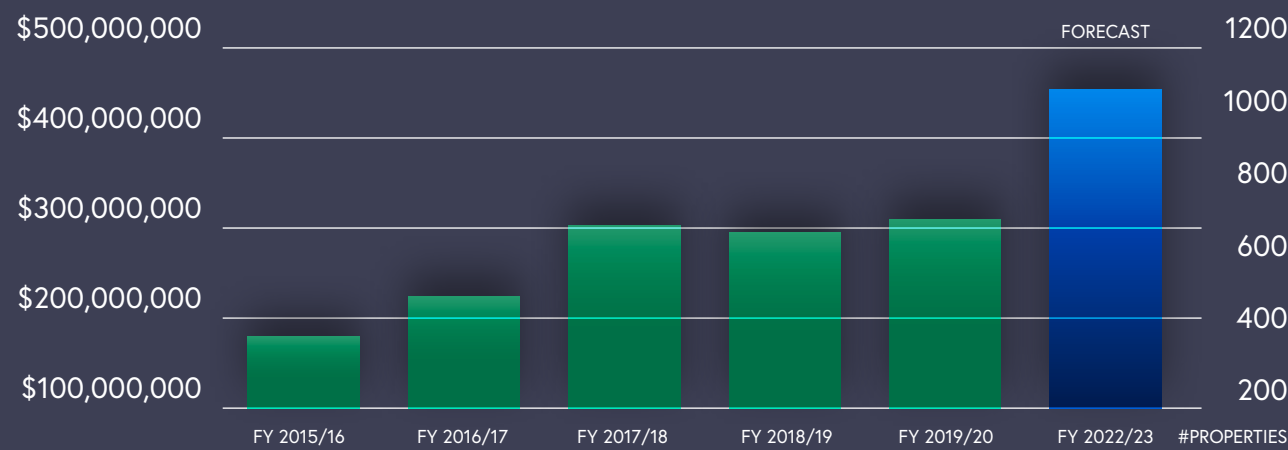
Evolve Housing has managed to steadily grow its average rental income with continuous investment in owned and managed properties. The decline in financial year 2019–2020 in average weekly rental income has largely been due to Evolve Housing's decision not to increase rents by CPI due to COVID-19 and reduce rents for those tenancies impacted by job losses or reduced incomes.

### OPERATING EBITDA



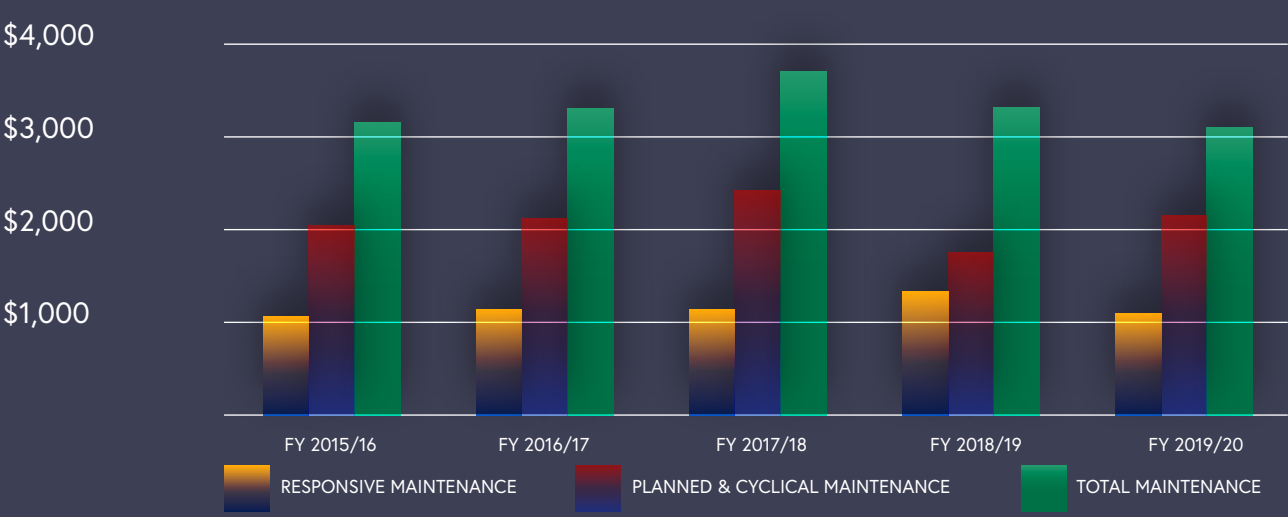
Evolve Housing's operating income has been growing steadily despite the fall of NRAS grants effective financial year 2019–2020. Nominal EBITDA (Earnings Before Interest, Taxes, Depreciation and Amortisation) movement is largely attributable to commitments for maintenance in respective years and timing of investment in ICT growth infrastructure.

# OWNED PROPERTY VALUES



Over the last 5 years, Evolve Housing has managed to increase the number of owned properties by more than double including fulfilling its vesting commitments on the stimulus properties around 2 years ahead of target and has leveraged this to continue to invest in community housing. Evolve Housing will be able to grow its owned portfolio base to just over 1000 properties by 2023.

# MAINTENANCE EXPENDITURE\*



We have reduced average maintenance cost and improved property condition through effective processes and competitive maintenance contracts. Evolve Housing has a very comprehensive asset management plan and maintains its properties above industry standards. Regular internal reviews are conducted against external industry benchmarks relative to property types and age to ensure adequacy of resources to continually maintain these high standards.

\* Average maintenance expenditure per dwelling/annum

## COMPLIANCE PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

A quarterly compliance assessment process is undertaken by the Department of Communities and Justice to assess the performance of community housing providers. For the past three years, we have exceeded all compliance area benchmarks. We are proud of this achievement and continue to strive to exceed, rather than meet, sector and regulatory targets.

### TURNAROUND\*

#### DAYS EARLY/LATE

Relates to average turnaround time in days — this figure is the number of days below / above benchmark across all vacancy episodes. Benchmark is 14 days.

LATE

BENCHMARK

EARLY

-6.69 DAYS

-6.28 DAYS

-8.19 DAYS

-9.58 DAYS

-8.78 DAYS

-7.36 DAYS

Financial year and quarter	2017–2018 $\alpha$	2018–2019 $\alpha$	Q1 2019–2020	Q2 2019–2020	Q3 2019–2020	Q4 2019–2020
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\* Turnaround refers to the time taken to complete property repairs and allocation of a new tenant.  $\alpha$  Average across 4 quarters

### OCCUPANCY

#### % PROPERTIES TENANTED

Benchmark for properties occupied as a proportion of all properties on last day of quarter — DCJ benchmark is 97%.

98.79%

98.45%

98.95%

99.33%

99.23%

98.75%

BENCHMARK

Financial year and quarter	2017–2018 $\alpha$	2018–2019 $\alpha$	Q1 2019–2020	Q2 2019–2020	Q3 2019–2020	Q4 2019–2020
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$\alpha$  Average across 4 quarters

### RESIDENT SATISFACTION SURVEY

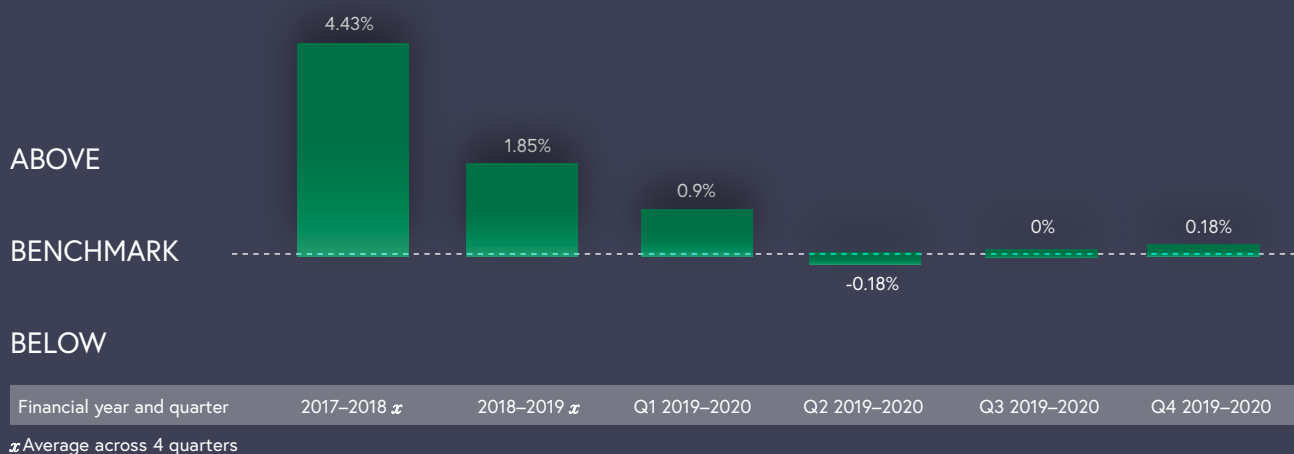
BENCHMARK CATEGORY	2016–2017	2017–2018	2018–2019	2019–2020	NRSCH BENCHMARK	CHIA BENCHMARK
Overall satisfaction	83%	80%	85%	86%	75%	84%
Property condition	80%	74%	81%	83%	75%	84%
Repairs & maintenance	74%	70%	75%	76%	75%	77%
Information provision	81%	82%	86%	85%	NA	84%
Communication	79%	78%	83%	84%	NA	82%
Tenant involvement	72%	65%	79%	77%	NA	75%

The National Regulatory System for Community Housing and the Community Housing Industry Association (CHIA) sets community housing sector benchmarks in relation to Resident Satisfaction Survey outcomes. Since the 2016–2017 financial year, we have exceeded a number of benchmarks and continue to strive to improve in all areas of operations and to improve our services to residents. Outside of this benchmarking process, we practice continual self-assessment and seek resident feedback through a range of surveys and processes.

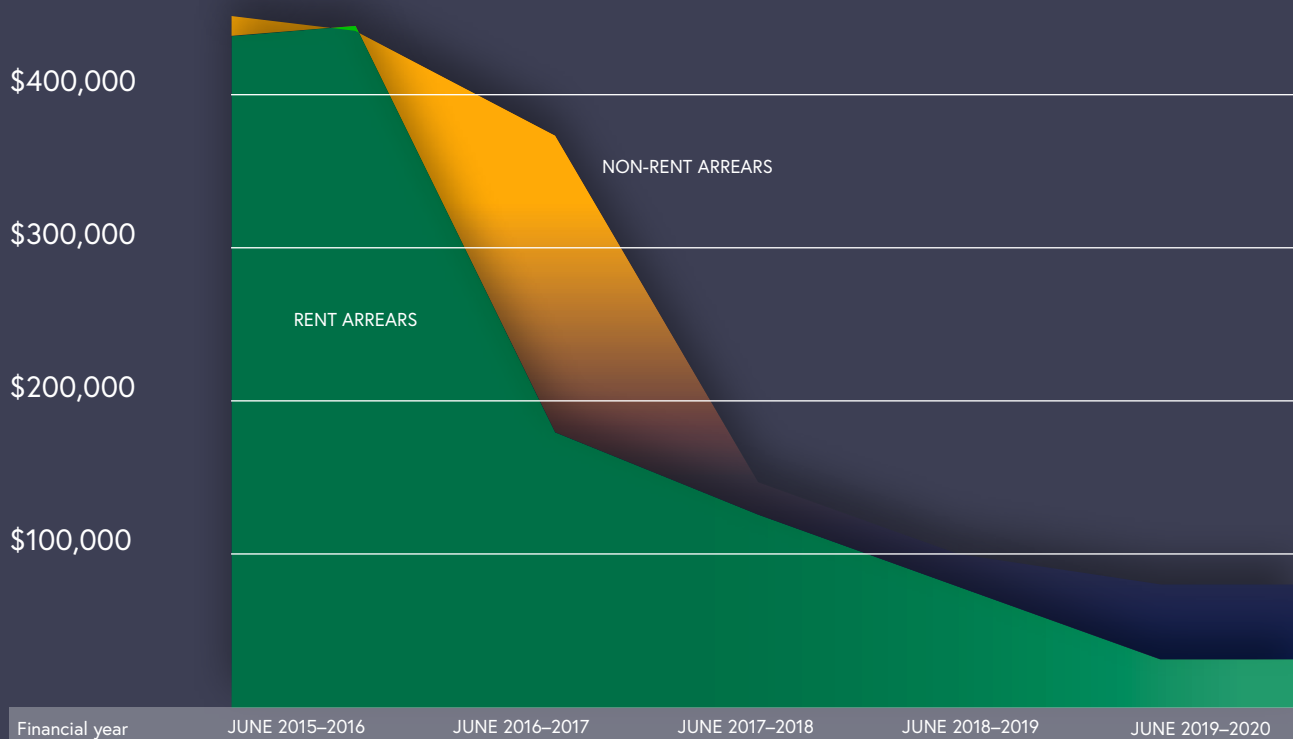


## COMMUNITY HOUSING LEASING PROGRAM (CHLP)

The CHLP result is based on a weighted count (to get the average number over the quarter). Evolve Housing's CHLP quota is 553 properties. Positive percentage indicates over achievement.



### 2019-2020 RENTAL ARREARS: 0.09% RENT AND 0.25% NON-RENT



This graph demonstrates that more of our social housing residents have been able to meet their rental payment from year to year and have been able to sustain their tenancies despite the financial challenges posed by COVID-19. At June 2020, rent arrears were \$32,595, a decrease of 93% when compared to 2015-2016 results. The non-rent arrears (e.g. utilities and other recoverable charges) stood at \$90,208 at the end of June 2020, an improvement of 79% over the 2015-2016 performance. As of June 2020, rent and non-rent arrears equate to 0.09% and 0.25% of our total income, respectively.

# IMPROVING OUR DIGITAL PROCESSES

Over the past financial year, Evolve Housing has been working on a number of projects to improve our digital processes and infrastructure to ensure that we can operate as efficiently and securely as possible.

## MOVING TO THE CLOUD

A major part of this journey has been moving our enterprise resource planning system to a solution called Software as a Service, which will be used by many different areas of our business (including HR, Contact Centre, Asset & Maintenance, Finance and Resident Services) to store important data and documents.

Adopting the cloud solution Software as a Service involves moving our data and integrated systems into the cloud, which will provide a more secure, robust service platform that can be accessed from any location and on any type of device.

Using the new cloud-based system will also help us to save costs and streamline our services.

This project began with a roadmap in October 2019 and is expected to go live from November 2020, after the testing, system preparation and User Acceptance Testing processes occur.

The cloud solution Software as a Service has been created by Tech1, who have also very generously donated 12 laptops to Evolve Housing.

We will be distributing these laptops to some of the young people who participate in our programs, to be used for their education.

## ADOPTING OFFICE 365

To allow our staff to work together effectively online, we will be adopting Office 365 and its suite of cloud collaboration tools.

Features include digital conferencing, voice calls, secure file sharing through OneDrive and SharePoint, chats through Teams, and version control of documents.

Using Office 365 will enhance collaboration across Evolve Housing, and also presents us with future opportunities to better engage with our residents (for example, through the creation of an extranet or through the secure sharing of documents that residents can directly access).

The whole platform can be accessed online, making it easy for teams to work together even if they are not all in the office.

We will also be migrating our IT infrastructure onto Microsoft Azure, which is a cloud-based platform.

This project will run parallel with our Tech1 project, and is expected to be running by November 2020.

## CLOUD CONTACT CENTRE

We have replaced our previous contact centre software with Genesis Pure Cloud, a cloud contact centre service that is fully web-based.

This new system is easy to manage and use, and gives our Contact Centre staff a lot more independence and control than they had previously, allowing them to schedule calendar events, make reports, access information, and chart Key Performance Indicators.

We have also upgraded our Contact Centre's Interactive Voice Response system, with a new recorded message that provides better prompts for our callers. In addition, to further improve our customer service, we have added a WebChat service to our website, which allows our residents to live chat with our Contact Centre staff in real time during our business hours.

This project began in February 2020 and was fully implemented by July 2020.

## WEBSITE CONSOLIDATION

We are undertaking a project to consolidate our website management so that one digital agency is responsible for all three of our websites (Evolve Housing, EchoRealty and Evolve Housing for Youth).

