



Access
Community
Housing

Better Homes, Better Futures



Year in Review

2014 - 2015

2014 - 2015



Chairman's Report

We are pleased to have finished the financial year in a strong position and our reputation as an NRS Champion continues to grow, with us supporting other housing providers seeking our assistance with the registration process. Regionally, we are looking to work with governments, at all levels, to grow the stock of quality affordable housing in this region. Our hope is that the surpluses we have accumulated can be used to undertake a development in the next 12 months. With this goal in mind we have established a third sub committee of the board, the Building and Development Committee, and welcomed a new director to this committee, Mark Buttrose. Mark joins Mark Stallman and myself on this committee. The other two committees, the Finance & Risk Management and the Legal and Risk continue to provide the board and the CEO with crucial advice and support. Leah Cameron, who joined the board in November has been working with Amanda Langtree on the Legal and Risk Committee and Tony McDonagh who joined the board last year has joined Michael Delaney on the Finance & Risk Management committee.

A significant financial commitment during the year has been the decision to implement a new integrated business management system, Kypera at a cost of close to \$300K. It is anticipated that this system will be fully operational in early 2016. Kerrie Richmond, a board director, has provided invaluable assistance to this decision making process. Last month one of our board members, Wynn Hopkins, who has been connected to our company for some 20 years, retired. I would like to thank Wynn for her contribution and commitment to Access Housing. We welcomed Sue Andrews to our board in September and Sue brings extensive experience and a background in health, Indigenous issues and governance.

Over the last 12 months we have engaged in a range of activities with our clients. The opening of a new basketball court at our Murray Street complex, with the "Taipans" basketball players, the Christmas hampers draw and 2 Christmas parties at Murray St and Pease St. In March we re-established a Tenancy Advisory Group; in April, we held our Easter Bunny colouring in competition for young residents; and in May, we held art workshops and an Art Exhibition, sponsored by Cairns Penny Bank. Our Gardening Competition presentation and morning tea, sponsored by Old Country Credit Union was held in August. We recognize the importance of these activities in the lives of our tenants and look forward to a busy community engagement program next year.

I would like to thank our staff: Donna-Maree, the leadership team, all front line and operational staff for their dedication and efforts over the past year. We recognize the significant and fundamental changes which have, and will continue to take place, and are impressed that these changes have been embraced by our staff. You are the face and heart of this organisation, and on behalf of my fellow Directors, thank you for all your hard work and dedication to this most important cause.

To my fellow board members, who continue to give of their time and expertise in a voluntary capacity, your energy and passion is commendable. I thank each of you for all of your hard work, and am reminded of the words of the great American Poet and Physician, Oliver Wendell Holmes, "The Noblest service comes from nameless hands, and the best servant does his work unseen". To all involved in this admirable cause, a huge vote of thanks.

Michael



CEO's Report

The last year has been exciting, busy and energising. Soon after the AGM last year we moved into our new office in Anderson Street and very quickly it felt like our home. We feel proud of where we work and the positive comments have reinforced the decision to move. Since this time last year we have had an additional five staff members join our team to take us to a permanent workforce of twenty-two. This has allowed us to have a team of four Housing Officers who work closely with our eight Housing Managers to improve our processes and ensure our aim of sustainable tenancies. The injection of new staff always brings with it new ideas and vitality and it has been great working with people who are committed to continuous improvement and providing the best services we can to our tenants and clients.

That is why it is so pleasing to read our survey results. Some of the highlights:

- over 30% of our tenants responding to our survey
- 92 % of respondents indicating they are satisfied or very satisfied with the service.
- 82% of tenants indicated that they read the newsletter we produced; and
- 87% of tenants were satisfied or very satisfied with our response to their needs for repairs and maintenance.

2014/15 was another successful year for the Company financially and as a result we are focussed on future partnerships with the state government and the Cairns Regional Council to grow the quantity and quality of social and community housing stock in this region. During this financial year we will spend in excess of \$1.2M on upgrading the 57 unit complex at Murray Street. In addition, we have spent approximately \$1M on property maintenance and repairs.

