



ANNUAL REPORT 2023



**Building on the Past
Building for the Future**

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OUR VISION

Northern Rivers Housing is a leading provider of innovative housing services.

OUR VALUES

Respect

We are a people centered organisation, respecting the diversity and the different needs of the individuals we work with.

Professionalism

We work with integrity to provide quality, innovative services and are accountable for our decisions and actions.

Safety & Wellbeing

We are committed to a work environment that values health, safety and wellbeing.

Social Responsibility

We support people with housing needs, striving for equality and fairness in housing outcomes.

CHAIR AND CEO'S REPORT



Robyn Hordern



Craig Brennan

We are pleased to present the 2022-23 Annual Report for Northern Rivers Housing (NRH). This year's report captures the progress, challenges, and vision that continues to guide our organisation through these uncertain times.

Building on the Past: Building for the Future

The theme, "Building on the Past: Building for the Future," reflects our commitment to honouring the foundations laid and the transformative work undertaken to shape a future of stability and growth for NRH. As the Region's only Tier 1 Community Housing Provider, our focus remains on providing sustainable housing solutions and robust support systems for our tenants and community.

Navigating Unprecedented Challenges

The past year has been a period of resilience and adaptation for both NRH and the Northern Rivers Region. We have been gradually recovering from the multifaceted impacts of the global pandemic and the 2022 floods, which significantly affected the lives and livelihoods of many in our community.

Compounding these challenges is the Region's housing crisis. The Northern Rivers community has long grappled with housing and homelessness issues, further exacerbated by recent events. These cumulative events have intensified the challenges faced by our Region, underscoring the urgency of addressing the housing crisis.

Flood Impacts on Housing

The impacts of the 2022 floods were severe, resulting in the displacement of 10,000 individuals with 6,300 homes damaged. Presently, approximately 1,800 individuals continue to live in temporary housing, which includes pod villages, at-home caravans, and emergency accommodation.

The lack of housing has impacted both purchase and rental markets. In this regard, rental costs have surged by 6% between March 2022 and March 2023 placing immense pressure on renters with approximately 43.4% experiencing rental stress.

Social Housing Demand

Alarmingly, data suggests a requirement for an additional 6,200 social and affordable dwellings by 2026 to meet the escalating demand for housing assistance. This grim reality is further demonstrated by a 69% surge in individuals sleeping rough over the past 12 months alone. These are individuals sleeping on the streets, beaches, in their cars, tents, "couch surfing", or seeking shelter in crisis accommodation, highlighting the pressing need for comprehensive and immediate action.



Station Street, Mullumbimby development

This data paints a stark picture of the housing crisis in the Northern Rivers Region, underlining the urgency and importance of our efforts and work in addressing these pressing issues.

Evolving to Meet Demand

Throughout the reporting year, NRH has undergone significant transformation. A new CEO and Executive Team have taken the helm, steering the organisation towards a path of innovation, efficiency, and growth. We have heavily invested in new systems, processes, and procedures, laying the groundwork for our future endeavours.

We rebranded from North Coast Community Housing to Northern Rivers Housing signifying more than just a name change - but a deep commitment to the Region we serve and a symbolic representation of our evolution and adaptability to the changing landscape.

Achievements and Initiatives

In line with our commitment to expanding housing opportunities, we were proud to have completed our 25-unit development in Mullumbimby - supported by a mix of commercial and grant funding from Housing Australia (formerly the National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation) and the NSW State Government.

Furthermore, our operation of seven Temporary Accommodation Villages across the Region in partnership with the State Government has been pivotal in housing those impacted by the floods, providing them with a pathway to recovery.

Looking ahead, we are exploring new building technologies, with a focus on new-generation housing (modular), to address the housing supply gap. We are also exploring new programs to assist our residents – ensuring that our customer journey provides tangible and meaningful outcomes.

While these initiatives are significant, we acknowledge the challenges we face, such as a highly competitive labour market; lack of trades; and high cost of insurance – which continues to be a concern for NRH and the broader Region.

Financial Progress

Through careful planning and management of resources, we delivered a respectable \$6.13m surplus, thus providing NRH with the opportunity of further expanding its services and housing initiatives. The Company maintained a strong balance sheet with modest gearing and ample liquidity throughout the 2022-23 year, with equity increasing to \$25.4m.



Federal Housing Minister Julie Collins visits one of our Station Street units with Chair Robyn Hordern and Justine Elliot Member for Richmond.

However, challenges in our core business persist, demanding our continued focus and attention. Further details of the Company's financial performance are provided later in this report.

Partnerships: The Pillars of Success

Our partnerships have been instrumental in our success. From our collaborations with support partners to our strong relationship with the NSW Government, these alliances have been critical in achieving our goals. We extend our sincere gratitude to all our partners for their unwavering support and cooperation.

Future Prospects and Gratitude

The Commonwealth Government's Housing Australia Future Fund represents a promising initiative for the sector, one that we are committed to pursuing to increase housing supply. We eagerly await the Investment Mandate for Housing Australia and details of how funding will be appropriated across Regional areas.

We extend our deepest gratitude to our hardworking and dedicated staff, whose commitment to NRH and our tenants has been the driving force behind our achievements.

Lastly, a heartfelt thank you to our Board for their guidance and unwavering support. Together, we stand prepared to face the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead, building a brighter, more secure future for our community.

In closing, we are confident that NRH, with its evolving strategies and dedicated team, is well-positioned to tackle the challenges ahead and continue to build a stronger, more resilient future for the Region we serve.

Robyn Hordern

Robyn Hordern
Chair

Craig Brennan

Craig Brennan
Chief Executive Officer





During 2023, we relocated our Tweed office to brand new premises in Wharf Street, Tweed Heads.

This relocation was designed to provide improved amenities for both our tenants and staff.