Currently, each website is under the management of a different digital media agency, which increases costs and complexity for our organisation.

Our consolidation project has two phases. In the first phase, we will bring the management of all websites under one vendor, using a tender process to determine the best candidate. The vendor will be responsible for hosting, managing the backend, and providing security.

In the second phase, we will be relaunching our EchoRealty website and migrating our property management system to another platform. This will allow us to more easily integrate our systems and publish our property listings directly onto the website.

Work on this project began in May 2020, and Phase 1 is anticipated to be completed in mid-November.

## CYBERSECURITY FRAMEWORK

To enhance our security, Evolve Housing is in the process of implementing a Cybersecurity Framework, which is a series of documents that sets out controls and practices to effectively manage cybersecurity risk.

This project was developed as a result of a 2019 assessment by an external provider of Evolve Housing's systems and environments, both physical and digital, which also included a check on our vendors.

After the assessment, Deloitte recommended that we create a Cybersecurity Framework to help us increase security in our business.

We will be adopting the ISO27001 specification, which is widely used in Australia, including by many government bodies.

The project to create the framework has been split up into two phases, with the most urgent priority policies to be implemented first, and then the remaining policies to be implemented from December 2020 to May 2021.

## PROJECTS IN THE PIPELINE

Other projects that Evolve Housing is working on include a contractors portal, an online rent calculator that will speed up our rent review process, new analytics dashboards, and digital inspection management assets.



# IMPROVING OUR GOVERNANCE

## SDA REGISTRATION

In July 2019, Evolve Housing achieved registration as a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Provider with the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission (the NDIS Commission). At Evolve Housing, we are committed to:

- ensuring internal systems and processes conform against NDIS Practice standards and quality indicators
- ensuring the capability and effectiveness of our management system in ensuring continual compliance with client, statutory and regulatory requirements.

## RISK MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK

The Risk & Compliance Team successfully carried out 22 control assurance reviews during the year as planned. Control assurance reviews are anchored around Evolve Housing's Risk Management Framework which articulates a solid risk and control architecture methodology. Where key risks are identified across the organisation, control assurance reviews seek to:

- identify the key controls in managing those risks
- test the design and operating effectiveness of those controls.

Where gaps are identified, actions are prioritised to address those gaps. These enable:

- an improved internal control environment
- proactive rather than reactive management of risks
- a level of assurance to stakeholders (internal and external)
- better identification of opportunities and threats
- better decision making and planning
- enhanced communication and reporting of risk.

## WHS AUDIT

At Evolve Housing, we are committed to ensuring a safe working environment for our employees.

During the year, an independent audit by an external provider was carried out to ensure our conformance to the WHS Act and Regulations. There are several ongoing projects and actions in place to ensure the continuous improvement of WHS practices within Evolve Housing.

## BOARD PORTAL

In line with Evolve Housing's commitment to continually improve on our information security practices, a Board Portal software was implemented during the year. This provided the Board with a modern governance tool that was secure and easy to use, allowing them to expand their reach outside the boardroom. Amongst many benefits, the software enables:

- easy management of agendas, annotations, documents, discussions of Board meetings, and board meeting minutes quickly and securely
- real-time updates to Board materials anywhere on-the-go, i.e. phone, tablet, computers or even offline
- collaboration in a secure environment so the Board can easily make annotations and share them with the whole Board or just individual members before, during or after a Board meeting.

In addition, Evolve Housing has achieved paperless Board meetings, which helps the environment and saves time and resources that would have been otherwise spent on compiling and distributing Board packs.

# JITENDER

## STAFF STORY

Jitender Balani is the General Manager, Strategic Asset Management and Business Growth and reflects on the growth of the community housing industry.

「BETWEEN 2012 AND 2020 NSW  
COMMUNITY HOUSING PROVIDERS  
HAVE INVESTED \$1.2 BILLION IN NSW」

The above headline from the recently published Community Housing Industry Association (CHIA) report, *A snapshot of the community housing sector in NSW*, sums up the story of the capacity, capability, growth and effectiveness of the NSW community housing sector.

It only feels like yesterday that I was working at the then NSW Office of Community Housing preparing the Planned Maintenance Guidelines in 2002 to lift the capability of the sector in the domain of asset maintenance. We also provided training to community housing providers to enable them to effectively maintain the property portfolios under their management.

Objectively observing the capability of the sector and seeing it grow exponentially, starting initially from simple maintenance planning to now creating large mixed tenure development projects is nothing short of a remarkable journey that feels like a miracle.

Over the last 20 years, the community housing sector has grown in all aspects; not only in size, effectiveness and capability but also in the expansion of complementary services that we all provide. We are no longer just housing providers that put roofs over people's heads. We now provide and coordinate

services through our valued partners to help our clients achieve their goals.

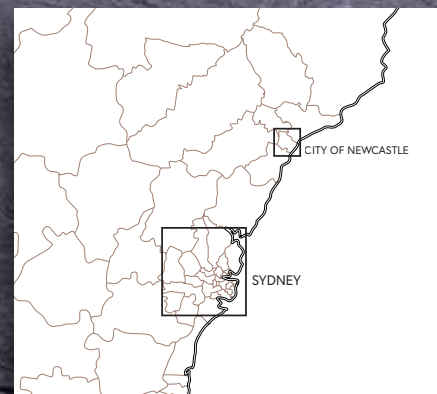
Community housing providers have risen to the challenges, embraced opportunities and have filled the market gap whenever there is a need to do so. For example, when the government changed the way it delivered disability services, Evolve Housing became a Specialist Disability Accommodation Provider. We are also now an Opportunity Pathways provider and a preferred partner for both government and private organisations.

When I reflect on the last 20 years and see how our sector has evolved, I feel privileged and proud to have been part of this journey.



# CELEBRATING OUR PAST AND LOOKING AT THE FUTURE

## HISTORY OF EVOLVE HOUSING



### 1992–1996

#### ORIGINS OF EVOLVE HOUSING

Evolve Housing's predecessors, the Western Suburbs Housing Co-Operative Ltd and Canterbury Bankstown Community Housing Co-Operative Ltd registered with the Department of Fair Trading in 1992 and 1996 respectively.

### 2007

#### 1,562 PROPERTIES

The Western Suburbs Housing Co-Operative Ltd and Canterbury Bankstown Community Housing Co-Operative Ltd merged into Affordable Community Housing Limited (ACHL), which incorporated and registered as a company limited by guarantee with ASIC in 2007. ACHL had 1,562 properties in this year.

### 2016

#### 3,020 PROPERTIES

Passing the 3,000 mark in properties and 7,500 residents. Registered as a Speciality Disability Accommodation Provider under the NDIS.



## 2020

### 4,054 PROPERTIES

Completion of Merewether Street, Newcastle in June increased our properties to 4,054.



## 2019

### 3,478 PROPERTIES

Completion of Tetris Village and King George's Road Roselands. These projects increased our property count to over 3,478.



## 2018

### EVOLVE HOUSING LIMITED

Name change to a new corporate identity.



## 2018

### HARTS LANDING

Launch of Harts Landing Penrith. Evolve Housing was the owner-developer for this flagship apartment complex.

## 2017

### ECHOREALTY & MYEVOLVE

Launch of EchoRealty.

Launch of **myevolve** contact centre and online resident centre.

# OUR STRATEGIC PLAN 2020–2023

This year, we launched our Strategic Plan 2020–2023, which will allow us to achieve the best possible results for our residents, our clients and the broader community.

The community housing sector is in a constant state of change, and by refining our plan, we are able to keep our strategies fresh and relevant to our context so that we are best placed to fulfil our purpose to enable more people to live in quality homes in thriving and inclusive communities.

Our new strategic plan creates a clear pathway that will guide each and every one of our team members as they work to create more community housing and provide support to our residents and clients. A high level summary of the plan is featured below. A more in-depth version is available by visiting our website at [www.evolvehousing.com.au](http://www.evolvehousing.com.au).

## STRATEGIC GOALS & OBJECTIVES

This strategic plan is directed towards four key goals:

- achieve sustainable growth
- enhance business practice and capacity
- provide quality homes and services and
- improve social outcomes for our clients.

These goals establish a framework and provide key indicators that mark our progress in the pursuit of our vision and purpose. They clearly summarise what success looks like for our organisation, and are critical factors for ongoing growth and achievement.

Objectives correspond with each goal and identify how they will be delivered over the next three years.

The objectives break down each goal into identifiable and achievable actions, and they assist us to develop more detailed operational plans. They are specific, measurable outcomes supporting the attainment of their associated goal.

Metrics associated with the strategic objectives indicate how we are progressing toward reaching our goals and allow us to adjust our approach to improve results.

Robust business review practices with governance measures are in place to ensure the appropriate levels of focus and activity are underway.

## PROJECT MANAGEMENT OFFICE

The primary means of implementing our strategic objectives is via our Annual Business Plan. To further assist in delivering the key initiatives within the plan, a Project Management Office (PMO) was established in May 2020.

This team is responsible for:

- Providing advice regarding the alignment of the project portfolio to our strategic objectives
- Developing and improving project standards
- Building project management maturity
- Proactively supporting staff to advance their projects
- Advocating for best practice
- Being a source of expertise for stakeholders.

The PMO initial priorities have been to help shape the 2020–2021 project portfolio, develop an implementation methodology and support project managers to deliver their projects on time, on quality and on budget.

## STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES



### ACHIEVE SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

- 1.1 Meet housing needs by increasing and diversifying housing supply
- 1.2 Optimise financial sustainability and performance
- 1.3 Develop and strengthen strategic partnerships and stakeholder engagement
- 1.4 Seek to influence policy settings for better housing outcomes.



### ENHANCE BUSINESS PRACTICE AND CAPACITY

- 2.1 Create a high performance culture that enables all team members to maximise their potential
- 2.2 Implement best practice governance systems
- 2.3 Develop and implement business systems that improve oversight and effectiveness.



### PROVIDE QUALITY HOMES AND SERVICES

- 3.1 Improve our residents' housing experience and sustain tenancies
- 3.2 Align housing to client needs
- 3.3 Improve client satisfaction through high quality service provision.

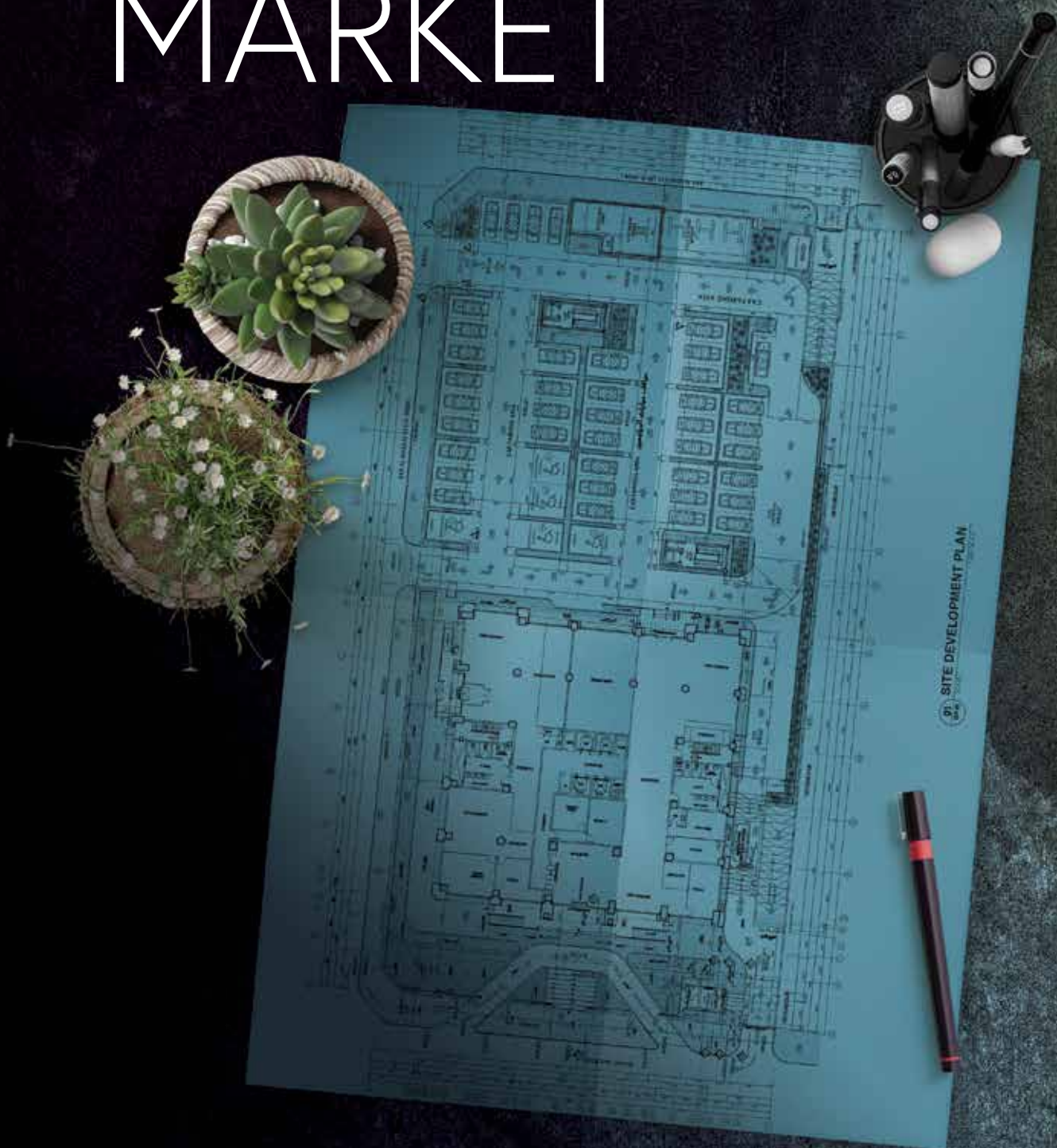


### IMPROVE SOCIAL OUTCOMES FOR OUR CLIENTS

- 4.1 Deliver programs and services that enhance our clients' health, wellbeing and social and economic participation
- 4.2 Create integrated and thriving communities
- 4.3 Implement and enhance systems to measure and evaluate social outcomes.



# 02 HOUSING MARKET





## TYPES OF HOUSING WE PROVIDE

As at 30 June 2020, Evolve Housing managed 4,054 properties across our portfolio, housing 8,419 residents. Our properties cater to a range of needs, which are outlined below.

### SOCIAL HOUSING

Social housing is secure, subsidised housing for people on low-to-very-low incomes who need accommodation. Social housing can be provided by the Land and Housing Corporation, the Department of Communities and Justice, or non-government community housing providers like Evolve Housing. Rental rates are calculated on a sliding scale, however most social housing residents will pay around 25% of their income.

As at 30 June 2020, Evolve Housing managed 2,641 social housing properties, which is 65% of Evolve Housing's property portfolio.

### AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Affordable housing is for low-to-moderate income households and is priced so that residents are able to meet their other basic living costs such as food, clothing, transport, medical care and education. Affordable housing residents pay a percentage of market rent, which is usually 74.9% if the property is owned by Evolve Housing or 80% if the property is managed by Evolve Housing on behalf of an investor-owner.

As at 30 June 2020 Evolve Housing managed 1,413 affordable housing properties, which is 35% of our portfolio.

# TYPES OF HOUSING WE PROVIDE

## CONTINUED

### YOUTH HOUSING

Evolve Housing for Youth (EHY) provides short-to-medium term transitional housing support services for up to 95 young people at any one time in the Parramatta and Cumberland local government areas. Clients are aged 16 to 24 and are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Individuals are generally given their own room in a share house with other young people, while families are given a property of their own.

We work alongside partner organisations to offer EHY clients support services including expert case management, advocacy, referral to other support services, brokerage, and assistance to enter the private housing market. We also offer guidance and programs that can help clients to develop important life skills relating to relationships, budgeting, and renting.

### DISABILITY HOUSING

Evolve Housing is a registered Specialist Disability Accommodation provider under the National Disability Insurance Scheme. We offer customised, accessible housing to people living with disability so that residents can maintain their independence in their everyday life. We work closely with other registered Supported Independent Living providers to provide high-quality homes for our residents. As at 30 June 2020, we managed 92 group homes as Specialist Disability Accommodation.

