



Year in Review

2016/17

Homes for the community





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Welcome to CHC's Year in Review.

2017 has been an exceptional year of growth for our organisation and we look forward to sharing our achievements with you.

CHC create housing opportunities for rent and purchase. Our range of rental programs provide housing options for people in need and on low to moderate incomes.

Our profits are returned to the community through the addition of rental stock and the creation of new housing initiatives and programs. We commit to partnerships that support our mission in delivering housing options and sustainable tenancies.



Our Vision:

To be a leading not-for-profit provider of quality affordable housing.

Our Mission:

To provide affordable housing to people on low to moderate incomes.

Our Values:

- Ethical Practice
- Creativity
- Respect
- Leadership
- Accountability
- Sustainability

Report from the Chair

Affordability is a pivotal conversation at both the federal and local level. CHC is well positioned, financially and strategically, to continue to make a material difference to affordable housing in the nation's capital.

Housing is a fundamental enabler in our society. A safe place to live can be the foundation for securing and maintaining employment, gaining access to and continuing study as well as promoting health and wellbeing. As the ACT's leading provider of affordable housing for purchase or rent, CHC makes a real difference to the Canberra community.

In the last 10 years, CHC has been a major player in the delivery of the ACT Government's *Affordable Housing Action Plan* (2007). Our involvement has provided a framework for CHC to increase the supply of affordable housing for those on low to moderate incomes.

10 years on, we are now contributors in the next tranche of the ACT Government's plan for the future, through participation in the 2017 *Towards A New Housing Strategy* discussion paper. As well as presenting our own submission in response to the paper, we have directly engaged with other industry providers in the housing and community sectors.

CHC aims to use our unique position as a community housing provider with in-house development capabilities to identify and respond to a growing number of key groups at risk or currently experiencing homelessness. These include people on moderate incomes, apprentices, people with disability and women and children escaping domestic and family violence.

Canberra has long held the unofficial title of Australia's affluent city, with often-reported above average disposable household incomes, a higher than average tertiary-qualified population and a lower than average unemployment rate.

While these broad statistics remain true, these factors also play a central role in the upward pressures of Canberra's rental prices and developers favoring more expensive housing projects. This leads to an increase in homelessness or untenable long-term housing options for families or at risk groups.

While concessions on land and government charges are one part of the discussion to provide assistance in the provision of affordable housing, we also need to consider the type of products that would provide the most immediate tangible solutions to Canberra's housing needs whilst also ensuring that they form part of a larger strategy for the next 50 years.

The delivery of these products need to be coordinated and meet design and sustainability outcomes, while integration with our current community should also be high on the agenda.

CHC has recently partnered with House With No Steps and Care Plus Services to deliver specialist disability housing at our new development in Kambah. These partnerships will allow us to better understand the housing needs of people with disability and the demands for suitable housing.

We can also make a contribution to current waiting lists and concentrate on the feasibility of delivering more homes for those with disability in the future. The initial homes in Kambah will be delivered under a pilot program and are due to be completed in 2018. We are also seeking to build the financial sustainability of our affordable tenancy portfolio, as the National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS) starts to taper off towards the end of next year.

With homes for sale also a focus for CHC, we remain a provider of the ACT Government's Land Rent Scheme and advocate the program as a means to making home ownership more affordable by allowing people to mortgage their building and rent the land at a fee of 2.0% per annum of the unimproved value of the land.

Recognising that the Land Rent Scheme still had some barriers for our buyers, this year we refined our delivery of the scheme to make it easier for purchasers to achieve home ownership. We have been able to add value and further facilitate home ownership by absorbing the cost of land rent payments during construction and manage the construction process for the purchasers.

We had a changing of the guard in 2017 as we farewelled Kim Sinclair as Chief Executive Officer. On behalf of the Board, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Kim for her dedicated service to CHC over the past 10 years, in a variety of roles within the organisation. The board and I wish Kim the very best for her future endeavours as she continues to serve the Canberra community in her new role.