“ Our new office has been a breath of fresh air and represents who we are as an organisation and where we are headed.

We have found that overall satisfaction from our visiting tenants is positive. The new office allows staff to have face to face interactions with each other which is much more positive and productive as staff no longer have to speak to each other over a the top of a desk.

The location change has been great being only walking distance to our stakeholders and, as a Team Leader, I am finding that I am able to attend a lot more cross-agency meetings due to being so accessible.”

NRH Tweed Team Leader

– Rachel



Our Governance

NRH's governance focus remained strong, delivering high-quality services, risk management, and compliance standards in our core housing operations and new business.

Key governance and accountability processes were enhanced to meet the challenges of an expanding business while upholding excellence in key areas, including:

- Robust oversight through NRH's Board and Committees to review, modify, or amend policy and governance documents for coherent planning.
- Enhanced integration and reporting through the Executive Team.
- Reinforcement of NRH's values and culture, emphasising risk management and dedication to workplace safety.
- Implementation of a comprehensive organisation-wide WHS Committee involving representatives from all business areas.
- Development of a Village Risk Register to meet the specific and intricate risks associated with Village management.
- Establishment of new ticketing systems and processes for recording, tracking, and managing Housing and Village concerns such as incidents, complaints, appeals, WHS issues, risks, and hazards.
- Improved presentation of data to the Executive Team and the Board, enabling more effective decision-making.
- Utilisation of data and reporting systems to identify quality enhancements.
- The further development of quality, risk, compliance, and safety processes supported by an evolving Accountability Framework throughout the business.

NDIS

NRH owns and manages three group homes offering Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) under the NDIS.

NRH completed its first full external NDIS audit in May 2023, receiving a recommendation for a further 3-year term.

NRAS

NRH owns and manages dwellings that receive incentives under the National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS).

In the 2022-23 year, NRH managed 25 registered properties under NRAS, with an additional 15 dwellings from the newly completed Station Street Mullumbimby development.

With the Scheme currently being wound-down – the challenge will be to continue to provide housing solutions for tenants living within NRAS properties.

Our Governance and Regulatory Framework

Governance

NRH is a company limited by guarantee, incorporated under the Corporations Act 2001. NRH is regulated by the Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission (ACNC), the Australian Securities and Investment Commission (ASIC) and the National Regulatory System for Community Housing (NRSCH).

Ultimate responsibility for the governance of the company rests with the Board of Directors.

NRH policy requires that, where possible, NRH appoint Directors who have skills in financial management, law, asset management, social housing management, risk management, organisational management, and marketing/media/legal areas.

Public Benevolent Institution

The NRHL Public Benevolent Institution (PBI) with Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status under Subdivision 30-BA of the Income and Assessment Act 1997.

The provision for gift deductibility is under Item 1 of the table in Section 30-15 of the Income and Assessment Act 1997.

Sub-committees

The following standing sub-committees have been established by the Board to assist with the effective governance of the Company:

- Audit, Finance and Risk Management Committee
- Marketing and Communications Committee
- Nominations Committee
- Policy and Governance Committee
- Property and Development Committee
- Remuneration and CEO's Appraisal Committee
- Strategic Planning and Registration Committee.

Time limited sub-committees are also established from time to time as necessary.

National Regulatory System for Community Housing

A National Regulatory System for community housing providers (NRSCH) came into effect on 1 January 2014.

The national system means that community housing providers registered under the system can operate in any part of Australia that has signed up to the system.

This registration involves ongoing compliance monitoring against the following seven performance outcomes:

1. Tenant & Housing Services

2. Housing Assets

3. Community Engagement

4. Governance

5. Probity

6. Management

7. Financial Viability.

NRH is a Tier 1 registered Community Housing Provider under the NRSCH.



Our Board of Directors



Robyn Hordern

Chair of the NRH Board;
Chair of the Alliance Social
Enterprises Company Ltd (ASE)
Joined the Board: November 2012

Robyn is a long-time resident of the far north coast with an extensive background in small business, property acquisition, property development and maintenance, marketing and Local Government. She previously served as Councillor for the Ballina Shire, worked in State and Regional Development and mentored others through the Business Enterprise Centre.

Currently Robyn runs accessible holiday accommodation. She joined the Board in November 2012 and was elected as Chair in June 2017.



Carolyn Parker

Vice Chair of the NRH Board;
Chair of the Audit, Finance & Risk
Management Committee;
Tenant Council Representative
Joined the Board: May 2009

Carolyn has 30 years commercial experience in business management in numerous industries including community services, asset management, retail, tourism, hospitality, and media. She has 13 years Non-executive Director experience, holding leadership roles on several NFP boards. She has been Chair of NCCH's Audit, Finance and Risk Management Committee for 10 years.

Qualifications and Experience

- Masters of Business Administration
- Graduate Diploma of Strategic Leadership
- Senior Executive Business Management
- Justice of the Peace and Civil Marriage Celebrant
- Work, Health and Safety Cert IV & Training
- Corporate finance and governance and facility management
- Graduate of Australian Institute of Company Directors



Anders Halvorsen, OAM MAICD

Joined the Board: July 2005

Anders has an interest in high and low level care facilities for the disabled and a strong commitment to community building. Anders is a long-term resident of Ballina.

Anders was awarded an Order of Australia Medal (General Division) in the 2021 Australia Day Honours List in recognition of his service to people with a disability, and to the community.

Qualifications and Experience

- Chairman, Forward Ability Support, Brightsky Australia
- Director of Irene Gleeson Foundation
- Chairman, C3 Church Byron/Ballina/Yamba
- Masters in Business Administration, Member Australian Institute of Company Directors



Margaret Kaszo

Joined the Board: November 2016

Margaret has 25 years of experience in the Community Housing Sector as a previous CEO of a regional housing association. Her skills include asset management, property development, human resources, tenancy management, financial management, community building and government liaison. As a previous Chair of the NSWFHA, she also brings a strong background in the development of the housing sector in NSW. She was elected Company Secretary in November 2016 and held this position until November 2019.