### SUPPORTED HOUSING

The Supported Housing Initiative is a three-way partnership between Evolve Housing, support providers and the clients of support providers; offering housing for residents on a short to medium-term basis while other partners provide complementary services.

### HOUSING FIRST WITH WRAPAROUND SUPPORT

Evolve Housing has been involved with numerous 'housing first' projects with wraparound support services to homeless people in the last financial year. We were chosen by the NSW Government to deliver the Together Home project in the South Western Sydney, Western Sydney and Nepean Blue Mountains areas.

The project secures homes from the private rental market for use by those experiencing homelessness for two years, during which time support services will be offered to residents.

In addition, as part of our commitment to supporting homeless and vulnerable people, Evolve Housing has been involved in a project to assist over 140 people who have been homeless or in urgent need of housing. These people are being housed in units in Arncliffe. Fifteen residents were accommodated through NEAMI's STEP-Link program that provides support and brokerage for furniture for rough sleepers who had temporarily been placed in motels around Sydney to protect them from the risk of COVID-19.

The remainder of people who have settled into Arncliffe have come from the NSW Government's priority housing waitlist, many of whom have experienced homelessness and living in crisis accommodation.

This work has been a fantastic demonstration of team effort between Evolve Housing, NEAMI and multiple support providers to help tenants transition into their new homes. Our contractors, Willowdene Constructions, generously donated more than

70 baskets with essential and practical items to help residents settle into their new homes.

Work is in progress to establish community gardens and introduce resident programs in the latter half of 2020.

## HOUSING FOR PEOPLE ESCAPING DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

Evolve Housing has joined with Women's Community Shelters for the Safe Foundations program, which supports people experiencing domestic violence and help them get into safe, affordable accommodation. We provide a home for up to three years, allowing people to make the move from crisis accommodation into long-term housing. Residents are offered tailored support plans that aim to improve health and wellbeing, while providing access to training and employment. Evolve Housing has also joined with Women's Community Shelters in a tender to seek funding for housing from the Commonwealth Government with the outcome pending at the time of writing.

## ABORIGINAL HOUSING

Currently, around 1.75% of our residents identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. Evolve Housing has an agreement with the Aboriginal Housing Office (AHO) to manage affordable housing properties designated for use by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Rent is set at a maximum of 30% of the resident's income plus their Commonwealth Rent Assistance entitlements, and is capped at 74.9% of the property's market rent value. The eligibility criteria, set by the AHO, specifies that residents must be employed. We manage 18 AHO properties in the Penrith area, which are located in Jordan Springs and Thornton.

## PROPERTY PORTFOLIO 30 JUNE 2020

PORTFOLIO	OWNED	MANAGED	TOTAL
Affordable Housing	262	1151	<b>1413</b>
Social Housing	485	2156	<b>2641</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>747</b>	<b>3307</b>	<b>4054</b>

65%

35%

SOCIAL HOUSING

AFFORDABLE HOUSING



# GERTRUDE

## RESIDENT STORY

When Gertrude found herself without a home in her late teens, she was forced to couch surf for years until a visit to the Evolve Housing for Youth office changed her life.

Gertrude, aged 27, now lives happily with her fiancée Martin and their two children Zephaniah (5 months old) and Elijah (3 years old) in an affordable housing property in Penrith. She works part-time as an in-home aged carer and has ambitions of buying her own home one day soon.

But Gertrude's life wasn't always this serene. She became homeless during her first year of university, after a dispute with her sister led to her being forced out of the Canberra home they were living in together.

With both parents living overseas, Gertrude wasn't sure of what to do, but eventually began couch surfing and living with other people for short stints. She applied for public housing in both Canberra, where there were no vacancies, and in Sydney, where she was told there was a 12-year waitlist.

In the meantime, not having a fixed address meant that Gertrude struggled to establish herself in life like other people of her age were doing. "People sometimes judge people that are homeless for not working but it's hard when you don't know where you're going to sleep because if you're being moved to another state or something, you obviously have to quit that job, or you can't make it there on time because you don't have the money to go for your interviews," she said.

Gertrude's fortunes changed in 2015 when a friend suggested that she get in contact with Evolve Housing

for Youth. "A friend of mine had been there before and she just said, 'why don't you try these people?' ... I'd been to all these different people and it's either, oh you're not pregnant or you're not this or you're not old enough or you're not this enough [to qualify for social housing]," she said.

Despite her scepticism, Gertrude made an appointment with Evolve Housing, and was shocked when she was offered a studio apartment in Auburn, which was ready to move into just two weeks later — a huge difference from the years-long waitlists she had previously encountered.

She accepted, and became a client of Evolve Housing, which gave her access to a caseworker who assisted her with her education and employment goals.

With the stability that long-term, secure housing provided, she was able to complete a Diploma in Business Management and then later a Certificate 4 in Community Service.

After six months in her Auburn studio, Gertrude moved to a larger one-bedroom apartment in Merrylands. When she got pregnant with her first child, we offered her a two-bedroom apartment in Parramatta. Finally, in 2018, she moved on from Evolve Housing for Youth when she saw an advertisement on realestate.com.au for an affordable housing apartment in a new development in Penrith.

It wasn't until she spoke with the property manager that she realised the real estate agency, EchoRealty, was a division of Evolve Housing, meaning that her journey with the organisation has lasted 5 years. Since moving to their new home, Gertrude and Martin

CONTACT EVOLVE ... NO MATTER WHO YOU'VE BEEN WITH,  
HOW MANY NOS YOU'VE GOTTEN ... JUST CONTACT THEM  
BECAUSE THEY HAVE A PLACE FOR LITERALLY EVERYONE.



PHOTO: Gertrude and partner Martin, EchoRealty residents

have appreciated the beautiful views the apartment offers and the proximity to public transport, shops, and local parks.

Gertrude's experience with Evolve Housing for Youth was so positive that she has referred her friends to the organisation, and would encourage any young person who is homeless or at risk of homelessness to get in touch.

"Contact Evolve. Just go there, no matter who you've been with, how many nos you've gotten or scary

situations or people you've seen, just contact them because they have a place for literally everyone, that's the good thing about them," she said.

"Even if they don't have a place they make sure they sit down with you and help you find a place. I've referred so many friends to them and it's been the same situation for all of them, they've all gotten a place within 2 weeks ... so it's just based on your circumstance, just talk to them even if it's just counselling or you just need someone to talk to. You get everything."

# OUR OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

Evolve Housing operates within a context that is constantly changing, with demand for our services continually growing. To ensure that we remain responsive and able to take advantage of all the opportunities that may arise, we have based our Strategic Plan 2020–2023 on a thorough consideration of our operating environment. Some of the prominent contextual factors that affect our work are explored below.

## HOUSING PRESSURES

Over the last year, the community housing sector has continued to face major challenges in addressing housing shortfalls. The affordability crisis is deepening, with many Australians continuing to experience housing stress and paying more towards rent than they can sustainably afford. Others are forced to live in overcrowded, insecure or poor-quality housing.

Particularly worrying is the continued growth of homelessness, with a 14% increase in the number of homeless Australians between the 2011 and 2016 Census. In 2017, 50 people in every 10,000 were considered homeless. A quarter of Australia's homeless people live in NSW, where the level of homelessness correlates to higher median rents and overall shortfalls in affordable private rental housing and social housing. In addition, in 2017, 11% of Australian households were categorised as being in housing stress.

The supply of social housing is not keeping up with demand, with the NSW social housing waitlist including over 51,000 applicants across the general and priority lists as of June 2019. In Australia, there are over 148,520 applicants on the social housing wait list. Researchers estimate that in order to meet current

unmet and future needs in NSW, over the next 20 years two out of every 10 new homes built need to be social housing, and one in 10 need to be affordable housing. This equates to a demand for around 12,000 new homes per year.

Currently, just 4.4% of Australian housing stock is social housing, and the government's Australian Infrastructure Audit has identified the community housing sector as having an important role to play in creating affordable housing solutions that help address the needs of our most vulnerable communities. However, to be able to deliver much needed housing, community housing providers such as Evolve Housing need ongoing government support through policy settings and funding, and to pursue mutually beneficial partnerships with private investors and corporations.

While there has always been a great need for social and affordable housing, this need has been even more dramatically highlighted in recent times due to the global outbreak of COVID-19 and its flow on effects. Before COVID-19, there was a wait list of 51,000 people for social housing in NSW, and 231,000 low-income households paid more than 30 percent of their income in rent. During the pandemic, in April 2020, nearly a third of Australians have reported that their household finances had worsened due to COVID-19, and 7.5 per cent are struggling to pay their bills. It is expected that as unemployment grows, more people in NSW will become at risk of homelessness and there will be an increased need for social and affordable housing.

Evolve Housing's 2020–2023 Strategic Plan has been developed to allow us to carefully respond to and



# HOUSING IN AUSTRALIA

## NUMBERS NATIONALLY

**806,100**

HOUSEHOLDS IN  
AFFORDABILITY STRESS



**527,400**

HOUSEHOLDS UNABLE TO ENTER  
MARKET HOUSING



**148,520**

PUBLIC HOUSING WAITING LIST



**478,800**

AFFORDABLE AND AVAILABLE PRIVATE  
RENTAL DWELLINGS SHORTAGE FOR LOWER  
INCOME HOUSEHOLDS IN 2016



NUMBER OF SOCIAL HOUSING DWELLINGS IN NSW



**100,623**

NUMBER OF PUBLIC  
HOUSING DWELLINGS



**4,591**

NUMBER OF STATE  
OWNED/MANAGED  
INDIGENOUS



**46,250**

NUMBER OF  
PROPERTIES OWNED/  
OPERATED BY CHPs



# OUR OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

## CONTINUED

maximise our ability to increase housing supply, best support our residents and direct our resources in the most effective way possible. This will help us remain agile and able to deliver housing and programs that support the community's changing needs over the next few years.

## FUNDING AND PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

### PARTNERSHIP WITH THE NSW GOVERNMENT TO RESPOND TO COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a need to rapidly deliver more social and affordable housing to ensure the health and security of all people in NSW, and to stimulate the economy. Evolve Housing is proud to have worked with the NSW Government on multiple projects to achieve these goals.

In April and May 2020, we worked on an initiative to upgrade and manage emergency housing in Arncliffe for people on the public housing priority list.

We have also collaborated with the government on the Together Home project, and are delivering stable housing and wrap-around support for a number of rough sleepers in the South Western Sydney, Western Sydney and Nepean Blue Mountains areas.

### SOCIAL HOUSING AS AN ECONOMIC STIMULUS

At the time of writing this report, the NSW Government is considering social housing stimulus as a mechanism to kick start the economy. Four state governments — Victoria, Tasmania, Western Australia and Queensland — have already announced social housing packages to deliver new housing stock, undertake urgent repairs and maintenance, and create and retain jobs in the construction industry.

The community housing sector and other not-for-profits have been actively advocating for stimulus funding to deliver more social and affordable housing, as well as economic and employment growth.

At the Federal level, housing stimulus has moved away from social housing, with the Federal Government announcing the \$680 million HomeBuilder program on 4 June 2020. Although the HomeBuilder program has been welcomed by the Housing Industry Association, Master Builders Association and the Property Council of Australia, it has faced significant criticism from the Federal Opposition, some economists and academics, and the not-for-profit sector. Critics have argued that the program has failed to provide much-needed funding for the social and affordable housing sector, that the funding will mainly benefit economically advantaged households, and that the stimulus is too small to make a difference to economic recovery.

Through its peak agencies, Community Housing Industry Association and PowerHousing, Evolve Housing continues to advocate for stimulus at the Federal level, primarily through the Social Housing Acceleration and Renovation Program (SHARP). The program consists of four stages: social housing maintenance and upgrading, acquisition of sites and properties suitable for social housing and requiring renovation or completion, shovel ready development projects, and longer term new development projects.

### NATIONAL HOUSING FINANCE AND INVESTMENT CORPORATION

Evolve Housing was one of the first community housing providers to receive a loan from the Australian Government's National Housing Finance and Investment

Corporation (NHFIC). NHFIC was launched in 2018 with the aim to support investment in social and affordable housing by registered community housing providers. It provides low-cost, long-term financing to increase the viability of new housing projects and the community housing sector more broadly.

Evolve Housing applauds the Australian Government for this initiative, which has the potential to have a significant and positive impact on the financial sustainability of the community housing sector.

NHFIC funding has been utilised by Evolve Housing to refinance Harts Landing (a development that is home to more than 500 people in Penrith), refinance other existing debts at a lower interest rate, and fund other development projects including our recently completed affordable housing development in Newcastle. We are exploring a number of other new projects to invest in over the coming months.

#### PLANNING SYSTEM REFORM AND AFFORDABLE RENTAL HOUSING TARGETS

The NSW Government has maintained a focus on addressing housing affordability by increasing housing supply, through market mechanisms and planning system reforms, and setting modest affordable and social housing targets.

In 2018, the NSW Government formally adopted Affordable Rental Housing Targets (ARHT) for the Greater Sydney Metropolitan Region, which were proposed by the Greater Sydney Commission. Under the ARHT, 5–10% of any new residential floor space created as a result of a change of planning controls will need to be dedicated to affordable housing.

We are pleased that the NSW Government has now allowed all metropolitan councils to utilise the provisions of the State Environmental Planning Policy 70, Affordable Housing (SEPP 70) to create affordable housing contribution schemes that can act as the legal mechanism to enforce the ARHT. Evolve Housing is working with a number of local councils to provide advice and input in relation to social and affordable housing in their housing strategies. Once fully implemented, the ARHT have the potential to produce between 6,860 and 16,210 new affordable dwellings in Sydney over ten years.

As the largest affordable housing provider in the state, Evolve Housing continues to advocate for the existing planning instruments and residential development regulations in NSW to be altered to enhance affordable housing outcomes. The provision of the existing Affordable Rental Housing State Environmental Planning Policy (ARHSEPP) could be strengthened to mandate affordable rents for affordable housing developed under this mechanism. We have also advocated for compulsory management of these dwellings by registered CHPs, which would ensure compliance with the rent setting requirements and ensure affordable housing delivered through these mechanisms remains available for their intended purpose. Evolve Housing believes it is critical that more resources are made available to monitor compliance with the development consents issued for properties delivered under this SEPP.

#### COMMUNITIES PLUS

Communities Plus is a NSW Government initiative to increase social and affordable housing supply.

# OUR OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

## CONTINUED

It also aims to improve the experience of social housing residents through redeveloping existing key housing developments into mixed-tenure communities. This program will add critical supply to both social and affordable housing.

Evolve Housing is excited to be involved in this program, as a community housing provider partner for a number of sites across Sydney. Working with our partners, we have projects in various stages of development.

### BUILD-TO-RENT (BTR)

The BTR sector has been slow to emerge in an Australian context due to taxation issues and a preference from developers to invest in 'build to sell' housing during the unprecedented housing boom.

Despite this, the NSW Government has established a BTR project (through Communities Plus) in Redfern. Build-to-Rent allows the Government and its partners to deliver new and integrated social, affordable and private housing by collaborating with the private and not-for-profit sectors, whilst retaining ownership of government land.

Under this model, proponents enter a long-term lease (49 years) and collect rental income for the duration in return for building and managing the dwellings on the site. The NSW Government retains ownership of all land and dwellings, which will be returned to them after the lease expires.

Evolve Housing is one of the three shortlisted delivery partners and is part of a consortium with Capella Capital and Lendlease Building. If successful, this project will provide around 400 rental dwellings in a mixed tenure development.

### TWENTY YEAR LEASES

In early 2020, the NSW Government's Land and Housing Corporation (LAHC) announced that it would be offering 20-year leases to community housing providers. This initiative will allow providers like us to transition from existing three-year leases on social housing properties owned by LAHC to 20-year leases.

Evolve Housing was approved to transition approximately 1,100 of our LAHC properties to a 20-year lease after successfully participating in an Expression of Interest process. The contractual certainty afforded by 20-year-leases will allow us to plan our asset maintenance further into the future, lower our maintenance costs by negotiating longer-term contracts, and leverage more secure, longer-term finance. This will help us invest in more community housing infrastructure and programs to support social housing residents.