It is important to note that tenancy engagement and social inclusion are important aspects of our work and I want to acknowledge the invaluable relationships we have with support agencies who work with our tenants to help them respond to the challenges they face. The success of our tenancy activities, our commitment to enhanced communication strategies through our newsletters and our regular visits to properties and our close relationships with community groups has been at the heart of how we have interacted with our tenants.

The past year has seen the introduction of new policies and procedures and this has ensured consistency of response to tenants and helped to identify any issues with properties or tenancies. Looking forward we are anxious for the introduction of our new IT system, Kypera and the benefits that will bring to our work. 2016 will be our 25th year of operation and we have started some initial discussions around a new strategic plan which will be finalised in that year. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our staff for their dedication to their roles and the people we serve. To ACHC's board, I would like to thank you all for the time and advice you provide and for your commitment to good governance.

Donna-Maree

Profile of the Organisation

Our Vision:

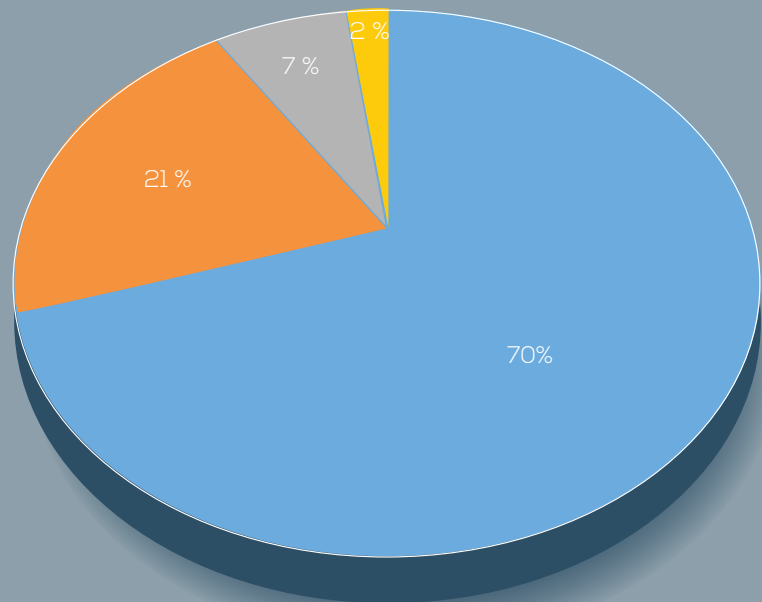
The leading organisation through which people in need access affordable, suitable housing outcomes in Cairns and surrounding regions.

Core Values:

Social Justice, Access, Equity and Service Standards.

Access Community Housing Company Ltd (ACHC) is a not-for-profit company, which provides social housing for individuals and families living across Far North Queensland. The organisation was established in 1991, which means that in 2016 it will celebrate its 25th year of operation. As the largest community housing company in Far North Queensland it has a stock portfolio of approximately 570 properties, from Mossman to Babinda. At any one time there are approximately 1100 people living in these properties.

Housing Stock Breakdown



- State Government properties (DHPW) 400
- Private properties 120 (varies)
- Cairns Regional Council 38
- Babinda/Boulders Court 10





All tenants must be on the Register of Need managed by the Department of Housing & Public Works. ACHC offers housing assistance through three Department of Housing & Public Works funded programs:

Community Rent Scheme (CRS) for private homes, through owners or real estate agents. Transitional housing up to 12 months duration.

Community Managed Studio Units (CMSU) for singles. Longer term tenancies.

Long Term Community Housing for seniors, families and individuals.

The National Regulatory Scheme (NRS)

All housing providers are required to hold registration under the NRS. Access Housing is a Tier 2 provider.



Tenant Stories



For Teresa, her partner Michael and their three children it has been a long journey.

Once housed in the Community Rent Scheme, Teresa and Michael had the opportunity to look for work. It took a while but both managed to get a few hours a week in the hospitality industry. Although the work was not regular and they would have been paid more on welfare benefits if they did not work, they believed that it was important to the family that they worked when it was available and looked for work when it was not.