Qualifications and Experience

- Diploma of Social Sciences
- Ministerial Advisory committee member
- Leadership and Management
- Project Management



Philip Belletty

Chair of the Property & Development Committee
Joined the Board: November 2017

Phil has extensive experience in the Government and private sectors. This experience includes all aspects of management including being a CEO with over 50 Staff, reporting directly to a Not for Profit Board, facility management, developer of service delivery strategies, strategic capital investment planning, maintenance planning, asset and land acquisition, disposals and leased asset management plus marketing and extensive community engagement with indigenous communities, local community organisations and all levels of government.

25 years Northern Territory Government experience and 12 years in the private sector has equipped him with a diverse range of experience and understanding of both fields of employment.

Qualifications and Experience

- Graduate AICD
- Graduate Certificate in Management



Janice Mangleson, OAM MAICD

Joined the Board: November 2012

Jan has been a long-time resident of the Byron Shire. She and her husband brought up their family on a rural property. As a retired licensed real estate agent and a former local government councillor, Jan has has a strong interest in affordable and social.

Qualifications and Experience

- Licensed Real Estate and Business Agent (Retired)
- Stock and Station Agent and Auctioneer (Retired)
- Former Councillor Byron Shire Council
- Former Committee member for the Affordable Housing Strategy, Social Plan, Aboriginal Consultative Committee, Disability Access and Inclusion Plan
- Chair former Brunswick Byron Area Health Service Board and Mullumbimby Hospital Site Trust.
- Member Project Reference Group (PRG) for new Byron Central Hospital and Mullumbimby Hospital Site PRG



Richard Burns

Company Secretary | Quality & Compliance Manager
Secretary of North Coast Community Housing since November 2019

Richard is a CPA and risk/governance professional with 45 years' experience spanning government, commerce and the community sector.

He is a Chartered Secretary and Fellow of the Governance Institute of Australia.





“Nothing is more satisfying than working alongside a great bunch of people whilst housing the most vulnerable people in our community”.

NRH Staff Member, Melissa

Our Housing Services

Following the challenges of Covid-19 and the impact of the February and March 2022 floods, our Tenancy Teams have prioritised the engagement of NRH tenants.

Over the past twelve months, more than 1400 property visits have been conducted. These visits have proven invaluable, enabling NRH to identify and offer support to tenants, while addressing any potential barriers that might affect their ability to sustain their tenancy.

The limited supply in the rental market has resulted in NRH experiencing a vacancy rate of 99% over the past year. Indeed, our Tenancy Teams successfully completed 203 new tenancy sign-ups, in addition to 53 transfers ensuring that the needs of residents aligned with their properties.

Temporary Accommodation Villages

The Temporary Accommodation Villages serve as a unique and crucial initiative to address the challenges presented by the 2022 floods. These Villages are an integral part of the NSW Government's comprehensive \$3.5 billion Flood Response Plan. Their purpose is to provide temporary housing and support to the communities affected by the flood event, offering residents the space and resources necessary to focus on their recovery.

Of the eleven villages established in the Region, NRH has been entrusted to manage seven Villages providing housing for over 600 flood-impacted individuals. NRH has employed case workers for each Village offering support to these residents, and assisting in planning their transition from temporary accommodation to more permanent housing.

The Villages prioritise community engagement and empowerment – functioning not just as temporary shelter – but fostering a sense of belonging and ownership among residents. They provide opportunities for skill development, education, and social interaction, creating a supportive environment for individuals and families.

Activities at the villages include job and skills exhibitions in collaboration with NSW TAFE, mindfulness and well-being sessions, counseling services, gardening and arts therapy.

“ I will miss the staff and people who have all been wonderful. I don't know what I would have done without emergency housing after the flood”.