Andrew Hannan has been appointed to lead the CHC team into 2018 after a rigorous search for a person with the calibre to drive a business with such an important mission and vision.

I would like to extend a thank you to Paul Kane who has held the position during this transition period. Paul has guided CHC through the presentation of the 2017 *Towards a New Housing Strategy* submission.



**Col Alexander,
OAM**

CEO Report

As a local, home-grown community housing provider and developer, CHC is particularly sensitive and attuned to the distinctive operating environment and affordable housing needs of the ACT.

We are actively investing in our business to create capacity for scale and efficiency – seeking and developing meaningful new partnerships, integrated business systems and robust work flow processes to deliver innovative and affordable housing in the Canberra community.

We have enhanced the capability and experience in our executive leadership team by appointing specialist general managers to be responsible for our three core business divisions – Operations, Developments and Corporate Services. In addition, we have invested in a strategic communications team well versed in the property and community-housing sectors.

CHC is now in the advanced stages of a major program of work to expand, enhance and modernise our service offering. As part of this work, the systems that support our business are being upgraded and integrated to deliver the following key benefits:

- Unified platform for all our business services
- Improved customer satisfaction and service quality
- Streamlined processes reducing duplication of effort

As a not-for-profit housing provider, our staff are our most precious asset. We are continuously improving our induction process and are looking at implementing a Rewards & Recognition Program to complement our Employee Wellbeing Program.

The first half of 2018 will see the roll-out of a training calendar to cover all staff's mandatory training and identified professional development requirements. We will also focus on further improving the performance management framework for the organisation.

Making a difference through social investment

CHC is dedicated to making a difference in our community through our social investment endeavours. This year's focus has broadened the programs that we provide by strengthening supporting services to our tenants and the wider community.

Housing is central to safety and sense of place and when coupled with empowerment, the impact to community can be more rewarding.

This year we have made a significant investment in programs which assist our tenants to grow their employment opportunities, access resources to study and work towards home ownership, should they so choose.

These programs include 10 Ken Horsham Scholarships, partnerships with CIT in training and community services, Home Energy Seminars and CHC's Land Rent program.

All these initiatives work to support and empower our wonderful tenants and means that CHC helps improve the lives and skills of our tenants. This is all part of the CHC lifecycle approach, supporting our tenants from affordable rental through to home ownership.

Excitement for the future

We're very pleased to be developing ideas and opportunities to partner and create innovative, small lot dwellings which align with our mission. There is significant demand in our community for homes that are financially viable for low to moderate income families to rent and own, which address specialty housing needs and create safe spaces for more vulnerable members of our community as they age.

Our community title development at Moncrieff, delivered under the Land Rent Scheme, offered 33 new properties to Canberra buyers looking to achieve home ownership. Now under construction, the most rewarding part of delivering this project has been our ability to enable eight of our own tenants to achieve home ownership through taking up this opportunity.