The family moved into a Long Term property in September, 2015 and that has given them further housing security. Michael is currently not working but he rides his bicycle around dropping off his resume while Teresa has three, three hour shifts a week in hospitality. The children are happy as their new home is close to their school.

Kylie and her 9 year old daughter came to Access Housing and were placed in a property in the Community Rent Scheme program in 2008. At the time she was homeless and had no family support in Cairns. As Kylie was a good tenant she was offered a long term residence when additional properties were built in 2010, as part of the Nation Building program.

Throughout Kylie's time with Access Housing she has had a number of part time and casual jobs and has always looked after her property. She now works as a respite carer and is helping others to improve their life. She has recently moved out of community housing (after 7 years) into a private rental property that offers more space for her and her now 16 year old daughter. Kylie is a real success story and testament to what can happen if you get a hand up.



Ron and his wife, Krys Pawlowski, Cape York, late 1950s

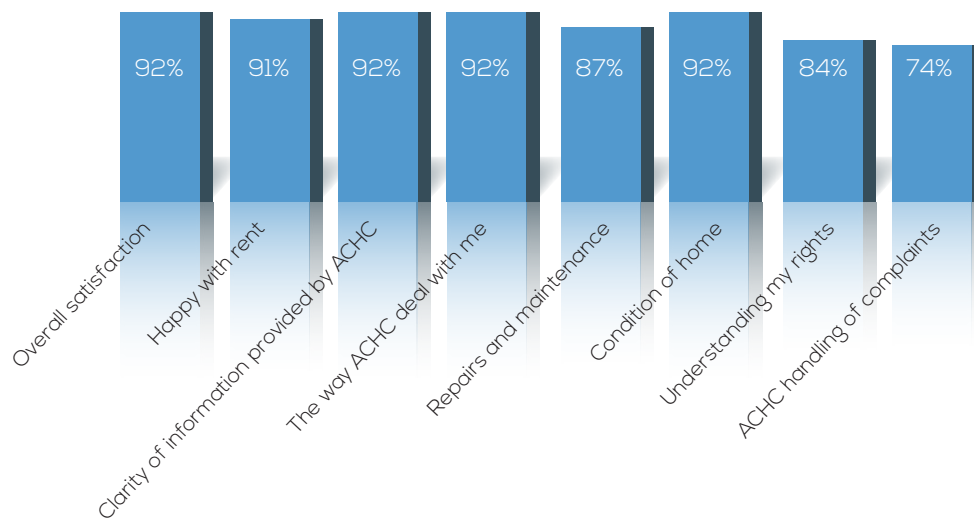
Ron Pawlowski who died in August, 2015 at the age of 89 was a tenant of Access Housing. Ron was a Polish immigrant who had endured horrendous experiences as a child and young man. In the 1950's, living in Kurumba he became one of Australia's most famous crocodile hunters, having shot and killed Australia's largest known crocodile on the banks of the Norman River. He later became a wildlife conservationist in the field of crocodile preservation, addressing the UN on the topic of saving crocodiles from extinction and to the Old state parliament on banning hunting of crocodiles. He and his wife opened the first experimental crocodile farm where they studied the behaviour and habits of the species. He finally realised his dream when crocodiles were included under the Fauna Protection Act in 1974. Ron was also an accomplished photographer.



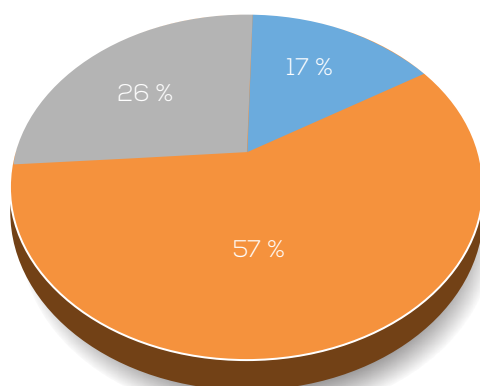
Tenant Survey Results ... a snapshot

155 households (approximately 30%) took part in the annual tenant survey with surveys being distributed via the newsletter, email and through the post. Some face to face interviews were held where tenants requested support. The results of the survey will inform our future plans and strategies for improvement.