### PARTNERSHIPS WITH PRIVATE AND NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANISATIONS

We proactively seek out relationships with private investors, corporations and other not-for-profits, collaborating with them on affordable housing projects to boost the supply of housing in Australia and provide an income stream that can be channelled back into social housing.

We currently manage key worker affordable housing programs for organisations including Altis Property Partners (on behalf of Aware Super), Sydney Olympic Park Authority, Parramatta City Council, Willoughby City Council and a number of investors and developers. We also provide tailored affordable housing management to the Aboriginal Housing Office.

# PROVIDING SAFE EMERGENCY HOUSING IN ARNCLIFFE



The Hon. Dominic Perrottet, Treasurer and The Hon. Melinda Pavey, Minister for Water, Property and Housing with Evolve Housing's CEO Lyall Gorman.

In mid-2020, Evolve Housing partnered with the NSW Government on an initiative to upgrade and manage emergency housing in Arncliffe for people on the public housing priority list.

The project is part of the NSW Government's \$60.5 million program to deliver maintenance works and upgrades on public housing properties, funded out of its \$2.3 billion COVID-19 stimulus package.

We will be managing the tenancies of 142 households and will help the residents transition into longer-term housing after the program ends in two years.

Evolve Housing's maintenance partners, SR Constructions and Willowdene Constructions, undertook the temporary renovations of the Arncliffe estate and completed the works in just six weeks. This NSW Government program will deliver public housing infrastructure upgrades and economic benefits while also helping some of NSW's most vulnerable residents.

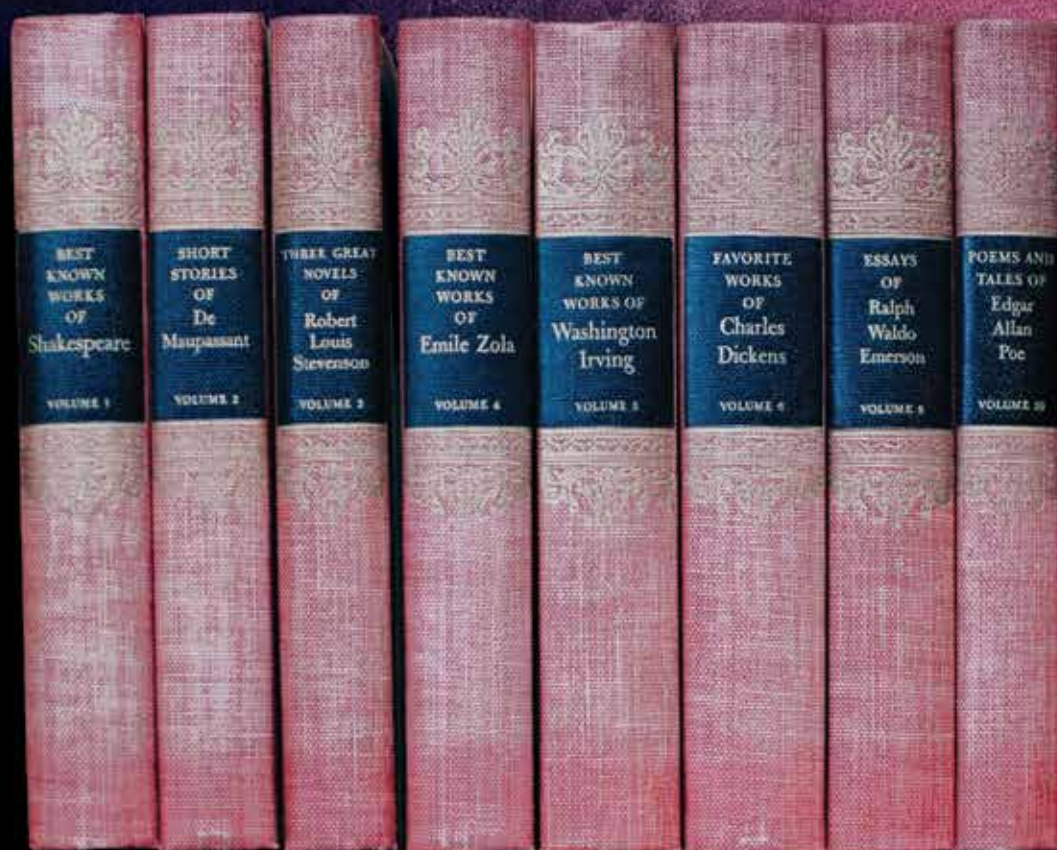
"We are very proud to be working with the NSW Government and our maintenance partners, SR Constructions and Willowdene Constructions, to upgrade the housing facilities at Arncliffe to provide habitable, quality homes for people on the public housing priority waitlist and ensure they can stay safe indoors during the global pandemic," Evolve Housing CEO Lyall Gorman said.

"The project is also a great way to stimulate the local economy by employing contractors to perform the maintenance works and injecting money into local businesses when purchasing supplies."

The Arncliffe social housing estate will eventually be redeveloped into a mixed tenure community that includes social, affordable and private housing as part of the NSW Government's Communities Plus program, however these plans have been paused during the pandemic.



# 03 RESIDENTS & SERVICES





# THRIVING COMMUNITIES

At Evolve Housing, we place residents at the heart of everything we do and aim to create thriving communities where people feel welcome and supported. We have residents from many different backgrounds and life stages, and we offer a diverse range of services and activities so that there is something to suit everyone's needs. Residents have access to social events, tailored support plans, financial grants and training courses.

There are also opportunities to volunteer with our organisation, and we keep residents informed of our activities with digital and hard copy communication.

In 2019–2020, 86% of our tenants were satisfied with our services.

86%  
TENANT  
SATISFACTION



# OUR PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

## GRANTS, EVENTS AND SUPPORT

Evolve Housing offers many ongoing programs and activities to support our residents to help them attain education, training, life skills and more.

### MONEY MINDED WORKSHOP

At this workshop, residents can learn how to manage their money and take control of their finances.

This workshop covers topics that include creating budgets, reducing debt, saving money, managing credit cards and more.

### IMAGINATE

After a successful pilot last year, Imagine is now an anticipated school holiday event for Evolve Housing families. Each event focuses on a different theme.

From sports and science shows to STEM learning by building robots, this event series helps children explore the world of learning in a fun and creative way.

### WOMEN'S GROUP

Driven by feedback from our residents in the Bankstown area, this year we started a women's group. The group has become a space for female residents to get together for a coffee and chat about what's most important in their lives.

### GO! GRANTS

Go! Grants offer financial support to encourage children to get involved in sports and physical activity.

### KEEP EDUCATING YOURSELF (KEY) GRANTS

These grants offer financial support for residents to study a trade, or complete a course at university, a private college or TAFE.

## COMMUNITY GARDENS

This program is run in partnership with Community Greening, and encourages social time between residents, while delivering fruits and vegetables for our communities to enjoy.

### DIGITAL BASICS WORKSHOP

This workshop helps residents learn how to use the internet and modern technology, with a focus on computer basics, online banking, emails, navigating Centrelink, social media and more.

### FRIENDSHIP AGED NETWORK

Residents who are in their senior years and live on their own can receive a friendly phone call from a fellow resident on a weekly basis.

### NILS (NO INTEREST LOAN SCHEME)

We are a registered provider for Good Shepherd Microfinance. This program helps those on low incomes to purchase essential items (such as whitegoods, furniture, computers and educational supplies) on credit with no interest.

### HIGH SCHOOL HELP

This program offers financial support for residents with children in high school. Support lasts up to three years and can include professional tutoring and support with school fees.

### STREET LIBRARY

To help both adults and kids develop and sustain a love of reading, we've installed street libraries in some resident communities. This gives residents a place to take, leave and share books with their neighbours.

## RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Evolve Housing is currently developing a new Resident Engagement Strategy to ensure we continue to keep residents at the centre of everything we do. We are taking a whole of business approach and consulting staff from every department in the organisation to ensure that we consider all points of contact and engagement opportunities when planning. Another key aspect of our process is consulting with residents who have engaged with us through various programs.



## RESIDENT HANDBOOK


This year, we commenced a project to upgrade our Resident Handbook, which is given to all social housing residents when they sign their lease with Evolve Housing.

The handbook is intended to be an easy-to-access, clear summary of resources and programs that are available to residents. It includes information about common issues that may arise during a tenancy such as repairs and inspections, and also features tips on how to connect with the local community.

This document is being developed in consultation with residents, and has been designed to be accessible, especially for our residents who are from a culturally and linguistically diverse background.

## DIVERSITY AND DEMOGRAPHICS


### STATISTICS


 **56%** are women **44%** are men


 Residents live in **32** local government areas


 **60.6%** live in social housing


 **39.4%** live in affordable housing


 **28%** of social housing households are lone person households


 **12%** of social housing households are single parent households


 **6.7%** of social housing residents were previously homeless

 **1.75%** of social housing residents identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

 **35.4%** of social housing residents were born overseas

 **32%** of social housing residents are on the disability support pension

 **89%** of adult residents in social housing have welfare payments as their main source of income

 **19%** of social housing residents are on the age pension



## OUR RESIDENTS

TENANT PROFILE AS OF 30 JUNE 2020

WE PROVIDE HOMES FOR **8,419** RESIDENTS  
ACROSS **4,054** PROPERTIES

### AGE GROUPS

23% CHILDREN (0–17)

13% YOUTH (18–24)

11% YOUNG ADULTS (25–35)

23% MIDDLE AGED (36–54)

23% OLDER ADULTS (55–74)

7% ELDERLY (75+)

### HOUSEHOLD TYPES

28%  
LONE  
PERSON

5%  
COUPLE +  
CHILDREN

12%  
SOLE  
PARENT

11%  
COUPLE

30%  
GROUP\*  
WITHOUT  
CHILDREN

14%  
GROUP\*  
WITH  
CHILDREN

\* Group refers to a household of two or more people who are not in a couple or parent-child relationship. It may include blood relationships such as siblings or extended family members.  
NOTE: These figures relate to our social housing residents.

# OPPORTUNITY PATHWAYS

Evolve Housing has been delivering the Opportunity Pathways program in the South Western Sydney and Nepean Blue Mountains regions since March 2019.

The program, funded by the Department of Communities and Justice, aims to support social housing clients to access training and work opportunities, with the ultimate goal of securing permanent employment and potentially moving into private market housing.

The program is free and voluntary for people aged 17 years and over who are:

- Living in public, community or Aboriginal community housing, or
- Receiving a Rent Choice subsidy, or
- An approved social housing applicant on the NSW Housing Register.

Evolve Housing delivers the program as part of a consortium including MAX Solutions, Olympus Solutions/Ability Options (employment partners), Macquarie Community College (education and training partners) and Relationships Australia NSW.

Participants can join the program by signing up directly or by being referred by a service provider.

People who express interest in the program undergo an intake assessment to ensure that they are eligible, understand what the program involves, and are ready to look for work. Once admitted into the program, participants are paired with a Case Coordinator who works with them to create a Training, Employment and Housing Plan that is tailored to their needs, goals and aspirations. The program can also provide financial

assistance for job-related costs such as transport, licences and work attire.

While every participant has a unique situation, financial assistance has most often been provided in relation to transport costs (fuel and/or opal card funds), enrolment into training courses, and help getting online with a laptop.

The program has been so popular that it is currently over capacity, and the team recently hired a new member. This brings the total number of staff to 8:

- 4 Case Coordinators for the South Western Sydney region
- 2 for the Nepean Blue Mountains region, and
- 2 intake officers.

"I am very passionate about the Opportunity Pathways program, it has had a huge impact on the participants in being able to change their lives and knowing that this program can really assist them in achieving their dreams and goals," said Kathy Parry, Team Leader for Opportunity Pathways.

Over the past financial year, 521 people were referred to us as potential candidates for the Opportunity Pathways program, with 219 of these proceeding to enrol. So far, 69 program participants have secured employment, including seven people who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

In addition, 88 participants have been enrolled into training or education courses in a diverse range of fields including Responsible Service of Alcohol, traffic control, first aid, hospitality, business, retail, disability support and more.





Members of Evolve Housing's 2019–2020 Resident Advisory Group.

## WELCOMING OUR NEW RESIDENT ADVISORY GROUP

Our new Resident Advisory Group (RAG) began working together in February this year, and have been meeting each month.

The role of the RAG is to represent all residents, relay any concerns residents may have, and provide feedback to us about our activities, programs and key policies.

The group includes a diverse mix of residents of all ages coming from a wide variety of cultural

backgrounds and geographic areas of Sydney. Some long-term members have remained in the group, while we also welcomed aboard some new residents, providing a good balance of experience and fresh perspectives.

We have created a flat structure for the group, which enables all members to have their say and provide feedback and suggestions on the work we do. Each month, the RAG makes a suggestion for





a guest speaker from Evolve Housing to attend their meeting and discuss the work that they do and how it impacts residents. This allows members to learn and understand all areas of our business so that they are able to communicate accurate information about organisational processes to their fellow residents.

The group has already made some significant contributions such as providing ideas for online activities to keep young residents busy during the school holidays. They have also contributed by reviewing standard letter templates that are sent to residents, reviewing the proposed Resident Handbook

and providing suggestions to the Rent Review department. Notably, the RAG have played an important part in the implementation of the Resident Satisfaction Survey by providing input in the planning stage and volunteering their time to contact residents to follow up on their surveys.

Despite COVID-19 preventing many in-person meetings in 2020, the group has still been able to work effectively, learning how to use technology so that they can engage via Zoom meetings.



# MIAJAN

## RESIDENT STORY

After living in an Evolve Housing property for almost two decades, Miajan decided to join the Resident Advisory Group to share his ideas and help to shape a better tenant experience for his peers.

Miajan joined the Resident Advisory Group (RAG) in February 2020, as one of 15 new members that were engaged as part of the group's restructure that occurred in late 2019.

The restructure was designed to ensure that the RAG represents a broader, more diverse range of Evolve Housing tenants who can share their viewpoints. It also involved changes to the way the RAG operates to create more effective procedures and enhance dialogue between the group and Evolve Housing staff.

Members meet once a month for a few hours to discuss important issues that may be affecting tenants. They sometimes meet with representatives from different departments of Evolve Housing to better understand the organisation's operations.

Miajan said that he has enjoyed the experience of being part of the RAG so far and was motivated to participate as a way to give back to his community. "One of the reasons was because we have been living in this property since 2002. We've gotten a lot of experience, I wanted to share those experiences with others," he said.

The focus of the group and its discussions are always how to improve the lives of Evolve Housing tenants, and despite the different backgrounds and geographic locations of tenants, there are some core issues that seem to affect all residents.

"In our group, tenants are the centre, so all issues around the tenants are discussed there," Miajan said.

"For example, the issue of rent assessment... the method of payment and how they can pay, the issue of maintenance comes up, the issue of security... those are the things that are coming up.