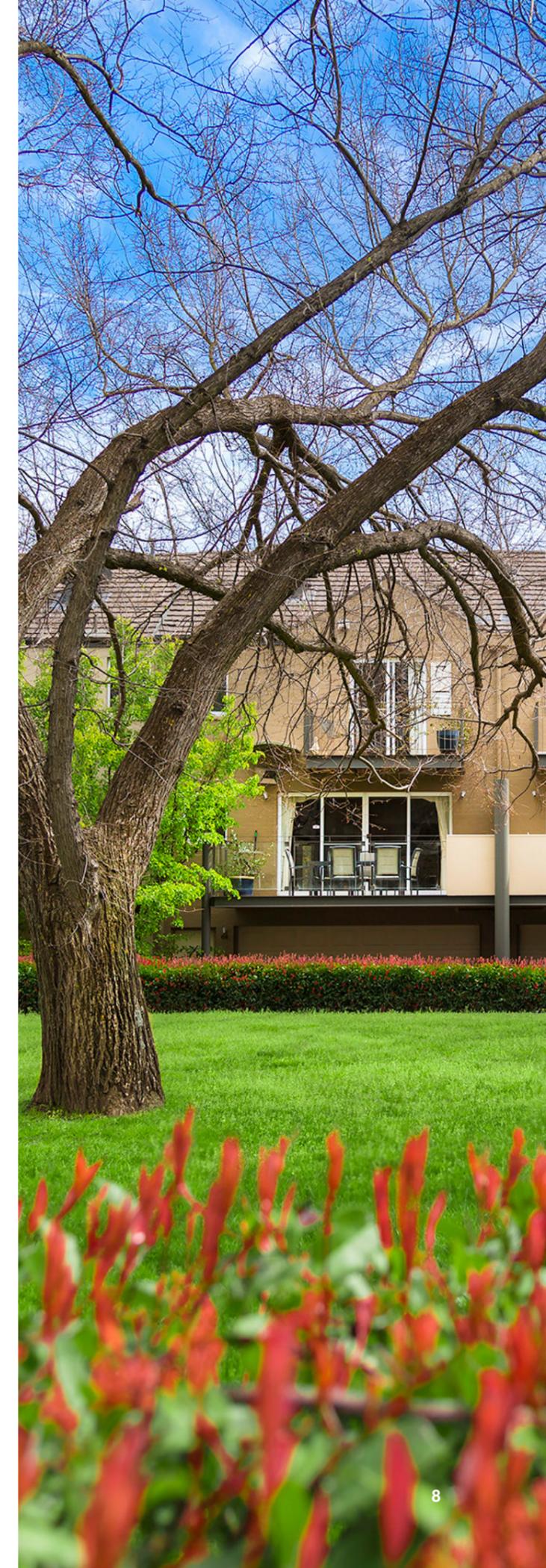
This wonderful outcome clearly demonstrates that people accessing CHC affordable rental properties, have a greater chance of acquiring a CHC affordable home to live in. In 2018, when our Moncrieff homes are ready for our tenants to take ownership, we will be able to invite eight new families to take up affordable tenancy with CHC and continue to build on this important lifecycle.

Maturity and confidence

Our sector will undergo significant change in the coming years and CHC is in a position to lead the transformation of the affordable community housing landscape with maturity and confidence. Our goal is, and always has been, to relieve housing stress by improving access to and increasing the availability of affordable housing for people on low to moderate incomes.



**Paul Kane,
CEO**



Corporate Governance

Quality governance and sound risk management practices are essential factors for any business' success.

Over the year CHC has significantly improved and enhanced our governing and regulatory compliance framework. Some improvements include the implementation of revised and robust procurement policies and work instructions with the additional utilisation of external probity advisors for CHC's major developments.

Furthermore, enhancements in contractor engagement workflows and on boarding processes have been undertaken, along with expansion of CHC's Work Health & Safety compliance. Internal audit functions, capabilities and fraud control policies were also enhanced.

CHC were recertified under Quality Management ISO:9001:2008, and are well placed for ISO 9001:2015 when it comes into effect in 2018.

Board of Directors

Each member of the Board is selected to bring a skill set that helps CHC meet our charter. Directors may be appointed for their expertise in housing development, asset management, community and social policy development, law, finance, or accounting.

The Chair, Deputy Chair and one other Director are appointed by the ACT Government. This year, we thank the following Directors and committee members for their ongoing commitment and contributions to the success of our organisation:

Colin Alexander, *OAM, BA (Acc),FCPA* Chair; Chair Development Committee

Paul Green, *MG, BA, LLB (Hons)* Deputy Chair; Member Audit Committee; Member Development Committee

Rebecca Vassarotti, *BA/MenvLaw* Director; Chair Community Committee

Richard Bear, *Bcom* Director; Member Audit Committee; Member Development Committee

Cathi Moore, *(Social Science)* Director; Chair Audit Committee, Member Community Committee

Clare Wall, *B, Ec, Dip Rec. Pl, M Pub Pol* Director; Member Community Committee

Paul Carmody, *BA Admin* Director; Member Development Committee

In 2017, positions were also held by Independent Members, Chris Harding and Jill Divorty. Chris resigned from the Audit Committee in May 2017 and Jill was appointed to the same committee in July 2017.