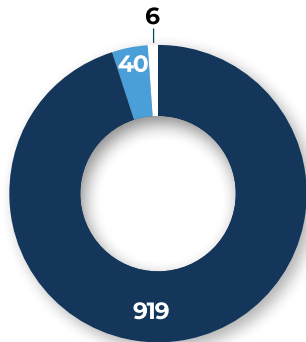
Former Community Village resident

Property Summary - Core Business

965

Total number of properties

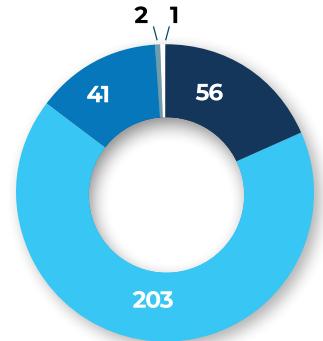
- GENERAL HOUSING
- NRAS
- AFFORDABLE HOUSING/NRAS



DWELLING TYPE

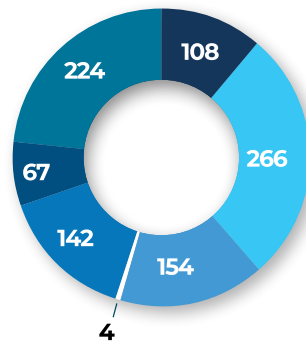
HOUSE

- 2 BEDROOM
- 3 BEDROOM
- 4 BEDROOM
- 5 BEDROOM
- 6 BEDROOM



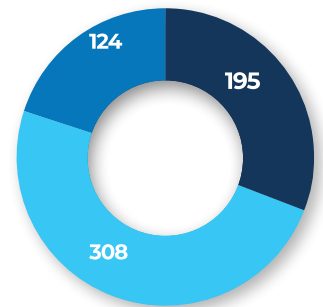
LGA - NSW

- BALLINA
- BYRON
- CLARENCE VALLEY
- KYOGLE
- LISMORE
- RICHMOND VALLEY
- TWEED



UNIT

- 1 BEDROOM
- 2 BEDROOM
- 3 BEDROOM



35 ROOMS - 1 BEDROOM

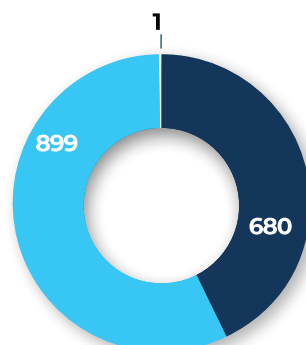
Tenant Summary - Core Business

934

Total number of households

GENDER

- MALE
- FEMALE
- NON-BINARY

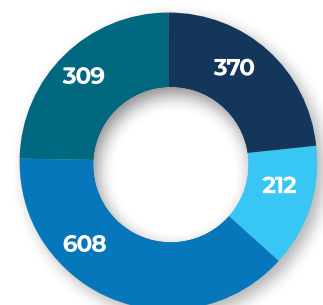


1580

Total number of household members

AGE

- 0-17
- 18-35
- 36-64
- 64+



Together Home Program

NRH was entrusted with the housing and support provision for the Together Home Program in July 2020. This \$122.1 million initiative aims to transition individuals away from homelessness and into stable, long-term housing while enhancing their overall well-being.

The Program is built upon evidence demonstrating that a secure home serves as a platform to tackle other challenges in individuals' lives. It represents an innovative approach to combatting homelessness, not merely providing shelter but also offering a foundation from which individuals can rebuild their lives.

The Program's core principles are based on "Housing First," advocating for the prompt provision of housing followed by tailored, wrap-around support. This support addresses various barriers, including mental illness, drug and alcohol issues, childhood trauma, physical and sexual trauma, experiences of being removed from family and growing up in out-of-home care, having children removed into care, post-traumatic stress disorder, ADHD, and chronic health issues.

In 2023, NRH conducted a review of the Together Home Program to assess its service delivery and outcomes for program participants. This evaluation reviewed the structure and practices to ensure they effectively deliver results to clients while meeting the KPIs set out in contractual agreements with the NSW Government.

Tranche one and Tranche two have received supplementary funding amounting to \$1,110,077.19 to cater to the ongoing needs of clients in these tranches.

Tenant Story Toni Maree

"I was living in an abusive and unsafe environment with no place to go until I was referred to the Together Home program."

I met the Program Lead and I was then placed in a motel until a property was found.

Now I am living in my own little unit with the help of my caseworker. My caseworker got me into the gym through a program called "Glow up". It's about empowering women and I am now going to the gym five days a week. I have entered three different challenges and since starting the gym, I have lost half of my body weight.

I have started a TAFE course and have met some really good people I can now call my friends."

“ I have achieved so much since being on the Together Home program - having a safe place and being happy.”



Toni Maree and her Together Home Case Worker

Our People and Culture

People are attracted to working for NRH for our purpose in providing access to safe, affordable housing and our determination in meeting the needs of a diverse community.

Building our Workforce

The housing and community services is a thriving sector in the Northern Rivers with a clear and increasing need for qualified and skilled workers.

As NRH emerged from the global pandemic, our community was further challenged by multiple significant floods.

While the Northern Rivers community has long experienced the complex issues in housing and homelessness, finding a home – one that is affordable – became even more difficult. With this, the demand for our expertise in devising responsive and innovative housing solutions, as well as providing quality and assured tenancy management and maintenance services, expanded.

As discussed within this report, NRH entered into a contract with the NSW Government and a partnership with NSW Reconstruction Authority to provide services to the temporary accommodation villages for flood impacted individuals.

With this Program, NRH's workforce profile had its most significant change in its near 40-year history. Increasing by close to 100% in number of people and operating costs, we expanded to encompass specialist and qualified skills in case management and designed a different service approach to manage the new form of temporary housing – the scale of which had not been experienced in Australia previously.

With recovery and emergency services, and companies delivering reconstruction of infrastructure in the region competing for similar skill sets, and recruiting from outside the region complex due to lack of housing for key workers,

an agile approach to acquiring the skills was engaged in addition to traditional approaches.

Over the year, we have placed 55 separate job adverts for multiple roles, screened over 1,200 candidates, interviewed hundreds of potential employees, and contracted and inducted a workforce which has effectively doubled our people-power. With recruitment taking longer due to the challenges in the labour market, efforts were made to adapt our recruitment strategy – including the engagement of a recruitment panel of specialist and local agents, raising employer brand profile, investment in outreach recruitment tools, and implementing student pathways to employment.

In the year ahead, our pathways and opportunities will only continue to build as we embed the new service approach.

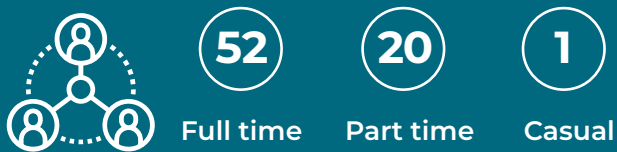
“ I find immense fulfillment in working for Northern Rivers Housing. It allows me to contribute meaningfully to the community by addressing housing needs and fostering positive social impact”.

NRH Staff Member, Peter

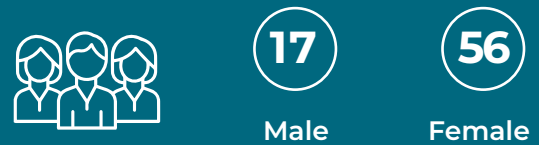


Staff and Directors were acknowledged for their service to NRH with a presentation at the 2022 Annual General Meeting. Awards were presented for 5, 10 and 20 years of service.