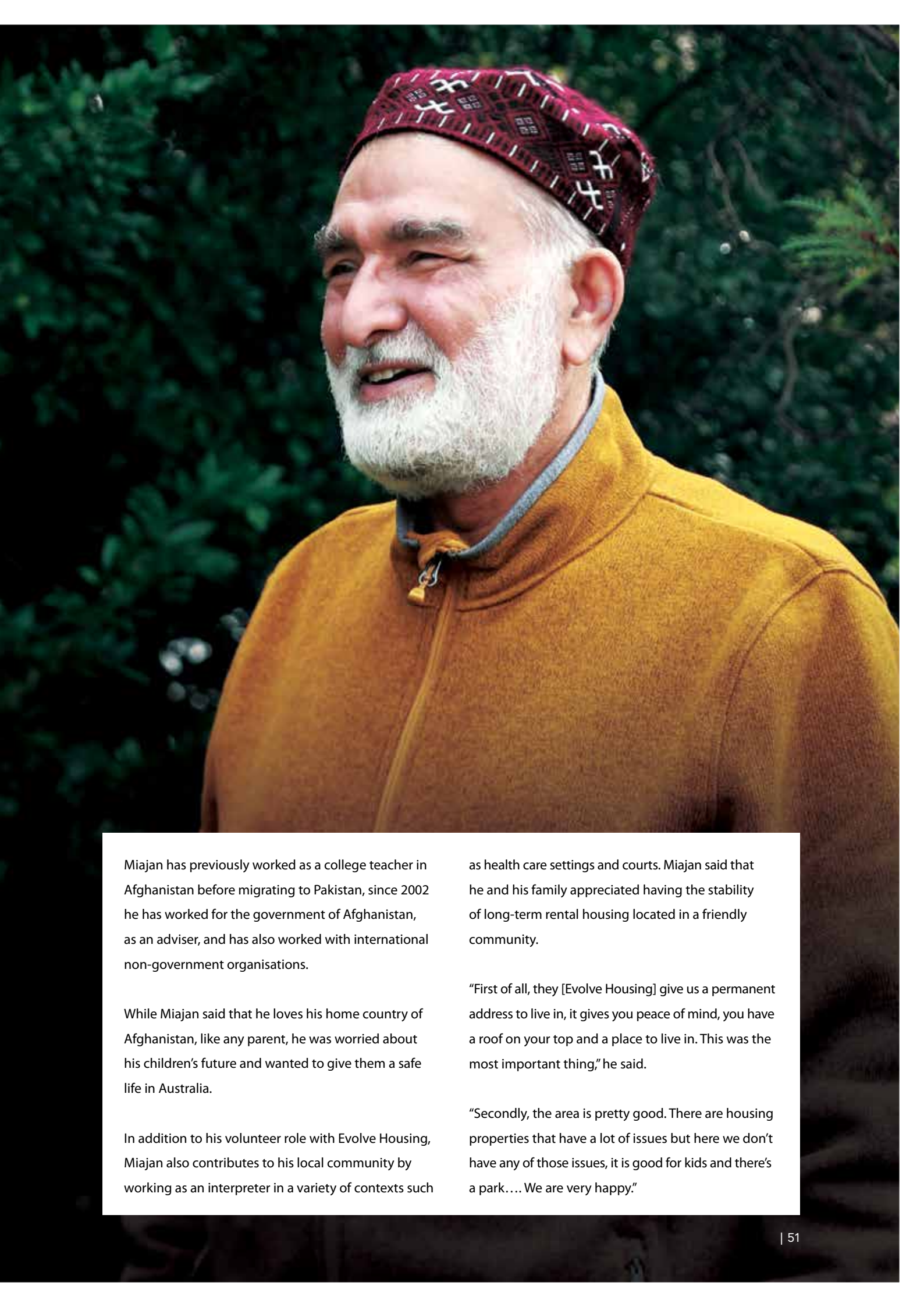
"Activities are proposed, which type of activities we can hold and when they can happen. The most important thing is communication and educating people about their rights, their responsibilities, and those sort of things. Also, the issue of skills and training comes up. These are the main issues so far that came up from the RAG meetings and of course for every issue there are sub-activities and other issues."

The group has a primarily advisory purpose, providing suggestions from a tenant perspective to management for consideration, and a report is written up for each meeting including minutes and action items.

"The ideas that come through the RAG, that will help the Evolve management team while they are working on policy issues, they'll develop strategies that will help them ... we nicely pressure them," Miajan said.

Miajan, his wife Huma, and their four sons have been living in their property at Lidcombe since 2002, and were originally tenants of Cumberland Housing, which was one of the predecessors of Evolve Housing.

He came to Australia in 1995, after spending his childhood and early adulthood in Afghanistan then living in Pakistan as a refugee for 11 years with his family.



Miajan has previously worked as a college teacher in Afghanistan before migrating to Pakistan, since 2002 he has worked for the government of Afghanistan, as an adviser, and has also worked with international non-government organisations.

While Miajan said that he loves his home country of Afghanistan, like any parent, he was worried about his children's future and wanted to give them a safe life in Australia.

In addition to his volunteer role with Evolve Housing, Miajan also contributes to his local community by working as an interpreter in a variety of contexts such

as health care settings and courts. Miajan said that he and his family appreciated having the stability of long-term rental housing located in a friendly community.

"First of all, they [Evolve Housing] give us a permanent address to live in, it gives you peace of mind, you have a roof on your top and a place to live in. This was the most important thing," he said.

"Secondly, the area is pretty good. There are housing properties that have a lot of issues but here we don't have any of those issues, it is good for kids and there's a park.... We are very happy."

# WORKING ALONGSIDE LOCAL SUPPORT SERVICES

As well as helping our own clients, Evolve Housing's Support Team also works to help other support services in the Western Sydney community to achieve better outcomes for people in need.

Supported Housing Manager Debra Ireson has played an active role in creating an inclusive, supportive community for her peers working in the homelessness support sector.

She is currently the Chairperson for the Parramatta Regional Homelessness Interagency, a bi-monthly gathering for people working in the homelessness sector in Western Sydney. Meetings allow members to disseminate relevant information, listen to keynote speakers talk about topical issues, and network.

Debra is also on the working group of the Collaborative Youth Services Partnership, a Cumberland-based group that provides a roundtable of service providers who can pool their resources and knowledge together to assist clients with complex needs. Any member can bring a de-identified case to the group to discuss, and Debra says that she can't remember a time when the

group haven't been able to jointly find a solution for a client. Members come from diverse backgrounds including housing, youth health, mental health, alcohol and drug support, legal services, welfare, parenting support and more.

Debra said that she enjoys collaborating with colleagues in other not-for-profits as it achieves a better result for the clients — for example, Evolve Housing regularly receives food donations from charities such as OzHarvest and Rapid Relief, which are then able to be passed on to our residents in need.

"If everyone gives and takes, that's how the sector works well. The sector doesn't have a lot of money so by doing a bit of time each and helping each other out, we get a lot more done for our clients, which is why we come to work every day," Debra said.

"I expect a lot from our working community so I feel that I should work and give back too, I don't mind putting my hand up to do things, or doing something to fill a gap if I see one. I like being able to give back to people who have done a lot for us as well."



# HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE GET INTO EMPLOYMENT

Evolve Housing is delivering the YELL (Youth Employment Local Linker) program to help vulnerable and at-risk young people in the Miller area gain employment, further their education, access training opportunities or re-engage with high school.

The program is completely voluntary and available to anyone aged 15–24 years old living in the Miller area in south west Sydney, regardless of whether they are currently in social housing or not. It has been designed to support young people who are looking to make a positive change in their life. Participants have access to a dedicated youth worker who can help them explore their employment and education options and plan goals to help them reach their aspirations. They are also linked up with other support services if appropriate.

Since the program was launched in August 2019, we have worked with 28 participants, 61% of whom are

Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. We have supported seven of these participants into employment and 18 into an accredited course.

We have supported nine participants to complete a Work Development Order, which allowed them to reduce their fines (such as parking or speeding fines) with the State Debt Recovery Office. We also collaborated with the Rent Choice Youth team to assist four participants into private rental properties using the NSW Government's Rent Choice subsidy, which covers a substantial part of the rent for up to three years.

Other positive outcomes achieved through the program so far include helping participants with housing, Centrelink applications, getting identification, and acquiring a driver's license.

## CLIENT SERVICE STRATEGY

Evolve Housing created our Client Service Strategy, a document that clearly lays out our client service goals and principles, in June 2020.

The strategy complements our Strategic Plan 2020–2023 and sets the standards our clients can expect from us, key performance indicators we will report against and our vision for future client service initiatives.

It is accompanied by two promotional documents that are designed to provide practical, top line information for clients — a fact sheet, which is available on our website, and a poster, which is also available online and displayed in our offices.

Together, these documents ensure that we are accountable to our aim of delivering our services with fairness, equity, dignity and respect.



# TREY & BILLY

## RESIDENT STORY

When best mates Trey and Billy first met Evolve Housing caseworker Naomi, they weren't sure if they could trust her but now the three get along so well that they joke she is like their second mum.

Throughout 2020, both men have been working with Naomi as part of the Miller YELL program, which helps young people achieve their educational and employment goals.

Trey and Billy, both 22, signed up for the program in early 2020 — Trey in January, and Billy in May. The young men have been regularly meeting up with Naomi since, working with her to explore different career options, remove barriers to employment, and improve their lives in general.

Rather than meeting in an office environment, Naomi often goes to their houses and manages to catch up with both at the same time.

Both Trey and Billy have similar ideas of what they want to get out of the program — to find fulfilling work and get their driver's licences. Trey recently got his learner's licence, Billy bought himself a car, and both have completed an Aboriginal Learner Driver Course this year.

While neither of them are completely set on a career path, they are exploring different options with Naomi. So far, Trey has completed a Certificate 3 in Logistics, is considering getting a forklift license, and is interested in working in construction labouring.

Billy wants a job that will allow him to help his community, and is looking into starting a mobile

hairdressing business that will focus on cutting hair at schools in lower socio-economic status areas.

Once they do start working, Trey and Billy will still receive Naomi's support until they reach 26 weeks employment, to ensure they are in the right position and have the resources they need to do well.

Naomi takes a holistic approach and aims to increase her clients' well-being rather than just find them a job. She has assisted both Billy and Trey to enrol in a program that allows them to work to pay off their fines. She also helped Trey sign up for the government's Rent Choice Youth program and get into a private rental property in Miller.

Both men said they felt that working with Naomi has improved their lives, and they have even referred their friends to the Miller YELL program.

"It's been the best, it's a life changer, [now I'm] looking out for better things in the future. It's opened my eyes to more things," Billy said. He also said that his experience had helped him trust the social services sector more than he had previously.

Naomi said that she has enjoyed working with Billy and Trey and seeing the progress they've made.

"I'm really proud of these boys, I'm really, really proud. I tell them all the time but I don't think they know how proud I am," she said.

She attributes the success of the Miller YELL program to its flexible, community-centered approach, and the steps that she has taken to build trust within the area. "I'm able to go see them instead of just



PHOTO: Residents Trey and Billy with Evolve Housing caseworker Naomi

## BILLY & TREY

CONTINUED

them coming into an office, which makes a massive difference, I think that's one of the biggest things," she said. "But also I think it's really important to have the right person in this role who isn't judgmental and is understanding of the hood.

"The other point of difference is the time I've taken out to do things that aren't necessarily focused on outcomes, like going to have coffees with their mums." Getting a new job is difficult for almost anyone in 2020, but Naomi says that young people living in Miller face additional structural barriers to employment and that's why programs like this are so important.

Having to rely on public transport makes it difficult to get to job interviews or shift work. In addition, securing a job often has an upfront financial cost such as uniform or interview outfit fees, transport costs and training fees. The Miller YELL program helps participants with these costs, where needed, removing barriers to employment.

Naomi has also found that simply being from the suburb of Miller can sometimes be a disadvantage when applying for jobs, which has led to her taking addresses off her clients' resumes. Contrary to the negative associations that some people may have of Miller, Naomi has found that the area is a positive, supportive place to work in.

"The whole time I've worked there, I've always felt welcome," she said. "These guys are good, I always say they have beautiful hearts... it is a good community and they all help each other out, yes there's stuff that happens in the background but no matter what happens the locals always help each other out."

## TOM RESIDENT STORY



After his son died, Tom\* spiralled into depression and ended up serving time in prison for unpaid fines. When he was released, he was keen to return to his career in truck driving, which he had previously worked in for nine years and loved, so he signed up for Opportunity Pathways with Evolve Housing.

Tom's Case Coordinator assisted him by assessing his long and short-term goals, creating a Training Employment and Housing Plan, and providing ongoing advice and encouragement. Tom secured employment as a HR (Heavy Rigid) Truck Driver, and when he did not have the correct Personal Protective Equipment that was required for his role, his Case Coordinator was able to purchase and deliver it for him.

In addition, when it was discovered that Tom did not have the right licences and tickets to operate the truck, Opportunity Pathways provided funding for him to attain them and liaised with his employer. He is now employed full-time, and also has a forklift licence and crane ticket.

During this time, Tom was living in transitional housing and was waiting to be housed by the Department of Communities and Justice. Tom's Case Coordinator was able to help him apply for Rent Choice Assist, which is a government subsidy that covers part of the cost of private rent for up to three years. Tom is now looking for an affordable property to move into. This will be the first private rental property with Tom's name on the lease, and he is happy at the prospect of having a house to call his own. Tom has said that he is very grateful for the support and assistance he has received from his Opportunity Pathways Case Coordinator.

\*Not his real name

# COVID-19 PANDEMIC RESPONSE

## KEEPING OUR STAFF AND RESIDENTS SAFE

The unexpected arrival of COVID-19 into our lives in February 2020 posed a major challenge to the way that Evolve Housing operates, but our team quickly adjusted and continued to provide high-quality support to our residents.

To protect the health of our residents and our staff, we made visits to our offices available by appointment only from early March. During this time, our whole team continued to work remotely and have consistently been available by phone and email to respond to enquiries as usual.

We also launched a new easy-to-use online maintenance request form during this period to enhance our service provision without needing in-person contact. The form allows residents to digitally report any maintenance issue and has an option to upload photos. It was also translated to Arabic and Vietnamese, which are the two most common languages spoken by our residents after English.

Our Housing Managers performed welfare checks over the phone to all of our residents at the beginning of the pandemic to ensure that everyone was coping well with the changes to everyday life such as government restrictions.

They also asked each resident about their support needs and if there was any extra assistance Evolve Housing could provide to help them.

When a resident was not able to be contacted via phone after a few attempts, their Housing Manager visited them in-person, observing COVID-19 guidelines,

to make sure that they were safe. Residents who felt they would benefit from friendly social contact were able to sign up for a weekly phone call from their Housing Manager. Similarly, our Evolve Housing for Youth team has been running a phone chat hour every Thursday so that young residents who are feeling isolated are able to phone in and talk.

The economic downturn caused by the pandemic has had a strong negative effect on many residents' household finances. Evolve Housing is dedicated to doing all we can to mitigate this impact.

Our Support Team has been hard at work providing emergency food packs and support to pay for food, rent and utilities if needed. There has been a 30% increase in referrals to our Support Team, who have noticed that more clients are feeling isolated, while others have needed assistance to source essential items like toilet paper, rice and pasta.

Our Opportunity Pathways program has remained operating and is playing an important role in helping residents who have recently lost their jobs to find new work, upskill or re-train.

Residents were kept up-to-date about the changes to the way we delivered our services, and also about support services that may be useful to them during the pandemic, via our newsletter, e-newsletter and social media pages.

We also made changes to our internal operations with a successful rollout of a working-from-home program, increased hygiene measures and practising social distancing protocols in the office.



# EVOLVE HOUSING FOR YOUTH

Evolve Housing for Youth (EHY) is a division of Evolve Housing that provides short-to-medium term transitional housing support services for people aged 16 to 24 in the Parramatta and Cumberland local government areas.

The EHY team specialises in assessing the needs of at-risk young people and providing expert case management through a holistic client-focused model. EHY has a network of partners who can provide a wide range of support services to meet the individual needs of each client.

Individuals are given their own room in a share house with other young people, while families are given a property of their own. The EHY team provides case management and works alongside partner organisations to offer clients support including advocacy, referral to other service providers, financial assistance and help to enter the private housing market. Clients also have access to programs to help them develop important life and living skills in relationships, budgeting, and maintaining a property and lease.

In the 2019–2020 financial year, EHY supported 194 tenants (113 females and 81 males). Approximately 50% of our clients were 16–20 years old when they began receiving support from EHY, 35.88% were 20–24 years old, and 13.52% were children aged 0–14 years old who were accompanying an older relative.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients made up 24.23% of our clientele in 2019–2020, while people from a culturally and linguistically diverse background made up 35.05% of clients.

Forty-five clients left EHY housing during the financial year, while 126 new clients were supported and or accommodated. 46.66% of housed clients moved on to more independent living or with their family.

PHOTO: Employees of Evolve Housing for Youth and Opportunity Pathways program.



## LIZ

### RESIDENT STORY

When Liz<sup>‡</sup>, a young single mother of three children, was referred to EHY, she was feeling dispirited after facing some challenging experiences in her personal life.

Liz and her family were soon placed in transitional accommodation and assigned a caseworker, Caroline, who assessed their needs and worked with Liz to develop a case plan. Working with Caroline, Liz developed goals, strategies to address barriers, and was encouraged to celebrate successes.

After consistent support and appropriate referrals to external support providers, Liz soon settled down and enrolled in a TAFE course, which she has since completed. Her family have continued to stay with

Evolve Housing, moving into an affordable housing property through our profit-for-purpose real estate agency EchoRealty.