Our Staff

As a business, CHC fosters social cohesion and takes the same approach to our working environment. We are committed to maintaining a workplace that promotes safe work practices, tolerance and teamwork. Our staff are empowered to share ideas about their work and the organisation.

CHC team members bring their expertise, commitment and passion to the organisation each and every day. Our staff also represent the all-important heart and soul of CHC.

In late 2016, CHC implemented a new structure with the creation of three key business divisions: Operations (Tenancy, Maintenance and Assets); Corporate Services (Office Administration, Finance, Risk and Compliance, Information Technology, Human Resources and Communications and Marketing); and Developments (Development and Sales).

A major component of this 'new look CHC', came with the recruitment of general manager's for each business unit. They have brought with them a wealth of expertise, knowledge and leadership to the organisation.

CHC continues to ensure the team is supported by maintaining a workplace that promotes safe work practices, tolerance, teamwork and learning. CHC staff live and breathe CHC's core mission and values and this is critical to the successful delivery of our shared goals and objectives.

While recognising the collective contribution, CHC is deeply invested in recognising the importance of individual performance and staff development. An improved performance management framework has been implemented to provide regular, ongoing feedback and encouragement to staff. We also maintain training and development programs, so that staff are able to advance in both their personal and professional lives.

Early in 2017, CHC completed a bi-annual Workforce Plan which incorporates measures to ensure that the CHC team are appropriately supported through ongoing internal policy renewal, access to external wellbeing services and the identification of key professional development opportunities for all staff over the next 12-18 months.

At CHC, we are proud of our team of exceptional staff for their continued dedication, professionalism and heart in ensuring that we meet our mission to provide affordable housing to people on low to moderate incomes. They play a major role in our involvement within the broader Canberra community.



Our Tenants

Rental affordability is increasingly a major concern for the Canberra community – especially for those on low to moderate incomes.

As reported in the 2017 Anglicare Australia Rental Affordability Snapshot the average market rent in the ACT has increased by 13% in the past year (to April 2017), which is the highest increase nationally and three times the increase seen in Sydney and Melbourne for the same period.

The ACT faces a number of challenging factors that increase the growing demand for safe, secure and accessible housing. These are: higher youth unemployment; a sharp increase in the cost of living – especially in the utilities sector; higher than average wages pushing up the price of market rents; limited land supply; and low vacancy rates.

CHC continues to fill the gap in affordable rental properties for the Canberra community by providing access to a range of housing options to eligible tenants at 74.9% of current market rents or by ensuring that our tenants pay no more than 30% of their total income.

2017

This year CHC has housed:

 **1310**
tenants 

 in **446**
properties 



Tenancy Engagement

Over the past year, CHC has focused on increasing our engagement with tenants. CHC has also actively sought partnerships with other community service providers to increase information about and access to services for our tenants.

Home Energy Sessions

Over two days, a group of CHC's tenants gathered at Gungaharra Homestead to participate in a free energy efficiency information seminar. Organised in conjunction with St Vincent de Paul and ACTsmart, tenants were provided with information about the most efficient ways to heat homes in winter, what appliances are the most costly to run and simple ideas on how to reduce the heat escaping with some DIY draught proofing tips.

Tenants were also offered the opportunity to have a free energy assessment with an ACTsmart energy expert to conduct a thorough evaluation of how to make their home as energy efficient as possible.

As part of a focus on energy efficiency, CHC houses and apartments will also be draught-proofed and assessed to determine if tenants are eligible for new block-out curtains, an energy efficient fridge or energy efficient heater. An individualised report will then be forwarded to tenants giving advice on the best energy plan suited to each home.

Education Scholarships

CHC launched the Ken Horsham Education Scholarship program in 2017, to provide financial support to CHC tenants and their family members who are studying. Originally planned for a total of two beneficiaries, upon receiving over 30 outstanding applications, CHC selected ten deserving recipients.

Rachel was one of the recipients chosen for her eagerness to help others in the mental health field. She is currently enrolled in a Diploma of Mental Health at the Canberra Institute of Technology, with hopes to further her education and complete a Bachelor of Nursing.