Satisfied or Very Satisfied

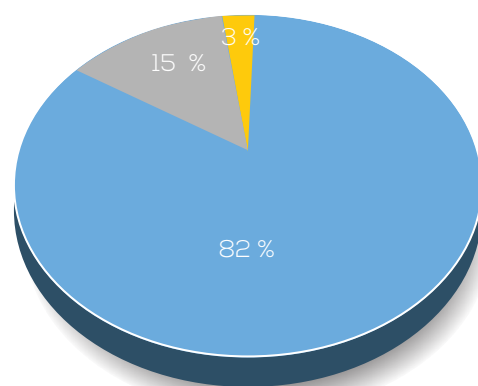


Time as a Tenant



Less than a year 1-6 years More than 6 years

Do you read the ACHC Newsletter?



YES NO UNSURE



Activities and Achievements



Staff of the Hilton Hotel

A New Basketball Hoop at Murray St

With the help of staff from the Hilton Hotel during their Global Week of Service, a new hoop and fresh court markings, children had the chance to play with members of the Taipans basketball squad.



Torrey Craig

Christmas parties and hampers

Christmas parties were held at the Murray Street and the Pease Street complexes. Children at Murray St enjoyed games, a visit from Santa and plenty of Christmas goodies, whilst at Pease Street there was food, entertainment and singing thanks to the efforts of Access staff.



Wendy says, "Happy Christmas Edwin"

Opening of the New Building



Henrietta Marrie

In early 2015 staff, board members and guests attended the opening of new offices at 5 Anderson Street, Manunda. Henrietta Marrie provided the welcome to country and the Chair of the Board and CEO spoke about the benefits of the new building and future plans.

Michael Healy, Mayor Bob Manning and Ian Roberts



Gardening Competition

20 tenants entered the gardening competition and judges Coralie and Lee were surprised at the high standard of entrants in categories such as best creative garden, best communal garden, best balcony, best edible garden and the overall best garden.

All entrants celebrated their achievements at a morning tea at the Pease Street complex. Winners were awarded bank accounts thanks to the sponsorship of Queensland Country Credit Union.



Art Exhibition

The offices at Anderson Street have been enhanced by the art work of tenants, painting to a theme of Better Homes, Better Futures. Thanks to the sponsorship of Cairns Penny Bank, tenants were able to attend 3 art workshops that were delivered by Robert Levi, a local Indigenous artist.



Donna Spencer and Donna-Maree



Chris was a smiling winner of the Easter competition

Easter Bunny Colouring Competition

The front door of the Access Housing office was "bouncing" with coloured bunnies thanks to the efforts of our young tenants.

Testimonials and Thanks

Toni – Owner

"I have had the pleasure of dealing with Access Community Housing for the past five years. Staff have always been professional, diligent and hard working in looking after my properties. Phyllis has provided culturally sensitive management in liaising between myself and the tenants, especially when problems have arisen in order to resolve these issues quickly. She is an asset to this organisation!

I have no hesitation in recommending other landlords rent their properties through Access Community Housing."

Real Estate Agent - Marilyn

"Since 2003 I have been involved with renting properties to Access Housing. Situations have sometimes been unpredictable, trying, surprising but pleased to say mostly positive experiences. Throughout this time I have worked with housing managers Cheryl, Jo, Judy and Wendy. More recently with Jill, Phyllis & Abbie whom I must say all strive for good outcomes, if there is a problem with the tenancy. They always liaise regularly with me and are prompt when organising appointments.

Considering the association with Access Housing has been for many years and that we have just recently rented 3 new properties to your organisation, I believe this speaks for itself."



The team at Access Community Housing want to sincerely thank the following:

Our Tenants, for your support, co-operation and efforts.

Our Board, who volunteer their time to ensure good governance and that ACHC is a viable company

Our Government partners in State and Local government for your funding, support and trust.