Caroline said that the smile on Liz's face when she expressed her appreciation of EHY's support was very motivating, as were her last words after completing her EHY client exit interview: "Caroline, your work is done".

<sup>‡</sup>Not her real name



# 04 PROJECTS & PARTNERSHIPS



## COMMUNITIES PLUS PROJECTS

We are working with developers on new projects in West Ryde, Padstow, Villawood and Lidcombe as part of the Communities Plus program, a NSW Government initiative that will include social, affordable and private apartments. Communities Plus aims to develop new mixed communities where social housing blends in with private and affordable housing. Residents have access to transport, employment, community facilities and open spaces.

### LIDCOMBE

At the time of publication it is anticipated that this development will include 93\* affordable apartments, which Evolve Housing will own and manage. We will also manage the 63\* social apartments within the development. This project is located next to Lidcombe Railway Station.

\* Subject to agreeing and finalising documentation and receiving relevant approvals.

### WEST RYDE, PADSTOW AND VILLAWOOD

Communities Plus projects will be developed in West Ryde, Padstow and Villawood. Evolve Housing will manage the social and affordable apartments within these developments.





## AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROJECT COMPLETED IN NEWCASTLE

A new apartment complex in the Newcastle CBD was opened by Evolve Housing in mid-2020 and is now providing affordable housing for locals on low-to-moderate incomes.

The property, located at 4 Merewether Street Newcastle, includes 30 residential apartments dedicated for affordable rental housing and is able to accommodate up to 78 people.

The land was purchased from the Hunter and Central Coast Development Corporation (HCCDC) in February 2019, after Evolve Housing won the tender to deliver the project in 2018. The City of Newcastle granted development consent in December 2018.

The complex includes one, two and three bedroom apartments, with four being set aside for Specialist Disability Accommodation. Apartments are being rented out at a rate that is 25% below the normal market rent that would be charged for an equivalent property. This apartment block is managed by Evolve Housing's profit-for-purpose real estate agency, EchoRealty.

Construction completed in June 2020, and EchoRealty has since found tenants for all 30 apartments.

Evolve Housing CEO Lyall Gorman said that he was excited that the construction was completed on time, within budget and to a high quality.

"These apartments are modern, well-designed and of a very high quality, and I have no doubt that they will make wonderful homes for the tenants who live here.

Apartments located at 4 Merewether Street, Newcastle NSW

They are an absolute testament to the outstanding work of our builder partner, GWH," he said.

"With so many people impacted financially by the coronavirus crisis over the past few months, affordable housing has never been more needed, and we hope that these properties will provide some much-needed relief and stability for people in need in Newcastle."

"It has been an absolute pleasure partnering with Evolve Housing to construct this wonderful affordable housing project," said GWH Director Jonathan Craig.

"This has been a fantastic opportunity for GWH to help provide such facilities in our hometown of Newcastle."

Newcastle Lord Mayor Nuatali Nelmes and Deputy Lord Mayor Declan Clausen enjoyed a private walk-through of the property in mid-2020 with staff from Evolve Housing and GWH.

Lord Mayor Nelmes said that developments that provide a greater range of housing options for people on varying incomes are important to building strong local communities.

"Our city must prioritise affordable housing so a diverse mix of workers can live in areas of growth and are not forced out.

"Access to secure, appropriate and affordable housing is not only a basic requirement for everyone, it's critical to creating an inclusive, dynamic and sustainable city."

## PROJECTS COMPLETED

### KANTARA ROAD, CANTON BEACH

- 30 homes
- 30 beds
- \$7 million
- Completion: August 2020
- Partner: Pacific Link Housing

This property is a two-storey building for social and affordable housing residents. It includes 30 studio apartments — 15 social and 15 affordable apartments, five of which are adaptable apartments. Residents have access to a communal room and open landscaped spaces. There is parking for seven cars and five motorbikes.

### MEREWETHER STREET, NEWCASTLE

- 30 homes
- 48 beds
- 78 people
- \$16 million
- Completion: June 2020

Redeveloped over the former heavy rail line next to Civic Station, this property includes 30 residential apartments dedicated for affordable rental housing. There are one, two and three bedroom apartments. Four apartments are constructed to suit Specialist Disability Accommodation.

Facilities include a ground floor car park and two communal rooftop terrace areas. There are also three retail tenancies in the building.

# PARTNERSHIPS

One of the most successful components of Evolve Housing's strategy has been forging mutually beneficial partnerships with government, private corporations and not-for-profits to deliver more affordable housing.

## SYDNEY OLYMPIC PARK AUTHORITY

We currently manage 62 affordable properties in Sydney Olympic Park for key workers who are employed in the area.

Evolve Housing was selected to manage the properties in November 2019 after a competitive tender process for the Sydney Olympic Park Authority's Affordable Housing Program.

Tenants in the properties are required to be on a low to moderate income, and many are working in Sydney Olympic Park in a sports related role, or as an essential service worker in industries including health care, education, emergency services, law enforcement, aged care and childcare.

## ALTIS PROPERTY PARTNERS

EchoRealty has partnered with real estate firm Altis Property Partners to manage affordable housing for key workers employed in industries such as emergency services, law enforcement and healthcare on behalf of superannuation provider Aware Super.

We have worked together on four housing projects in NSW, located in Epping, Hurstville, Northmead and Waterloo, comprising a total of 138 apartments housing up to 138 key worker households on low to moderate incomes.

In early 2020, EchoRealty also expanded into Victoria,\* managing 76 affordable properties for key workers in Moonee Ponds, just seven kilometres north-west of Melbourne's CBD.

The properties are located in a high-quality mixed tenure apartment building that includes 29 privately rented properties, which are also being managed by EchoRealty at market rent.

All apartments within the building have the same high-quality features and equal access to amenities including a pool, gymnasium and entertainment areas.

A property launch was held in February 2020 in Melbourne, with Evolve Housing CEO Lyall Gorman attending alongside representatives from Aware Super and Altis Property Partners.

Mr Gorman said that the project meets an important need for essential workers.

"Key workers such as police officers, nurses and teachers are among the hardest working, most essential service providers in our community, but unfortunately, rising rental prices often prevent them from living within a reasonable commuting distance to their workplace," he said.

"This project allows these workers to live in high-quality homes and cut down on their commute time without having to stretch their budget. We know only too well the huge positive impact on quality of life and overall individual and family well-being that projects such as this have. We would like to applaud Aware Super and Altis Property Partners for having the initiative and

social commitment to invest in key worker housing to produce the significant benefits it brings to communities and the vital workers within them.”

## LOCAL COUNCILS

Evolve Housing is proud to be managing the affordable housing stock of two councils in the Sydney metropolitan area. We manage 34 properties on behalf of Willoughby City Council, and 8 properties on behalf of Parramatta City Council.

Local councils can play an important role in providing appropriate housing for people living in their area, and we are delighted to be involved in Willoughby and Parramatta’s affordable housing programs.

## FOSTER CARE ANGELS

Evolve Housing worked with the registered charity Foster Care Angels to provide accommodation for four young people who are leaving out-of-home care and moving into independent living. We are providing transitional supported accommodation for a three year period and Foster Care Angels is providing on-site support and supervision to ensure the young people can smoothly transition into an independent, self-managed lifestyle. The accommodation being provided is through an affordable housing program, which typically involves a rental charge of 74.9% of market rent, but both Evolve Housing and Foster Care Angels are contributing a small amount of extra money to offer a deeper rental subsidy for these tenants to mitigate their rental stress

\* In association with Jens Veal Byrne Pty Limited  
ABN 56 608 923 646 trading as EchoRealty in Victoria under  
licence from Evolve Housing Limited ABN 16 127 713 731

Apartments located at Moonee Ponds, Victoria\*





# ECHOREALTY

EchoRealty, a division of Evolve Housing, is a profit-for-purpose real estate agency. Launched in 2017, the agency was the first of its kind in NSW specialising in affordable housing. While most of the properties that EchoRealty manages are affordable housing (owned by Evolve Housing or a private landlord), the team also manages some privately owned properties leased at market rent on a fee-for-service basis.

With a combined 50 years' experience in private and affordable housing management, the EchoRealty team has successfully partnered with government and private organisations including the Aboriginal Housing Office, City of Parramatta, Willoughby Council, Altis Property Partners, Sydney Olympic Park Authority, various developers and investors.

Since its launch, EchoRealty has been very successful, growing its affordable housing portfolio from 40 properties to 1,413 properties. Of EchoRealty's property portfolio, 262 dwellings are owned by Evolve Housing, and we have played an active part in growing affordable housing supply in Australia by building our own developments.

EchoRealty's aim is to provide affordable, high-quality properties and supportive tenancy management to residents, and to help increase the supply of affordable housing in NSW by partnering with developers and investors.

EchoRealty's affordable properties are available to households with low-to-moderate incomes. Income limits are applied to relevant affordable housing policies and schemes, combination of household members, size and market rent of the dwelling.



Apartment located at 17 Lachlan Street, Waterloo NSW.

Unlike traditional real estate agents, EchoRealty's profits are reinvested to create more social and affordable housing stock and to fund social support programs for disadvantaged members of the community. EchoRealty also provides fee-for-service property management for key worker housing. Key worker housing is housing provided at below market rent to eligible applicants who are employed in essential services such as aged care, health care, education, emergency services, childcare and law enforcement.

## STAFF STORIES

### STACY, TEAM LEADER ECHOREALTY

"As a Team Leader I manage a small team who complete property administration tasks including tenant application processing, portfolio management, liaising with landlords and tenants, routine inspections and repairs and maintenance. I thoroughly enjoy the fast pace and variety of my role. No two days are alike, which I thrive on.

I derive a lot of personal satisfaction from being able to help people get into a home and working with my team to ensure the process is a smooth journey for residents from start to finish.

「I am able to meet some wonderful and diverse people and get them established into their new life within the community.」

Evolve Housing has provided me with fantastic opportunities both with my career and with being involved in interesting projects. I started in Property Management and have recently taken on a People Leader role.

My new role provides me with the opportunity to develop my communication and leadership skills. I am also continuing my education and am currently completing my Real Estate Licence."







「 I THINK OTHER YOUNGER TENANTS NEED TO HEAR THE STORY AND  
THINK ABOUT EVOLVE AS A SOLUTION, GOOD BASE AND HELPING  
HAND TO SAVE SOME MONEY AND INVEST IN OUR CHILDREN'S FUTURE. 」



# LEJLA

## RESIDENT STORY

Like many Sydneysiders, Lejla and Amel thought they would never be homeowners but after seven years of living in an EchoRealty property and sticking to a savings plan, the young family's dream came true.

Lejla, 33, and Amel, 34, first became EchoRealty tenants in 2013 after Amel suffered a serious work injury and was unable to work for a year.

The couple, who moved to Australia in 2006 and had been renting in the private market, had never heard of affordable housing. "I thought it was normal because you're in Sydney and you know that Sydney is the most expensive city in the world, so I thought it's my fault," Lejla said of the high rents she once paid.

A friend let them know about EchoRealty and the family successfully applied for a two-bedroom unit in western Sydney. While their new home was on the top floor, the apartment block fortunately had a lift, and was almost brand new.

Despite the couple having young children and earning moderate incomes, being able to access an affordable rental property allowed them to save a deposit, a goal that Lejla thought was unattainable. After saving up a \$30k deposit, she and Amel went to a mortgage broker who turned them away three times.

Their luck changed when the government launched its First Home Loan Deposit Scheme, which allowed them to secure a home loan with a 5% deposit rather than the traditional 20% that is often required.

Armed with a loan pre-approval, Lejla and Amel had three months to find a home within their price range of

under \$550,000 in the notoriously expensive city of Sydney. They managed to find a beautiful home that suited their needs in the same western Sydney suburb they were already living in.

Lejla initially thought that they would lose out to a prospective buyer with more money, but the couple who were selling were retiring and wanted to pass on their home to a young family. The owners even left Lejla and Amel a lemon tree in the backyard as a gift.

"I couldn't believe that they would pick me as a buyer because there was someone who gave a higher offer... This elderly couple, I think they saw us and the kids and they actually wanted us to buy, so they reduced the price for us, they were lovely people," Lejla said.

While getting into the property market isn't achievable for everyone due to high prices, Lejla said that the government scheme she accessed was a huge help and that she would advise other aspiring homeowners to focus on sticking to a realistic savings plan.

While Lejla was very driven to achieve her savings goals, living in an EchoRealty property with discounted rent helped her to put money away for a deposit without feeling deprived or scrimping too much.

"In the 7 years while we were here we managed to pay off our car loan, raise two kids, we went overseas to visit family and save a deposit for our first home," she said.

"We still had a great time to do all kids activities like soccer, swimming and music, family time and lots of entertainment."

# FUNDING AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Many EchoRealty affordable housing properties are funded through the National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS), a federal government program that is progressively being phased out.

The scheme, which began in 2008, provided a financial incentive for up to ten years to property owners who allowed their homes to be rented out as affordable housing for at least 20 percent below market rent.

This scheme was discontinued in 2016, and by June 2026, the last NRAS properties to be included in the program will have their funding expire.

While the end of the scheme will undoubtedly impact the way we finance our affordable housing portfolio, we are proactively working to combat the loss of funding and maintain as many affordable housing properties as possible.

Evolve Housing currently owns 344 properties that receive NRAS funding. We will retain and continue to operate as many of these as affordable housing as possible, despite the potential cost to our organisation.

We have used finance obtained through the National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation to refinance developments which previously had NRAS incentives to reduce interest costs.

We also manage 438 NRAS properties that are owned by private market owners. Whether or not these can be retained as affordable housing after NRAS funding expires is highly uncertain and depends on the private owners' decisions. Without an incentive covering the difference between market rental rates and discounted

affordable housing rates, many landlords may choose to return their properties to the private market.

EchoRealty has been proactively exploring various options to minimise potential loss of affordable housing. As the current housing market is flat, we believe we may be able to persuade some investors to continue to lease their properties as affordable rental housing to income eligible households managed by us.

We are also looking at other programs that fund affordable housing so that we can move tenants into new properties if their rental home is transitioned to private market housing by its owner.

In particular, the ARHSEPP/inclusionary zoning policies at the state level have resulted in the creation of more affordable housing properties and EchoRealty has been able to secure a number of these.

There are other policy mechanisms that will also likely boost the supply of affordable housing, such as requirements for local councils to establish Affordable Rental Housing Targets. We are well-placed to take advantage of these opportunities and apply to become part of these programs.

EchoRealty will undertake analysis in due course to understand the locational loss of NRAS properties and potential replacement options. It is to be noted that apart from the potential loss of 2 dwellings in 2019, for EchoRealty, there is no real impact on externally owned NRAS properties until 2023. We are advocating for all levels of government to consider some alternate scheme that may provide continuing support to owners of affordable housing stock.

## ECHOREALTY VALUE PROPOSITION

### ECHOREALTY'S UNIQUE REAL ESTATE MODEL PROVIDES:

- Advice on meeting the obligation of affordable housing programs
- Affordable housing management services to meet the legal requirements of various affordable housing schemes
- Assistance in finding the perfect tenants, and property management
- Expertise in creating integrated communities
- All fees earned are invested in providing more affordable housing and social inclusion programs

2020 **1413**

2019 **1075**

2018 **852**

2017 **633**

2016 **584**

2015 **465**

2014 **453**

2013 **320**

2009 **40**



### MILESTONE

In May 2019, we reached a huge milestone of achieving 1,000 properties in our portfolio, which was celebrated with a ceremonious cake-cutting at our flagship mixed tenure development, Harts Landing. Our affordable housing portfolio now has an average growth rate of 206 properties per annum and we continue to invest in more opportunities to provide more affordable options.

### NUMBER OF DWELLINGS

In 2009, we had just 40 dwellings and by June 2020 this had grown to 1413.



# 05 OUR TEAM



NAME	FINANCE	MARKETING	OPERATIONS	SALES	TECHNICAL	TRAINING	ADMINISTRATIVE
Paul Howlett	6	6	3	3	3	3	3
Rhonda Hawkins	6	6	6	NA	NA	NA	NA
Alan Zammit	6	6	6	3	3	3	3
David Bonger	4	6	6	NA	NA	NA	NA
Kay Ventsch	6	6	6	NA	NA	NA	NA
Robert Lang	5	6	6	3	3	3	3
Natalie Walker	5	6	6	NA	NA	NA	NA
John Nesbitt	6	6	6	3	3	3	3



# OUR ORGANISATION

## DIVERSITY

Cultural diversity is high within our workforce with 23 languages spoken by employees. We are supporting gender equality with 20 females in management roles (including two at the executive level). In addition, our Board has three female Directors.