Another recipient, Samuel, is a CHC Apprentice House resident. As well as having access to lower-cost accommodation while he completes his trade, being awarded a scholarship will help fund a new computer to fulfil his dreams of continuing his studies to a tertiary level as an electrical engineer.

CHC would also like to recognise Canary and Qais, Matthew, Amber, Briony, Jessie, Alexis, Gift and Jardene who were also awarded under the program. An award ceremony was held at the ACT Legislative Assembly in August to celebrate the achievements of our tenants.

CHC was joined by Suzanne Orr MLA and Mary Horsham, wife of the late Ken Horsham, in presenting the scholarships and certificates.

AIS School Holiday Program

CHC recently launched the AIS School Holiday Program for the children in our tenancy community. As with the Ken Horsham Scholarship, CHC were overwhelmed with the number of applications received and made the decision to double the number of placements available.

Children participated in activities including swimming, football, volleyball, basketball, netball, hockey, athletics, tee ball, cricket, Oz tag, dance and much more.

Tenant Information Forums

In March 2017, CHC hosted a Tenant Information Forum for tenants who wished to learn more about purchasing their first home through CHC's Land Rent Scheme development in Moncrieff.

The opportunity and information was very well received as a viable stepping stone from a tenancy to home ownership.

The forum provided tenants with access to Canberra's three land rent lenders (Bank Australia, Beyond Bank and Police Credit Union) and provided an in-depth overview of the homes available and how the program works.

Eight CHC tenants have purchased a home at Moncrieff, taking up 34% of the total affordable component of the development.

Tenant Satisfaction Survey

In October 2016, CHC received the final Tenant Satisfaction Survey report from the NSW Federation of Housing Associations.

This survey aims to:

- establish levels of tenant satisfaction with CHC services in line with the *National Regulatory System for Community Housing (NRSCH)*,
- benchmark performance levels against the NSW Federation of Housing Associations' tenant satisfaction benchmarking group, and
- inform future service delivery improvements.

The survey was mailed to households managed by CHC and tenants were given the option of either responding in hardcopy (as in previous years) or completing the survey online. 25% of tenants responded to the survey.

National Regulatory Standards for Community Housing (NRSCH) and Federation Benchmarks

NRSCH stipulates three core indicators of satisfaction – these are property condition, housing services, and repairs and maintenance.

Overall, CHC's tenants have shown positive levels of satisfaction across property condition at 89%, housing services at 88% and maintenance at 75%.

This year, CHC has placed a focus on improving how we respond to and complete repairs and maintenance requests from our tenants. In doing this CHC has introduced in-house Maintenance Officers with new quality measures and screening of CHC's approved contractors.

Our

Properties



416

CHC dwellings



Bedrooms

1	2	3	4
50	155	193	10

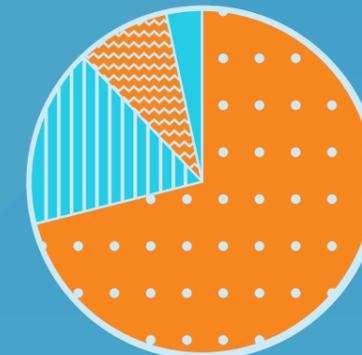


Group housing

8

446

CHC tenancies



Affordable properties

 **317**

Income based properties

 **75**

Group shared properties

 **39**

Externally managed properties

 **15**

Community

CHC aims to support, encourage and foster our community at many different levels, particularly through initiatives that align closely with our vision and mission, to be an enabler of housing.

Over the past year, the CHC team have identified many opportunities to support our broader Canberra community.

CHC helped the Domestic Violence Crisis Service through their annual Christmas appeal, fundraising activities, food drives and specific donations made to the Uniting Care Foodbank in Kippax.