Employee Categorisation



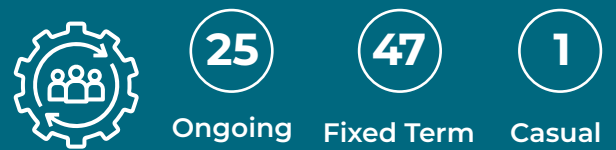
Gender Distribution



Number of Staff



Employment Type





Ensuring our foundations are strong

With the retirement of John McKenna – after a 13-year service to community housing – we welcomed Craig Brennan as our new CEO. Under Craig’s leadership, a key focus in his first 6 months was to build a strong Executive Team. With a number of new members – including appointments made through internal promotion – our Executive Team holds deep complementary expertise across finance, business administration, people and performance, government, asset management, property development and construction, policy and housing. Our genuine and down to earth team culture is guided by our mission and values, and we are driven to always deliver better for our employees to the benefit of residents, clients, stakeholders and investors.

An important component to supporting our people in core services, not least through ensuring capacity, is investing in new specialist positions that are responsive to the complexities of our vulnerable community. Additionally, this year, we engaged our industry training provider to run a series of workshops with managers for developing approaches and strategies for prioritising self-care and devising wellbeing action plans for their teams. These conversations will continue beyond the workshops.

Supported change programs to implement better practices in Core Service areas were also delivered across Tenancy management (Richmond Portfolio) and Asset Management Services.

Investing in the Development of our People

In ensuring our services are at their optimum level, NRH has continued to steadily invest in the development of core skills – both technical and people – and support a continuous learning environment.

Programs delivered throughout 2022/23

Building Connections and Insight in the Sector

- Community Housing 2023 Conference – CHIA NSW
- Affordable Housing Virtual Summit – The Urban Developer

Development of Core Skills for Better Tenant/Client Outcomes

- Professional Practice Supervision – Sydney School of Education and Social Work
- Positive Customer Service – AHI
- Communicating in Recovery – Australian Red Cross
- Child Protection and our Mandatory Reporting Obligations –Northern NSW Local Health District Service
- Effective Leadership in Social Housing – Australasian Housing Institute
- Accredited NCAT Training – CHIA NSW
- Housing First Principles Networking and Collaboration – CHIA NSW
- Complex Needs in Homelessness – CHIA NSW
- safeTALK – Lifeline
- Mental Health First Aid
- Accidental Counsellor – Lifeline
- Facilitated reflective practice focused on domestic and family violence management – Neroli Jager
- Responding to Behaviours of Concern – CHIA NSW
- Routine Inspections – Australasian Housing Institute
- Preventing Debt and Recovering Arrears – Australasian Housing Institute
- Essentials in Tenancy Management – Australasian Housing Institute
- Introduction to Residential Tenancies Act in NSW – Australasian Housing Institute

Reinforcing our values, behaviours and beliefs so that our people thrive

- Cultural Awareness – Momentum Collective
- Trauma Informed Practice – CHIA NSW
- Trauma Informed Care and Practice: An Indigenous Approach to Developing Worker Skills – We AI-I
- Debriefing – Australian Red Cross
- From Mate to Manager – Australasian Housing Institute
- Building Leadership and Wellbeing – CHIA NSW
- Health and Safety Representative Training – AdvanceOHS
- WHS for Managers and Supervisors – SkilledHealth
- WHS Due Diligence Training – SkilledHealth
- Managing for Team Wellbeing (BlackDog Institute)



“ I love working with NRH and was drawn to working with a values-based company that is at the forefront of innovation in affordable housing in the Northern Rivers. What I have loved most in my role as Community Engagement Manager is working with a fabulous team and getting to know so many amazing people living in the Community Villages. Their resilience and kindness is truly inspiring.”

NRH Staff Member, Robyn

Our Assets and Development

The past year has marked a period of significant progress for NRH Assets and its Developments.

A restructuring of the Assets Team at the start of 2023, alongside a fresh operational approach, has yielded enhanced efficiencies and provided a clearer perspective on the asset performance within our core business. Simultaneously, the development pipeline, which had been on hold following the 2021 floods, has shown a resurgence.

Challenges persist in constructing new housing stock due to high labour and material costs. While these inflationary pressures have been somewhat mitigated by new funding channels, creating new developments remains complex and demands an innovative approach to ensure financial viability.

Not only is NRH focused on providing new homes for clients, but the organisation is also in the process of establishing a new home for the Lismore head office team.

The prior location at 107 Molesworth Street became unusable after the 2021 floods, leading the team to split and relocate to temporary spaces at Woodlark St, Lismore, and Brunswick Street, Ballina. A modern office has been secured in Lismore, with ongoing efforts to equip it to enable the staff to reunite and further the vision of NRH.

In early 2023, the NRH Tweed Heads team also transitioned to a new office at 42A Wharf Street, Tweed Heads, which has been operational since March. This modern office space has proven to be dynamic and productive for staff, clients, and stakeholders, marking a new, identifiable look for NRH, which will be replicated at the new Lismore Head Office.

ASSETS

NRH Assets Team maintained a high level of service delivery throughout the 2022/23 period. The Team responded to 5624 tenant assistance requests and successfully completed 5659 repairs. Planned works have notably increased to 260 due to escalated tenancy inspections and the need for renovations in vacant properties.

Dedicated to providing safe and habitable homes for the community, the Assets Team has addressed 843 plumbing jobs, 1292 electrical jobs, tended to 516 lawns, and changed 120 locks. Property Assessment Surveys for 697 homes have been concluded, enhancing the depth of condition information held within the portfolio. This enriched data will facilitate the establishment of a program for property improvements and replacement of building components, forming a targeted investment strategy.

NRH will persist in investing in existing homes, ensuring they remain safe, habitable, and contribute to an exceptional customer experience in the future.