## FLEXIBLE WORKING

We promote flexible working and have launched a formal flexible working policy in 2020. Currently, 54% of our workforce leverage flexible working arrangements including a compressed working week, working part-time, working remotely, or taking flexi leave and purchasing additional annual leave.

## TRAINING AND EDUCATION

68 employees (59%) have tertiary qualifications. In total, our staff have completed 1138 training hours in the last 12 months. 97% of our

workforce completed compliance training with a total of 1368 training events having been undertaken.

28 employees completed mental health training in 2019–20 with additional sessions scheduled for 2020–21.

Our new 'Wellbeing Ambassador' program, run in conjunction with our Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provider, was initiated in 2020, with 17 employees appointed as Ambassadors to undertake wellbeing training with a goal of providing peer support.

# OUR ORGANISATION

## PERFORMANCE

100% of employees set Performance Goals aligned to our Strategic Business Plan to ensure our organisation as a whole is working toward achieving its strategic outcomes.

## COMMUNITY SUPPORT

In the last financial year, more than a quarter of our workforce participated in volunteer or community work outside of their employment with us. This includes community work with young people, as well as our LifeBlood Donorship program.

## TEAM HIGHLIGHTS

### BLOOD DONATION PROGRAM

Evolve Housing has been participating as a team in the Red Cross LifeBlood program since 2017, giving our staff members the opportunity to donate blood or plasma together at our local Red Cross Blood Centre during work hours. We have 40 staff who participate, many of these going on a monthly basis.

As of June, our team has made 27 donations this year, resulting in 81 lives saved. We have continued to run our donation program throughout the COVID-19 crisis, adapting it to ensure it is safe and complies with social distancing measures. Our target in the 2020 calendar year is to save 200 lives through our blood donations.

### CONTRIBUTING TO OUR COMMUNITY

As a not-for-profit, Evolve Housing believes that it is important that we contribute to our local community in any way possible and many of our staff offer their time, services and expertise to other organisations outside the scope of their work duties.

Evolve Housing offers all team members paid volunteer leave each year. This year, more than 25% of our staff took the opportunity to participate in volunteer work outside of their employment, including the Support Team, who spent a day assisting Good360, an organisation that distributes new non-perishable goods to not-for-profits.

Our staff also make an impact in the community by contributing to professional networks such as the Community Housing Industry Association NSW, PowerHousing Australia, the Parramatta Regional Homelessness Interagency and the Collaborative Youth Services Partnership. This participation helps develop the community housing sector so it can better serve all clients.

## DIVERSITY

### INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY LUNCH

In March, the Evolve Housing and EchoRealty family celebrated International Women's Day alongside two of our female board members, Rhonda Hawkins and Natalie Walker.

As well as enjoying lunch with the team, Rhonda and Natalie shared their inspirational stories and thoughts on how we can actively choose to challenge stereotypes, fight bias, broaden perceptions, improve situations and celebrate women's achievements.

The issue of gender equality is especially important to Evolve Housing, given that 69% of our staff are female, as are 56% of our residents.



# OUR PEOPLE 2019–2020 SNAPSHOT

## 114 TEAM MEMBERS

### GENDER:

79 female staff (69%)

35 male staff (31%)

### AGE:

<20 years old, 1 (0.8%)

20–29 years old, 18 (16%)

30–39 years old, 31 (27%)

40–49 years old, 25 (22%)

50–59 years old, 27 (24%)

60+ years old, 12 (11%)

### TENURE:

A third of our workforce have been employed with Evolve Housing for more than four years. We seek to achieve strong retention, balanced with engaging new employees, to ensure we create an innovative, motivated and fresh-thinking culture.

<1 year, 21 (18%)

1–4 years, 56 (49%)

5–9 years, 21 (18%)

10–14 years, 11 (9%)

15–19 years, 2 (2%)

20+ years, 3 (3%)

### RETENTION

Our employee engagement is high which has resulted in an increase in our staff retention compared to the prior year.

July 18–June 19, average 98.06%

July 19–June 20, average 98.50%



# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## PAUL HOWLETT

### CHAIRPERSON

Paul has an engineering and construction background with more than 45 years' experience in executive management positions, advising governments and the private sector and not-for-profit organisations.

Paul brings a wealth of experience to the Board, particularly in the areas of developing and advising on strategy, procurement and governance.

Paul is also a Director of Centacare Evolve Housing in Tasmania.



## ALAN ZAMMIT AM, FAICD

### DIRECTOR

Alan's 50-year career demonstrates expertise in finance, infrastructure delivery and property development. Alan is Managing Director of UPDM Pty Ltd, Chair of Norwest Association Ltd, a Director of Centacare Evolve Housing Ltd and Wentwest Ltd, and sits on a number of NSW Government Audit and Risk Committees.





## RHONDA HAWKINS AM, FAICD

### DEPUTY CHAIR

Rhonda received the Order of Australia in 2015 for her 30 years' service providing educational opportunities to the people of Western Sydney. Rhonda was Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Corporate Strategy and Services) and the University Provost at Western Sydney University in a career spanning more than 30 years. Current Director appointments include Fitzgerald Aged Care, Wentworth Institute, Victoria University as well as the Salvation Army Greater Western Sydney Advisory Board and Riverside Theatres Advisory Board.



## DAVID BORGER

### DIRECTOR

David is the Executive Director and founding executive of the Western Sydney Business Chamber and was the youngest ever Lord Mayor of the City of Parramatta. He served as the NSW Minister for Western Sydney, Minister for Housing, Minister for Roads, and Minister assisting the Minister for Transport. As Housing Minister, David oversaw the construction of approximately 9,000 social housing dwellings.

David is a Director of Think Planners and also serves as a non-executive director on the board of the NRMA.



# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## JOHN NESBITT

### DIRECTOR

John Nesbitt is a Non-Executive Director with more than 40 years' experience across a number of sectors including financial services, banking, property and construction. His current positions include non-executive directorships at ME Bank Ltd, Credit Corp Group Limited and General Reinsurance Australia Limited.

## KAY VEITCH FAICD

### DIRECTOR

Kay brings more than 25 years' experience in executive leadership at Qantas Airways, Virgin Australia Airlines and GWA Group Limited. She is former Director of CARE Australia and current appointments include VeMo Consulting, Chair of Keep Australia Beautiful NSW and Director of ASPECT Studios and Local Land Services. Kay's key areas of expertise are organisational transformation, change leadership, commercial distribution and revenue management.

## NATALIE WALKER

### DIRECTOR

One of Australia's 100 Women of Influence in 2012 and Australia's representative on the G20 Business Women Leaders Taskforce in 2018, Natalie is co-chair of the National Australia Bank's Indigenous Advisory Board, Chair of Evolve FM and director of Life Without Barriers, Goodstart Early Learning and the Telstra Foundation. Her 20-year career spans social enterprise, social policy design, impact investment and social impact creation across a number of sectors.



## DR ROBERT LANG

### DIRECTOR

Robert's previous appointments include CEO of the City of Parramatta and CEO of Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority and as an Adjunct Professor at the Western Sydney University School of Business. His expertise includes urban planning, economic development, arts, transformational change and corporate governance. Robert also sits on the boards of Urban Theatre Projects, Regional Development Australia (Sydney), Ability Options, Sydney Festival and Place Leaders Asia Pacific.



# BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Evolve Housing has a skills-based Board of Directors with diverse experience across a broad range of industries and sectors. The Board is actively involved in and committed to overseeing the performance of the organisation and contributing to the development of strategic objectives.

As a Tier 1 nationally registered community housing provider, Evolve Housing strives to meet and exceed the highest standards of sector governance. Our Board of Directors and the Evolve Housing team are committed to sound corporate governance as the foundation for achieving the company's vision, mission and strategy, while remaining accountable and transparent in our dealings. There were six Board meetings in 2019–2020 (excluding Board subcommittee meetings).

The Board has established various committees comprising members with the relevant specialist expertise to focus on specific issues and make recommendations. Terms of reference set out each Committee's remit. Meetings are scheduled in advance for the year, with flexibility for additional dates to be called if circumstances require.

## COMMITTEE MEMBERS

AS OF 30 JUNE 2020

### FINANCE, RISK AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

The Finance, Risk and Audit Committee is responsible for overseeing risk management and internal audit, and ensuring the integrity of financial reporting. Its members are:

- John Nesbitt (Chair)
- Alan Zammit
- Paul Howlett
- Robert Lang

### STRATEGIC PROJECTS ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

The Strategic Projects Assessment Committee is responsible for considering investment decisions, conducting risk assessments and making recommendations to the Board around strategic projects, including potential

development acquisition and partnership opportunities.

Its members are:

- Robert Lang (Chair)
- Paul Howlett
- Alan Zammit
- David Borger

Note: The Board resolved to dissolve this Committee in June 2020, replacing it with a working group comprised of appropriate Directors and members of Management, who would meet on an ad-hoc basis for strategic property projects.

## GOVERNANCE, NOMINATION AND PEOPLE COMMITTEE

The Governance, Nomination, and People Committee is responsible for overseeing the organisation's governance framework, and practices. It is also responsible for recommendations to the Board on the selection, appointment, remuneration and retention policies for the Board and CEO, succession planning and Board review.

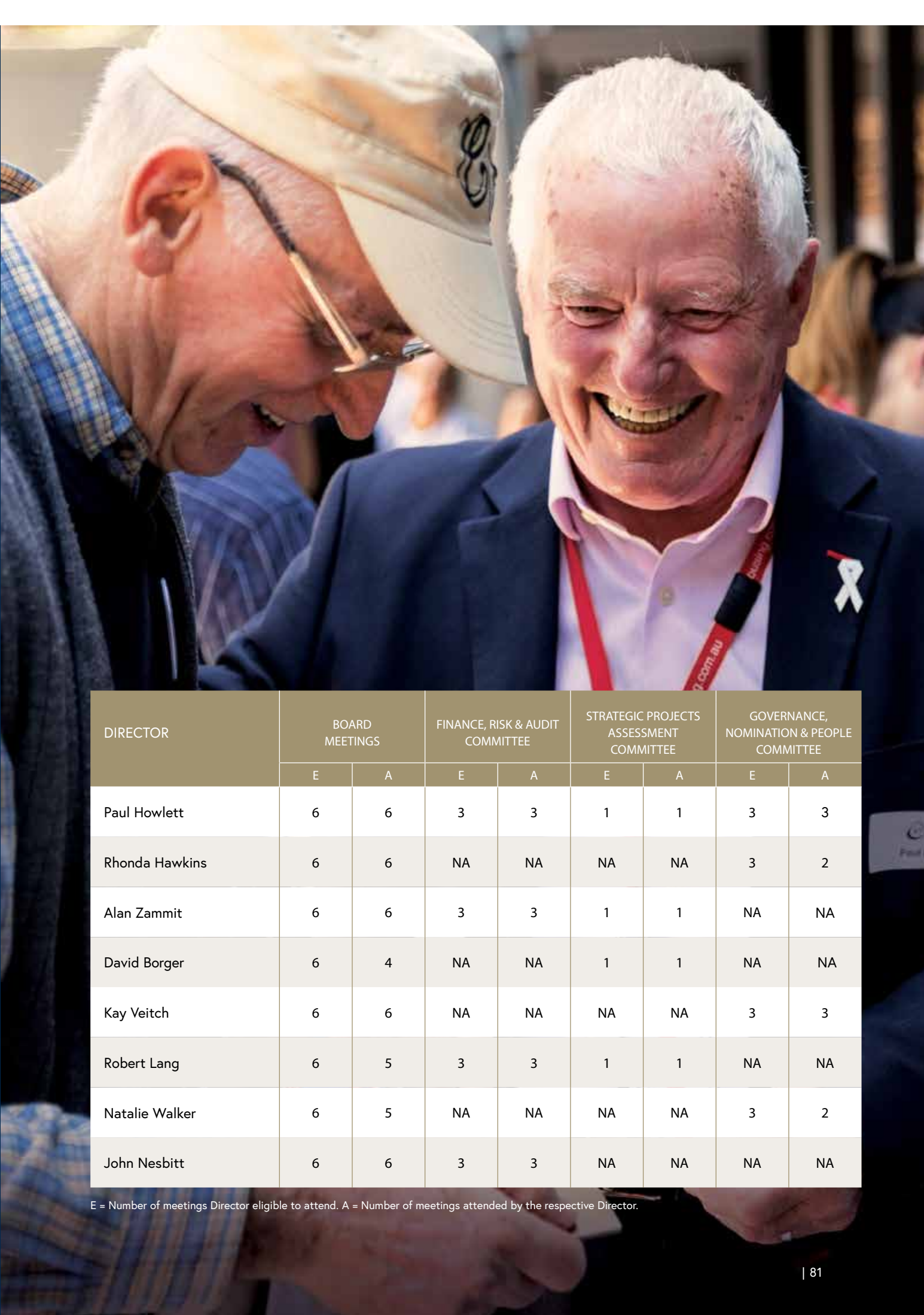
Its members are:

- Kay Veitch (Chair)
- Paul Howlett
- Rhonda Hawkins
- Natalie Walker

Note: The CEO attends all Board and Board Committee meetings by invitation. The CEO was also appointed as an Alternate Director for Paul Howlett (Appointing Director) on 21 April 2020 until 20 October 2020, unless varied by the Board. He was appointed on the following terms:

- The Alternate Director may attend and vote at Board meetings if the Appointing Director is not present.
- The Alternate Director may exercise any powers that the Appointing Director may exercise as a director if the Appointing Director is unavailable, including signing documents on behalf of the Company and as a director of the Company.





DIRECTOR	BOARD MEETINGS		FINANCE, RISK & AUDIT COMMITTEE		STRATEGIC PROJECTS ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE		GOVERNANCE, NOMINATION & PEOPLE COMMITTEE	
	E	A	E	A	E	A	E	A
Paul Howlett	6	6	3	3	1	1	3	3
Rhonda Hawkins	6	6	NA	NA	NA	NA	3	2
Alan Zammit	6	6	3	3	1	1	NA	NA
David Borger	6	4	NA	NA	1	1	NA	NA
Kay Veitch	6	6	NA	NA	NA	NA	3	3
Robert Lang	6	5	3	3	1	1	NA	NA
Natalie Walker	6	5	NA	NA	NA	NA	3	2
John Nesbitt	6	6	3	3	NA	NA	NA	NA

E = Number of meetings Director eligible to attend. A = Number of meetings attended by the respective Director.

# EXECUTIVE TEAM



## LYALL GORMAN

### CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Joining Evolve Housing in May 2019, Lyall is a highly successful business leader with over 35 years' experience in the public and private sectors covering senior management, project management and administration. During his various corporate roles, Lyall has filled key corporate governance roles in a range of private and listed entities. He is the President of Business NSW and a Director of the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI).



## JITENDER BALANI

### GENERAL MANAGER, STRATEGIC ASSEST MANAGEMENT & BUSINESS GROWTH

Jitender is a dynamic leader of social housing and human services in both an operational and strategic context. He holds an Executive Master of Public Administration, Bachelor of Building and tertiary qualifications in civil engineering. Jitender was previously responsible for managing the Wentworth Housing and Department of Communities and Justice (community housing) asset portfolio and asset system.



## HANNA MYLLYOJA

### GENERAL MANAGER, GOVERNANCE AND LEGAL

Hanna is a highly experienced General Counsel and Company Secretary with over 25 years of professional experience in a range of industries across multiple jurisdictions, including risk, compliance, governance consulting services, electronic publishing and property information. Hanna has a Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Laws and Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice and is a member of the Law Society of New South Wales.



## MARK LENIC

### GENERAL MANAGER, RESIDENT SERVICES

Mark has over 30 years of housing sector experience in contract management, residential management and asset planning. Previously, Mark was the General Manager of the Housing NSW Contact Centre where he led a team of 230 staff who managed 125,000 properties and 1.5 million interactions through telephone, email and other channels, as well as handling over 350,000 work orders annually.