During Homelessness Week 7-13 August 2017, CHC collected donations and sourced items for food crisis packs on behalf of Uniting Care's Early Morning Centre on Northbourne Avenue. This facility provides a warm safe place, offering free breakfast weekly and providing support and referral networks to those Canberrans who are faced with a life on the street. The CHC team hosted a BBQ and raised a significant financial donation which equated to enough money for 80 breakfasts for homeless people in Canberra and groceries to fill emergency food packs over winter. Touched by the staff's generosity and willingness to make a difference, the CHC Board of Directors matched the contributions and made a further financial donation to show their appreciation for the team's initiative.

A large part of our focus on community is also being invested in the communities we develop homes in for sale and rent. The Downer Community has been an important focus for CHC over the past six years as we work towards releasing the first stage of new homes located on the former Downer Primary School site.



CHC provided support to the Downer Community Association (DCA) and wider Downer community to host the Party at the Shops. It was the second consecutive year that the Downer community has held a party at their shops, however, this year's event had a special purpose celebrating the local shopping precinct's reopening and redevelopment. The Downer shops is now home to the Gang Gang Café, a yoga studio, a veterinary practice, See Change and plenty more to come.

We are very proud of the difference we are able to make in the Canberra community, which gives every member of the CHC team the opportunity to go beyond providing homes for our tenants and our purchasers.

“Thank you to CHC and everyone involved for the work put into planning the event. It was an excellent day and all the stallholders and visitors were very happy with everything. We very much appreciate the support provided by CHC, which made a substantial contribution to the day.”

Denys Garden, Downer Community Association.

Developments

Symphony Park

Flemington Road, Harrison

76

Stage 3 delivered 76 new homes to the Canberra community.

75%

of homes were sold to first home buyers.

75%

of purchases were facilitated under the Housing Affordability Fund (HAF).



Winner of the HIA ACT & Southern NSW Apartment Complex of the Year – 2016.

Symphony Park is an award-winning new community with a focus on design and a diverse product mix, including studios, affordable one and two-bedroom apartments, larger executive three bedroom homes and terrace and townhouse homes with private lock-up garages.

With an emphasis on parkside living, community amenities and quality architecture, Symphony Park was developed to deliver high-quality, entry-level properties to the Gungahlin market. CHC designed the project to challenge the status quo and create apartment and terrace properties that demonstrated a connection to the landscape on one of Gungahlin's busiest thoroughfares.

The development targeted first home buyers and was delivered under the *Commonwealth Government's Housing Affordability Fund (HAF)*, which included a \$20,000 rebate for eligible purchasers.

Stage 3 was the final stage of the development and sold out early last financial year. CHC retained three one-bedroom apartments for affordable tenancy.

CHC is proud to have delivered a project to the Gungahlin community with inclusion and community at the forefront of the vision. Symphony Park is now fully occupied and has a strong resident community with an established social media community for each stage of the development.

15

new townhouses

9

homes retained for tenancy were purchased by CHC under the ACT Government's Land Rent Scheme

6

homes were sold to the public market offered as completed product and priced between \$579,900 and \$629,900.



Homes offered for sale were secured within 5 days of public marketing

Lawson 6 & 9

Sliprail & Swagman Streets, Lawson

Situated in the brand new, highly sought-after suburb of Lawson, CHC delivered 15 town homes, six of which were sold to the public and nine retained as part of CHC's rental properties. The properties retained for CHC tenancy were the first stage of development, followed closely by homes available to the public sale market which finished in late 2016 and sold as completed homes.

The six courtyard homes for sale were built on 250sqm blocks and were in such high demand, deposits were taken on all properties in less than a week. The homes are double-storey and feature three and four bedrooms, single and double garage options and two separate living areas. Priced between \$579,900 and \$629,900, CHC's Lawson project demonstrates an ability to provide moderately priced homes for sale in a new sub-division where land prices were high and demand was exceptionally strong.

Lawson provides residents with parks, playgrounds, cycleways, walkways, a lookout and easy access to Lake Ginninderra's foreshore, promoting a healthy lifestyle and community interaction. The development is now fully occupied, and the project has been an overwhelming success.

“Lawson 9 is a demonstration of an ideal precinct that caters for those who need it most.”