DEVELOPMENT

In the last year, NRH successfully completed a 25-unit complex in Station Street Mullumbimby, leveraging a blend of funding from DCJ - NHIF, CHIF, and private sales. This development has contributed 13 social, 2 affordable, 5 market rent, and 5 privately owned homes to the community.

Currently, NRH has nine social housing units under construction in Callistemon St, Casino. This represents the organisation's inaugural modular built project, demonstrating NRH's dedication to delivering innovative, high-quality, resilient, and cost-effective homes for its clients.

The organisation is steadfast in forming strategic partnerships to deliver new housing to the region. NRH is actively engaging in discussions with top-tier builders, developers, and other CHPs to deliver new supply in high-demand areas.

What is the NRH Scholarship Program?

The NRH Scholarship Program is designed to assist tenants by easing the financial burden of educating their children and/or themselves. It is also designed to encourage tenants to pursue their ambitions in sport and creative arts.

Supporting NRH tenants to achieve through our Scholarship Program, is a way of building community capacity, leading to future social and economic engagement in society.

The objectives of the Scholarship Program are:

- To encourage NRH tenants and/or their children to pursue education and fulfil their dreams
- To assist NRH tenants with costs of education, sports or creative arts needs
- To enable NRH tenants to improve their personal circumstances
- To assist them to obtain employment, or sustain current employment.

Eligible NRH tenants can submit applications under the following categories:

Education – TAFE/Uni/Adult

\$1,200

Education/Creative Arts/Sport – Secondary

\$800

Education/Creative Arts/Sport – Primary

\$400

Scholarship funds can be used for:



Education: Laptops, software, books, technology, school supplies, tuition fees, school trips/camps, excursions



Sport: Sports equipment, uniforms, registration or other fees, coaching sessions



Creative arts: Musical equipment, tuition fees, dance shoes, costumes/uniforms, music/drama/art classes



Employment: Uniforms, work boots, work tools (tools of trade)

In the 2022-2023 financial year, a total of eleven Scholarship were granted to successful applicants totalling \$11,200 in the following Scholarship categories:

Education – TAFE/Uni/Adult

\$1,200 x 7

Education/Creative Arts/Sport – Secondary

\$800 x 3

Education/Creative Arts/Sport – Primary

\$400 x 1



Scholarship recipient, Danecca and CFO Martin Laverty

Thank you



We would like to thank the team at First National Byron Bay for the generous donation they made to our Scholarship Program.

1. Axel

“Thank you so much Northern Rivers Housing for the scholarship grant. It helped me buy a new computer for my studies, which made a huge difference because I always had second hand ones that kept crashing or dying. It also helped me get my RSA and RCG certificates so I can get part-time hospitality work while I’m studying. I had to leave high school in 2022 because of the floods in Mullumbimby, so all my studies since then have been online. I was worried I would end up behind my classmates, but thanks to Northern Rivers Housing I should be able to finish my high school equivalent in time to go to Uni in Melbourne with my friends next year.”

2. Danecca

“As a family, we are grateful recipients of the Scholarship as we know that it will benefit Danecca in numerous ways. As a result of partaking in a team sport, Danecca will be more involved in her local community, be more active and meet new people. This will benefit her both physically and emotionally. This wouldn’t have been possible for our family without the financial support of the NRH Scholarships Program”

3. Dione

“I’m very grateful to NRH for many things. I’ve been through domestic violence, physical and mental health issues and becoming borderline homeless as a single mother of a young child, which severely impacted my employment prospects. Northern Rivers Housing gave us a safe home, and kept working with us through the tough times.

The Scholarship program is amazing; I thought I would never be able to study again due to low income and lack of opportunity. The grant from NRH enabled me to undertake a TAFE course to increase my skills, and allowed me to find a fulfilling volunteer job in an industry I have always wanted to work in. I hope this will lead to paid work down the track once I am able to stabilise my current health issues.”

Tenant Story

Briony

Briony no longer needs to live with the anxiety of having no stable home and no community of friends around her.

“Hello, I’m Briony.

I’ve lived all my life with mental health issues, including depression and anxiety. One effect of this has been to make my earning capacity both small & irregular. I have never been in a position to own my own home – but until recently I have always been able to afford rent. Now though, with rentals so much more expensive, I can no longer afford them - I’m 70, and unable to work.

I remember the day last year when I was unexpectedly given notice to move so that the landlord’s son & his family could move in & have a home. I was devastated. It was 6 weeks after my mother had died, so I was already not functioning well. I went straight to my computer and googled one-bedroom dwellings to rent of any sort, in NSW, and under \$300. There were only 35! And they were all far away from anyone I knew, in places I’d never heard of. My anxiety level rose rapidly. I had already had to move away from the area I’d lived in for years, and over 5 years had really noticed my mental health deteriorate, with no friends around.

Coincidentally, I got a call from Northern Rivers Housing asking if I was still interested in being on their register. Every year since 2005 I’d received a text asking the same question, and always replied ‘Yes, but I’m not in need of help at the moment’. This time it was ‘Yes, and do you have anything NOW????’



After lots of conversations, I was offered a lovely new townhouse in an area I used to live in. I moved in in March this year, and have reconnected with many old friends. As you can see from my photo, I am full of joy - and astonishment, actually!

What I’m also full of is immense gratitude – to all those people in all the organisations that make affordable housing possible for people like me. The alternatives were frightening.”

Our Community

NRH participated alongside other community organisations at the Homelessness Expo held at the Lismore Quad. There was lots of community participation and interaction with other organisations and homeless people. One of our Together Home Team members even managed to secure some tents and sleeping bags for two homeless people which was an excellent outcome. A mural was created highlighting the need to end homelessness (pictured below)



Zonta morning tea for Station Street residents



NRH fortnightly newsletter 'The Village Extra' informing residents of local activities and services available.