Our Owners and Real Estate Agents for placing your properties with us so that we can continue to provide suitable, affordable housing in the region.

Our Social Support & Community Service partners, who provide invaluable support and help to our tenants.

Our contractors and suppliers for your responsiveness and care.

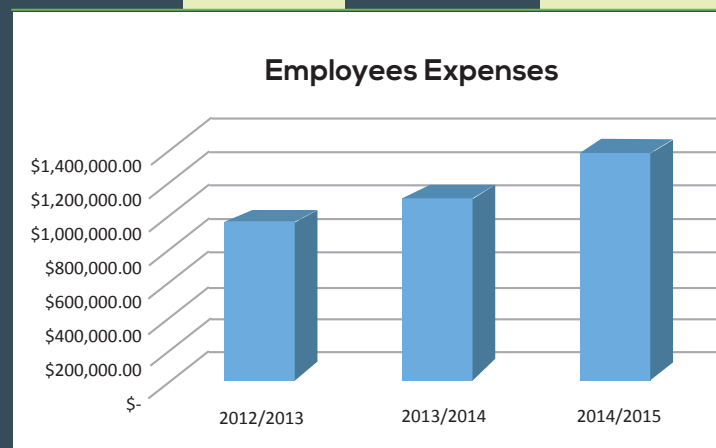
Our sponsors for sharing our vision to support our tenants.

Financial Highlights

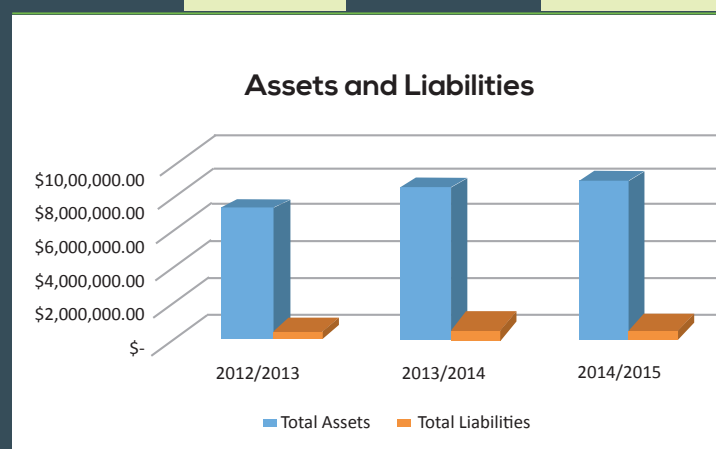
Profit and Loss, for the year ended 30 June 2015

| Income | Note \$ |
|--|-----------|
| Rental income | 4,464,346 |
| Grant revenue | 1,241,101 |
| Repairs reimbursement | 88,946 |
| Other income | 15,636 |
| | 5,810,029 |
| Expenses | |
| Employee expenses | 1,397,975 |
| Depreciation | 12,399 |
| Office expenditure | 616,035 |
| Property expenses | 1,899,356 |
| Rent expense | 1,461,494 |
| Other expenses | 148,342 |
| | 5,535,601 |
| Results from operating activities | 274,428 |
| Finance income | 310,029 |
| Finance costs | - |
| Net finance income | 310,029 |
| Net surplus before tax | 584,457 |
| Income tax expense | - |
| Total comprehensive income | 584,457 |

| | 2012/2013 | 2013/2014 | 2014/2015 |
|---------------------------|-----------|-------------|-------------|
| Employees Expenses | \$934,254 | \$1,082,465 | \$1,397,975 |



| | 2012/2013 | 2013/2014 | 2014/2015 |
|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Total Assets | \$6,514,307 | \$7,994,238 | \$8,320,917 |
| Total Liabilities | \$390,253 | \$714,372 | \$456,594 |





Our Board

In 2015 the board members have been:

Michael Healy, Chairman
Amanda Langtree, Deputy Chair
Michael Delaney Treasurer
Mark Buttrose
Leah Cameron

Sue Connolly-Andrews
Wynn Hopkins
Tony McDonagh
Kerrie Richmond
Mark Stallman

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