Mick Gentlemen
Minister for Planning and Land Management,
Minister for Urban Renewal.

Moncrieff

Bernard Heinze Avenue, Moncrieff

33

new homes created under the Land Rent Scheme

77%

of homes were sold to first home buyers.

8

CHC Tenants have purchased their first home in Moncrieff.



The Land Rent Scheme was tailored for Moncrieff to help purchasers secure the house and land.

CHC will deliver 33 affordable homes on the Moncrieff site under the ACT Government's Land Rent Scheme. These properties are unique in their offering with CHC covering all land rent payments until settlement, further reducing barriers to entry. This extra assistance means reducing the upfront costs of home ownership, providing an opportunity for CHC tenants and others seeking affordable housing to secure a foothold in the market.

To date, eight Moncrieff purchasers are former CHC tenants, creating a viable opportunity for families to transition from renting to buying a home.

The new suburb of Moncrieff has significant hilltops and ridges that will be retained as urban open space and have views of the surrounding hills. A group centre, community facilities, retail precinct, ponds, parks and playground areas are planned for the area.

CHC's Moncrieff development commenced construction in October 2017. To celebrate, a tree planting ceremony was held and ACT Minister for Housing Yvette Berry MLA and Member for Yerrabi Suzanne Orr MLA joined CHC tenants who have pre-purchased in Moncrieff to plant a commemorative tree.

"The cheapest property in Canberra was still unaffordable for someone in the range of my income and CHC solved that issue for us. We are so glad that it is happening."

Zac Kilani, CHC tenant and Moncrieff purchaser.

Future Developments

“Assisting more Canberra’s to achieve the dream of home ownership in a price bracket that meets their needs remains the highest priority of CHC.”

Paul Kane, CHC CEO.

Kambah

CHC purchased 6 blocks of land at Kambah offered as part of the ACT Government’s Mr Fluffy program. The development plans will consist of 11 dwellings. Three blocks will have standalone houses, one as a standard and ancillary house, and the remaining two consolidated to include six small single-storey specialist disability dwellings.

CHC has partnered with Care Plus Services to deliver the specialist disability homes. CHC will retain all the properties for affordable rental tenancies for people such as trade apprentices, women in crisis and people living with disabilities. Construction commenced in October 2017 for the 3 standalone residences with the remainder to follow in the first quarter of 2018.

Wanniassa

One of CHC’s flagship products are Group Homes – allowing minority groups to access affordable tenancy in a shared-accommodation arrangement. The products offered to date have been very well-received and exceptionally successful, including McKellar House, Apprentice House in Lyons, Abbeyfield in Curtin, Big House in O’Connor and Group Homes in Kaleen & Ainslie.

In 2018, CHC will redevelop a dilapidated ex-government home in Wanniassa into a new Group Home. This new home will offer five new tenancies and will be offered to key workers, similar to McKellar and Lyons. The home will be located close to several schools and the Erindale Group Centre. This new Group Home makes the best use of a well-located site for our target clientele.

Macgregor

In Macgregor, CHC is redeveloping a standard residential block into two, two-bedroom specialist disability dwellings and has partnered with House with No Steps to facilitate providing National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) participants with CHC’s Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) under the NDIS guidelines. It is envisaged that the homes will be completed in mid-2018.

Throsby

Following on the success of the CHC project in Moncrieff, the Throsby development, commencing in 2018, will comprise land rent properties and unit titled townhouses.

Surrounded by pristine nature reserves with views to Black Mountain and the Brindabella Ranges, Throsby will have playgrounds, plenty of open spaces and an expansive network of walking and cycling paths giving families and the community many places to meet and play.

Downer

CHC has worked with the ACT Government and the residents of Downer, including the Downer Community Association, over many years to ensure the development of the former Downer Primary School site is a positive addition to the inner north, both in product and design and with an overall vision to enrich the existing community.

Stage 1 of the development will include 37 two and three-bedroom townhouses with two further staged releases to follow. Stages 2 and 3 are yet to be determined but are likely to be designed to ensure that a diversity of housing products is offered across the site.



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