Housing and Homelessness

Housing supply, rental and mortgage stress are key issues in our region.

FLOOD IMPACTS ON HOUSING



10,000

People displaced



6,300

Homes damaged



1,800

People still living in temporary housing
(As of March 8, 2023)

WHERE WE LIVE



Two of our seven LGAs are in the top ten higher needs ranking compared to other housing areas: Byron #1 and Tweed #7.

66%

Purchasing or fully own their home

21%

Live in private rentals

3%

Live in social housing

HOME PRICES



Median house price:

\$1,009,214

Median unit price:

\$541,463

COST OF RENTING



6%

Rental costs went up 6% between Mar 2022 and Mar 2023.

MORTGAGE AND RENTAL STRESS



43.4%
of renters are experiencing rental stress.



15.6%
of homeowners are experiencing mortgage stress.

Changes to interest rates, along with the increase in house prices, means homeowners are paying almost 30% more to service their mortgage.



Housing and Homelessness

HOUSING AVAILABILITY



598 Available private rentals

6,849 Airbnb listings
963 available for long-term

Average price per night is **\$517** which is not an affordable housing option.

13,604

Unoccupied dwellings
38% are short term rental accommodation. NSW: 13%

HOUSING SUPPLY



11%

The number of dwellings increased by 11% between 2011 and 2021 (+14,139), however the number of households increased by 13%.

259,774

Households, an increase of 113% since 2016, and with average household size of 2.35.

+6,200

Additional social and affordable dwellings are needed by 2026.

HOMELESSNESS



2%

increase in homelessness since 2016

69%



The true figure of those sleeping rough has increased by 69% in the past 12 months. That's people sleeping on the street, the beach, in their cars, tents or crisis accommodation.

HOMELESS PEOPLE



42%
Female

58%
Male

320 Homeless but employed

336 Over 55 years of age

204 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

273 Children & youth under 19 years of age

CFO Commentary

Building on our solid foundation, our financial year 2022-23 operating surplus of \$6.13m represents our capacity to embark on ambitious community housing projects that address the evolving housing challenges of our Northern Rivers community.

We are committed to financial strength and resilience and excited about the period ahead to collaborate with partners to bring to the region new social and affordable housing. Our focus extends beyond profit, emphasising social responsibility and contributing to the broader National agenda of addressing housing affordability and accessibility.

The organisation recorded an operating surplus of \$6.13m for the year to 30th June 2023 and our balance sheet net equity position is strengthened to \$25.48m.

Financial Performance Overview

The financial scale of the business grew substantially in 2022-23 with revenue of \$31.65m compared to 2021-22 revenue \$18.27m. The increased financial performance reflects the completion of property developments, our new management services for the flood accommodation villages across the region and \$1.1m profit on sale of assets.

Like all participants in the housing sector our tenancy management operations have in recent years more acutely felt the effects of rising costs particularly for maintenance labour and materials and insurance in a flood impacted region with ageing assets. Our tenancy revenue remained consistent with last year however property management expense has risen materially.



We have a continued and strengthened focus on asset management and operational efficiencies. We have also taken steps to better protect our IT infrastructure with migration of data to Azure Platform, enrolment of all devices and users into enhanced MFA and endpoint security environment.

Thank you to our Northern Rivers Housing Board and AFRM Committee for their on-going support and direction.

Financials

This is a summarised version of our financial statements – a full copy including the accompanying notes is available by contacting Northern Rivers Housing.

The North Coast Community Housing Company Limited

ABN 97 002 685 761

Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

		2023	2022
	Note	\$	\$
Revenue	4	31,651,335	18,335,946
Tenancy and property management expenses	5(a)	(12,264,734)	(10,165,352)
Administration expenses	5(b)	(13,255,807)	(7,023,051)
Surplus for the year		6,130,794	1,147,543
Other comprehensive income			
Items that will not be reclassified subsequently to profit or loss		-	-
Items that will be reclassified to profit or loss when specific conditions are met		-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year		6,130,794	1,147,543

Financials

The North Coast Community Housing Company Limited

ABN 97 002 685 761

Statement of Financial Position

As At 30 June 2023

	Note	2023 \$	2022 \$
ASSETS			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	6	14,651,270	8,714,062
Trade and other receivables	7	1,125,067	1,001,824
Contract assets	8	511,394	349,449
Other assets	9	1,602,493	1,294,444
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		17,890,224	11,359,779
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Trade and other receivables	7	224,054	213,839
Right-of-use assets	10(a)	566,979	462,521
Property, plant and equipment	11	27,481,650	27,075,933
Intangible assets	13	59,282	52,644
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		28,331,965	27,804,937
TOTAL ASSETS		46,222,189	39,164,716
LIABILITIES			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and other payables	14	1,258,736	1,050,197
Borrowings	15	4,859,807	1,615,435
Employee benefits	16	319,327	348,853
Contract liabilities	17	13,542,053	10,911,191
Lease liabilities	10(b)	252,350	248,461
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		20,232,273	14,174,137
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Borrowings	15	45,511	5,231,578
Employee benefits	16	48,248	86,899
Lease liabilities	10(b)	409,263	316,002
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		503,022	5,634,479
TOTAL LIABILITIES		20,735,295	19,808,616
NET ASSETS		25,486,894	19,356,100
EQUITY			
Retained earnings		25,486,894	19,356,100
TOTAL EQUITY		25,486,894	19,356,100

Financials

The North Coast Community Housing Company Limited

ABN 97 002 685 761

Statement of Changes in Equity

For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

2023

	Retained Earnings	Total
	\$	\$
Balance at 1 July 2022	19,356,100	19,356,100
Net surplus/(deficit) for the year	6,130,794	6,130,794
Balance at 30 June 2023	25,486,894	25,486,894