## PHILIP FROST

GENERAL MANAGER, CORPORATE FINANCE

Philip brings over 30 years' experience in finance as an investment banker and chartered accountant. He has extensive experience in the financing of social and affordable housing projects and the development of institutional financing solutions via the Bond Aggregator model. Prior to joining the executive, Philip was a member of the Evolve Housing Board.



## BRETT MANWARING

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

AND GENERAL MANAGER, CORPORATE SERVICES

Brett brings more than 25 years of experience as a senior executive and board director across a variety of industries. He is skilled in cash-flow and risk management and has a passion for assisting businesses develop and implement sustainable strategic plans. Brett is the current Vice President of the NSW Business Chamber, chair of their Audit and Risk Committee and Joint Trustee of the Illawarra First Fund.



## JO HENDERSON-BROOKS

GENERAL MANAGER, PEOPLE AND CULTURE

Jo is an energetic executive leader with over 20 years of experience in the design, implementation and management of people and culture services. Her broad experience includes talent management, organisation structure design, performance frameworks, recruitment and talent attraction, remuneration analysis, and capability and development. Jo possesses a Bachelor of Arts degree, majoring in Psychology and a Diploma in Project Management.



# 06 FINANCE

## FINANCIAL COMMENTARY ANNUAL REPORT 2019–2020

An increase in the number of properties, both owned and managed, has resulted in another year of strong revenue growth for Evolve Housing Ltd for the 2019-20 financial year.

Through a focus on cost management, whilst still investing in our people, systems and asset management programs to deliver high quality customer service, the business has been able to deliver another year of solid profitability.

A key highlight from this years' result is the robustness of our business model across all metrics despite the challenges brought about through COVID-19 and the wider impacts on the economy generally.

Of particular note is the management of property rental income and tenant wellbeing

which resulted in the business actually seeing a decrease in rental arrears compared to previous years.

Evolve Housing, from a balance sheet perspective, has increased its total net assets through a combination of increased properties, growth in cash balances and strong management of working capital.

Cash flow management has also been a key focus resulting in an overall increase in cash held of \$15.4M which has positioned the business well to embark on further growth and investment in future years.

# AUDITOR'S LETTER



## Auditor's Independence Declaration under subdivision 60-C section 60-40 of Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012

To: the Directors of Evolve Housing Limited

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, in relation to the audit for the financial year ended 30 June 2020 there have been:

- i. no contraventions of the auditor independence requirements as set out in the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 in relation to the audit; and
- ii. no contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.



KPMG



Richard Drinnan

*Partner*

Wollongong

20 October 2020

# AUDITOR'S REPORT

PAGE 1 OF 3



## Independent Auditor's Report

To the members of Evolve Housing Limited

### Opinion

We have audited the **Financial Report** of Evolve Housing Limited (the Company).

In our opinion, the accompanying Financial Report of the Company is in accordance with the Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) Act 2012*, including:

- giving a true and fair view of the Group's financial position as at 30 June 2020 and of its financial performance for the year ended on that date; and
- complying with *Australian Accounting Standards - Reduced Disclosure Requirements* and Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013*.

The **Financial Report** comprises:

- Consolidated statement of financial position as at 30 June 2020;
- Consolidated statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, Consolidated statement of changes in equity, and Consolidated statement of cash flows for the year then ended;
- Notes including a summary of significant accounting policies; and
- Directors' Declaration.

The **Group** consists of Evolve Housing Limited (the Company) and the entities it controlled at the year-end or from time to time during the financial year.

### Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with *Australian Auditing Standards*. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

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 Group in accordance with the auditor independence requirements of the *ACNC Act 2012* and the ethical requirements of the *Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)* (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the Financial Report in Australia. We have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

### Other Information

Other Information is financial and non-financial information in Evolve Housing Limited's annual reporting which is provided in addition to the Financial Report and the Auditor's Report. The Directors





are responsible for the Other Information.

The Other Information we obtained prior to the date of this Auditor's Report was the Director's report.

Our opinion on the Financial Report does not cover the Other Information and, accordingly, we do not express an audit opinion or any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the Financial Report, our responsibility is to read the Other Information. In doing so, we consider whether the Other Information is materially inconsistent with the Financial Report or our knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

We are required to report if we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this Other Information, and based on the work we have performed on the Other Information that we obtained prior to the date of this Auditor's Report we have nothing to report.

#### Responsibilities of the Directors for the Financial Report

The Directors are responsible for:

- preparing the Financial Report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with *Australian Accounting Standards - Reduced Disclosure Requirements* and the *ACNC*.
- implementing necessary internal control to enable the preparation of a Financial Report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.
- assessing the Group and Company's ability to continue as a going concern and whether the use of the going concern basis of accounting is appropriate. This includes disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless they either intend to liquidate the Group and Company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

#### Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the Financial Report

Our objective is:

- to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the 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. They 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 Financial Report.

As part of an audit in accordance with *Australian Auditing Standards*, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit.

We also:

- i. Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the Financial Report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain



audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

- ii. Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the Audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the registered Group's internal control.
- iii. Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Directors.
- iv. Conclude on the appropriateness of the Directors' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the registered Group and Company's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our Auditor's Report to the related disclosures in the Financial Report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our Auditor's Report. However, future events or conditions may cause the registered Group and Company to cease to continue as a going concern.
- v. Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the Financial Report, including the disclosures, and whether the Financial Report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with the Directors of the registered Company regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.



KPMG

Richard Drinnan

*Partner*

Sydney

23 October 2020

# FINANCIAL

## SUMMARY REPORT

	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
<b>Resident Satisfaction</b>					
Overall satisfaction with the organisation (%)	86	85 <sup>‡</sup>	85	80	83
<b>Service Development</b>					
Total housing properties	4,054	3,478	3,241	3,001	3,020
<b>Finance Management</b>					
Staff costs as % of total revenue (%)	20%	21%	17%	19%	8%
Property costs as % of total revenue (%)	54%	58%	57%	53%	29%
Property costs inclusive amortised leased costs					
Administration costs as % of total revenue (%)	7%	5%	15%	7%	5%
Profitability Ratio <sup>§</sup> — EBITDA / Operating Revenue (%)	47%	18%	9%	12%	110%
Property costs inclusive amortised leased costs					
Liquidity Ratio — Current Assets/Current Liabilities	1.2 <sup>§</sup>	4.0	3.7	2.6	4
Current liabilities including lease liabilities					
Cash at end of year (\$m)	24.8	9.3	9.3	15.6	13.40
Net profit (\$m)	4.1	(10.7)	25.8	8.8	48.78
Operating Net profit (\$m)	1.4	5.3	3.5	4.2	10.40
Excludes Valuations gains/(loss) and one-off grants					
Retained profit (\$m)	264.0	259.7	271.6	246.2	237.41
Total Equity (\$m)	266.9	262.7	273.4	247.6	238.75
<b>Housing Management</b>					
Rent outstanding / arrears (BM 2.5%)	0.4	0.5	1.2	1.3	1.94
Rent forgone due to tenantable vacancies as a percentage of total potential rental income (BM 5%)	0.9	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.3
Average no. of days to house a tenant after an untenable unit becomes vacant (BM 28 days)	17.8	5	15	28	27
Average no. of days to house a tenant after a tenable unit becomes vacant (BM 14 days)	10.4	4	13	9	13
Number of tenants exiting the service because of a Possession Order enforcement	1	5	7	14	10
<b>Human Resources</b>					
Ratio of all staff to lettable properties	1:37	1:31	1:39	1:33	1:38
Number of full-time equivalent staff	114	108	96	92	73

§ Change to accounting standards in 2020 for treatment of leased assets.

‡ Number indicated is the 2018 result.

\* BM, Benchmark



CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF PROFIT AND LOSS, OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2020

	2020	2019
<b>Revenue</b>	<b>58,044,617</b>	<b>51,400,805</b>
Sale of investment properties		—
Other income	4,193,980	4,462,430
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>62,238,597</b>	<b>55,863,235</b>
Employee benefits expense	(12,412,606)	(10,851,947)
Bad and doubtful debts expense	(304,544)	(69,786)
Property expenses	(18,771,434)	(31,056,865)
Finance costs	(4,987,365)	(3,907,756)
Investment properties development expense — Harts Landing		—
Other expenses	(4,487,057)	4,100,742
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>(40,963,006)</b>	<b>(49,987,096)</b>
<b>Net current year surplus</b>	<b>21,275,591</b>	<b>5,876,139</b>
Change in fair value of investment property	(2,349,845)	(17,422,624)
Depreciation and amortisation expense	(14,761,841)	(535,821)
	<b>(17,111,686)</b>	<b>(17,958,445)</b>
<b>Net current year (loss)/surplus</b>	<b>4,163,905</b>	<b>(12,082,306)</b>
<b>Other comprehensive income</b>		
Revaluation of property		1,389,482
<b>Total comprehensive surplus for the year</b>		<b>1,389,482</b>
<b>Total comprehensive (loss)/ surplus attributable to members of the entity</b>	<b>4,163,905</b>	<b>(10,692,824)</b>

# CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

AS AT 30 JUNE 2020

	2020	2019
<b>Assets</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	24,787,227	9,318,394
Accounts receivable and other debtors	4,957,204	4,686,400
Other current assets	757,364	21,956,846
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>30,501,795</b>	<b>35,961,640</b>
<b>Non-current assets</b>		
Property, plant and equipment	7,444,349	7,363,610
Other non-current assets	1,141,996	1,142,637
Investment property — right of use asset	88,606,165	—
Investment property	88,731,970	87,054,338
Investment property — restricted	221,629,146	210,252,908
<b>Total non-current assets</b>	<b>407,553,625</b>	<b>305,813,493</b>
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>438,055,420</b>	<b>341,775,133</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
Accounts payable and other payables	8,801,287	6,833,598
Provisions	1,583,315	1,570,408
Borrowings	616,888	659,303
Lease liability	14,000,712	—
<b>Total current liabilities</b>	<b>25,002,202</b>	<b>9,063,309</b>
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>		
Borrowings	70,000,000	70,000,000
Lease liability	76,177,490	—
<b>Total non-current liabilities</b>	<b>146,177,490</b>	<b>70,000,000</b>
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>171,179,692</b>	<b>79,063,309</b>
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>266,875,729</b>	<b>262,711,824</b>
<b>Equity</b>		
Reserves	2,919,117	2,919,117
Accumulated surplus	70,601,166	67,656,242
Accumulated surplus — restricted	193,355,446	192,136,465
<b>Total equity</b>	<b>266,875,729</b>	<b>262,711,824</b>

## CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2020

	Reserves	Retained Surplus	Retained surplus restricted	Total accumulated funds
<b>Balance at 1 July 2018</b>	<b>1,529,635</b>	<b>65,369,447</b>	<b>206,505,566</b>	<b>273,404,648</b>
<b>Comprehensive income for the year</b>				
Gain/(loss) for the year attributable to the members	—	2,286,795	(14,369,101)	(12,082,306)
Surplus for the year attributable to the members	—	2,286,795	(14,369,101)	(12,082,306)
Other comprehensive income	1,389,482	—	—	1,389,482
<b>Balance at 30 June 2019</b>	<b>2,919,117</b>	<b>67,656,242</b>	<b>192,136,465</b>	<b>262,711,824</b>
Balance at 1 July 2019	2,919,117	67,656,242	192,136,465	262,711,824
<b>Comprehensive income for the year</b>				
Profit for the year attributable to the members	—	2,944,924	1,218,981	4,163,905
Other comprehensive income	—	—	—	—
<b>Balance at 30 June 2020</b>	<b>2,919,117</b>	<b>70,601,166</b>	<b>193,355,446</b>	<b>266,875,729</b>



## CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2020

	2020	2019
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>		
Receipts from customers and grants received from government	60,491,319	56,181,286
Payments to suppliers and employees	(35,785,179)	(43,887,417)
Interest received	427,638	322,069
Interest paid on lease liability	(2,979,698)	—
Interest paid	(2,007,667)	(3,907,756)
<b>Net cash from /(used) in operating activities</b>	<b>20,146,413</b>	<b>8,708,182</b>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>		
Payment from property, plant and equipment	(249,589)	(648,968)
Proceeds from sale of investment property, plant and equipment	—	5,618
Payment for investment properties	(12,395,252)	(6,534,811)
Funds transferred to term deposits	21,199,482	(15,133,186)
<b>Net cash used in investing activities</b>	<b>8,554,641</b>	<b>(22,311,347)</b>
<b>Cash flows from financing activities</b>		
Proceeds from borrowings	—	70,000,000
Repayment of borrowings	(42,417)	(56,401,040)
Repayment of finance leases	(13,189,804)	
<b>Net cash from financing activities</b>	<b>(13,232,221)</b>	<b>13,598,960</b>
Net decrease in cash and cash equivalents	15,468,833	(4,205)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	9,318,394	9,322,599
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at end of year</b>	<b>24,787,227</b>	<b>9,318,394</b>

# PARTNERS AND CREDITS

## KEY PARTNERS

3Bridges Community Incorporated	Fighting Chance	Northcott
Ability Options	Foster Care Angels	OzHarvest
Altis Property Partners	Guildford Leagues	Pacific Link Housing
Awabakal Local Aboriginal Land Council	High St Youth Health Centre	Parramatta City Council
Barnardos	Hunter and Central Coast Development Corporation	Parramatta Mission
Billbergia	Hunter Valley Disability Services	PAYCE
Brighter Access	Independent Living Villages	Rapid Relief
Capella Capital	Interaction Services	Relationships Australia NSW
Catholic Care Social Services	Land and Housing Corporation	Ryde Area Supported Accommodation for Intellectually Disabled (RASAIID)
Cerebral Palsy Alliance	Landcom	Royal Botanic Gardens
Coffs Harbour Support Services	Lendlease	Royal Rehabilitation Centre
Community Housing Industry Australia — NSW Division	Lifetime Care and Support Authority	Schizophrenia Fellowship
Community Migrant Resource Centre	LikeMinds	Stockland
Cumberland Council	Linking Hearts	Sydney Olympic Park Authority
Darcy Street Project	MacKillop Family Services	Traders in Purple
Department of Communities and Justice (formerly Family and Community Services)	Macquarie Community College	West Connect Domestic Violence Services Inc
Department of Planning, Industry and Environment	Marist180	Western Sydney University
Disability Services Australia	MAX Solutions	Willoughby City Council
DOOLEYS Lidcombe Catholic Club	Mid North Coast Disability Services	Women's Community Shelters
DV NSW Service Management	Mission Australia	Woodville Alliance
Flourish — HASI*	My Foundations Youth Housing	
	National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation (NHFIC)	
	Nepean Community College	
	New Horizons	

\* The Housing and Accommodation  
Support Initiative (HASI)

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## CREDITS

CEO: Lyall Gorman

General Manager, Strategic Assest Management & Business Growth: Jitender Balani

Editorial: Shannon Cochrane

Editorial support: Veronica Wehbe

Design: Timothy Hartridge

Production: Zulu8



# LUCY

## RESIDENTIAL SERVICES TEAM LEADER STAFF STORY

"I proudly support and lead a fabulous team of specialist Housing Managers. Coming to Australia from war torn former Yugoslavia in 1995 as refugee, not speaking any English and starting from scratch was very difficult.

After 20 years' experience in the Real Estate industry working as a Property Manager, in 2016 I joined Evolve Housing as a Housing Manager. From the very beginning of my employment within Evolve Housing, I found that missing piece of my life and work puzzle — an organisation that cares about its employees, customers, stakeholders, people and the community. The support, trust, encouragement and care I have received from Evolve Housing has been enormous, and at times, beyond my wildest dreams.

During the last 4 years with the Evolve Housing family, with the help and support of my managers and work colleagues and continuous training and education, I have found my confidence and my voice.

Due to my strict traditional upbringing, strong accent and not believing in myself I lacked confidence but have been given an opportunity to come out of my shell and grow. I am very proud to be a Residential Services Team Leader where I lead a very diverse Housing Management Team. I embrace any challenge full heartedly, knowing that it is the least I can do to say thank you to Evolve for the opportunities they have given me.

In my role I support and help struggling families and individuals to have better, respectable and enjoyable lives. It is such privilege to be in a role where I help people and the community by providing social and affordable housing."



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