2022

	Retained Earnings	Total
	\$	\$
Balance at 1 July 2021	18,208,557	18,208,557
Net surplus/(deficit) for the year	1,147,543	1,147,543
Balance at 30 June 2022	19,356,100	19,356,100

The North Coast Community Housing Company Limited

ABN 97 002 685 761

Statement of Cash Flows For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

	2023	2022
Note	\$	\$
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:		
Receipts from clients and others	15,377,987	11,332,283
Payments to suppliers and employees	(24,679,566)	(15,099,964)
Interest received	26,460	748
Interest and other costs of finance	(59,191)	2,892
Government grants received	17,506,662	12,249,821
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	8,172,352	8,485,780
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:		
Payment for intangible asset	(30,541)	(53,328)
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	(3,007,195)	(6,538,430)
Proceeds from sale of assets	3,038,748	-
Net cash used by investing activities	1,012	(6,591,758)
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES:		
Proceeds from borrowings	-	5,920,811
Repayment of borrowings	(1,941,695)	(707,214)
Repayment of lease liabilities	(294,461)	(478,741)
Net cash used by financing activities	(2,236,156)	4,734,856
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents held	5,937,208	6,628,878
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	8,714,062	2,085,184
Cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year	14,651,270	8,714,062
6(a)		



Independent Auditor’s Report to the Members of The North Coast Community Housing Company Limited

Report on the audit of the financial report

Opinion

We have audited the financial report of The North Coast Community Housing Company Limited (“the Company”) which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2023, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, the statement of changes in equity and the statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and the director’s declaration.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report of the Company is in accordance with Division 60 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act, including:

- a) giving a true and fair view of the Company’s financial position as at 30 June 2023 and of its financial performance for the year then ended; and
b) complying with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures and Division 60 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2022.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor’s Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report section of our report. We are independent of the Company in accordance with the auditor independence 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 also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

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

Information Other than the Financial Report and Auditor’s Report Thereon

The directors are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the directors’ report for the year ended 30 June 2023 but does not include the financial report and our auditor’s report thereon.

Our opinion on the financial report does not cover the other information and accordingly we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. In connection with our audit of the financial report, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, 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.

If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

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In preparing the financial report, the directors are responsible for assessing the Company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intend to liquidate the 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 objectives are 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 and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

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

- 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.
- 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 Company's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the management's 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 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 Company to cease to continue as a going concern.
- 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 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.

We also provide the directors with a statement that we have complied with relevant ethical requirements regarding independence, and to communicate with them all relationships and other matters that may reasonably be thought to bear on our independence, and where applicable, related safeguards.

THOMAS NOBLE & RUSSELL CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

Per:

.....
K R FRANEY (Partner)

Dated at Lismore this 21st day of November 2023

Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge a number of individuals and organisations who have assisted our work during the past twelve months:

Our tenants and residents of our Community Villages, who we are honoured to serve.

Housing, Homelessness and Disability Strategy, Policy and Commissioning, within the Department of Communities and Justice.

NSW Land and Housing Corporation (LAHC).

Housing Australia (formerly the National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation) for funding opportunities for development activities.

NSW Office of the Registrar, the chief regulator for community housing in NSW.

Our local Federal Members of Parliament: The Hon. Kevin Hogan MP (Member for Page) and The Hon. Justine Elliot (Member for Richmond).

Our local State Members of Parliament: The Hon. Janelle Saffin MP (Lismore), The Hon. Tamara Smith MP (Ballina), The Hon. Geoff Provest MP (Tweed), and The Hon. Richie Williamson MP (Clarence).

The support organisations who work in partnership with NRH to provide services to our clients on a daily basis.

Community Housing Industry Association (CHIA) and CHIA NSW as our national and State industry peak organisations providing us with a voice across all levels of Government.

PowerHousing Australia the industry association for growth focused CHP's for providing its members a voice at a Federal level.

The NSW Reconstruction Authority (formerly Resilience NSW) the lead disaster management agency for NSW who work with NRH in the management of our Community Villages.

The seven Local Government Councils: Ballina, Byron, Clarence Valley, Kyogle, Lismore, Richmond Valley and Tweed Valley.

Private Landlords for providing properties for our Leasehold and Affordable Housing program

Davcam Pty Limited for management/consultative work on various development projects

Builders, consultants and contractors of the properties that we have refurbished and maintained during the year.

Somerville Laundry Lomax, and McCullough Robertson for providing legal advice and services.

Thomas Noble Russell, for providing auditing services and advice to the organisation.

Newton Denny Chappelle for providing town and strata planning services.

Paul Banister and the team at First National Byron Bay for their donation to the NRH Scholarships Program

Zonta Northern Rivers for the donation of care parcels for female residents at our Station Street, Mullumbimby complex

Westpac for providing our loan and banking facilities.

NoDa IT and Computer One for their provision of IT support.

MRI for support with our integrated management system.

Acknowledgements

North Coast Telephone Systems (NCTS) for support with our telecommunications.

CAV Statesman and Challenger Security for supporting us with our security needs.

Giraffe Visual Communication Management Individual Design Solutions, and Melbourne IT for providing website support.

Acacia Connection, Neroli Jager, Sharon Mullan for providing counselling support and reflective practice for individual staff members and teams throughout the year.

Ruth Levy Consulting in delivering impartial, prompt and thorough workplace investigations.

Invercauld House, Brunswick Valley Community Centre and Byron Community Centre for venue hire for events and meetings held during the year.

Organisations who offered their services and provide workshops/activities for residents of our seven Community Villages.

James, Mark & Fiona on our community garden day at Ballina with the Bunnings team.





Annual Report 2023

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NRH acknowledges the Bundjalung,
Arakwal, Gumbaynggir and Yaegl peoples
who are the traditional custodians of the
land that comprises the Northern Rivers.

