

40 Years of Service

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### Corporate Values

### INTEGRITY RESPECT COURAGE COLLABORATION FOCUS

#### Acknowledgment of Country

The Women's Housing Company acknowledges the Traditional Owners of country throughout NSW and recognises their continuing connection to land, waters and culture. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

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### Introduction

For 40 years the Women's Housing Company has helped women who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

As we celebrate our '40 Years of Service', we consider our humble beginnings, the difference we've made and what's next. The Company was established to respond to the needs of single homeless women in inner Sydney, starting with four units of accommodation. As housing affordability declined, the need for our services increased. Today we are the largest women's housing organisation in Australia - providing crisis, transitional, social and affordable housing, as well as homelessness support services to women and children. This includes managing almost 1,100 homes for women and children.

Australia is in the midst of a housing affordability crisis. There is a shortage of affordable private rentals and social housing supply. However, there is a gender element to this crisis and women are the new face of homelessness – particularly women who have experienced domestic and family violence, and older women.



The Women's Housing Company is a Tier 1 community housing provider, registered under the National Regulatory System for Community Housing and operates as a charity. It is also accredited under the Australian Service Excellence Standards.



Our Journey

The Women's Housing Company is established as a unique housing service with four run down shared houses and a small grant of \$50,000 from the NSW Government.



Women's Housing Company tenant

### The statistics in 2022:

- Overall, the housing affordability crisis is having a profound impact on women
- Older women are the fastest growing group experiencing homelessness, with the last Census showing a 31% increase
- Domestic and family violence is one of the leading causes of homelessness
- Over 50,000 approved applicants are on the NSW social housing waiting list, with waiting times often exceeding 10 years
- The gender pay gap remains at around \$25K per year
- Women retire with less superannuation than men

### What we do:

We make a difference to the lives of vulnerable women by:

- Housing women on very low to moderate incomes who cannot afford market housing
- Preventing and responding to women's homelessness
- Connecting women to support and communities
- Creating pathways to employment and opportunity
- Providing safety for women at risk of violence
- Advocating for women

The answer to solving women's homelessness is simple - we need more housing. This is a priority for the Women's Housing Company as we work closely with Governments and the broader community to address this pressing need.



Expansion of operations and additional funding from the Community Tenancy Scheme.



The Women's Medium Term Housing Program is established, informed by the Women's Housing Company's experience. The program established 22 organisations across NSW providing housing and support to single women and women with children.

### Message from the Chair

The Women's Housing Company has gone from strength to strength and as the Chair, I am proud of our commitment, perseverance and results in what has been another challenging year. 2022 marks the organisation's **40 Year** anniversary – a very significant milestone.

The Board is comprised of dedicated and skilled Directors who are passionate about making a difference, as well as an Observer who each year brings a new perspective to our deliberations.

The organisation has reached a level of maturity whereby there are strong and effective governance policies and systems in place, along with a skilled and experienced executive team. This has allowed the Board this year to focus more on a number of new areas, particularly growth, advocacy and philanthropy. New work in relation to philanthropy will be funded with kind donations from supporters such as JB Glamorgan Pty Ltd and Phatt Duck.

There is increasing community awareness and concern regarding the causes of women's homelessness and the need for more housing, and strategies to eliminate domestic and family violence. We have actively engaged in advocacy on these issues through media and interviews, presentations at conferences, and participation in the ARE Media national campaign 'Unhoused'.

We worked closely with the NSW Government on solutions to women's homelessness, particularly in the face of COVID-19, and have

partnered in a number of initiatives to deliver new housing and support services. We are grateful for grants through the NSW Department of Communities and Justice to purchase new housing, and our partnership with the NSW Land and Housing Corporation on the New Generation Boarding House Program for Older Women. This new housing started to come on board in 2022 and will continue in the coming years. We also worked with Woollahra and Randwick Councils to deliver a tailored new program for women who have experienced domestic and family violence in those municipalities and look forward to working with more Councils.

And of course, we look to the Federal Government for an investment in women's housing, particularly for women impacted by domestic and family violence, and older women who are the fastest growing group experiencing homelessness.

### Key highlights for 2022

**New Housing** – 31 units in Bankstown, Lakemba and Wiley Park, funded from NSW Government grants and contributions from the Women's Housing Company.

**Donations** – generous fundraising and donations throughout the year to support our work. Examples include the Older Women's Network that raised funds through their 'Buy a Brick' campaign to contribute to our property acquisition funds; Viqarunnisa Alumni Australia raised funds for our homelessness



Alice Spizzo

services; Phatt Duck team that rode on a bike from Mittagong to Perth raising awareness about domestic violence and funds for the Women's Housing Company; and the Bondi International Women's Day Business Awards that dedicated proceeds from the evening to our work.

**Communications** – released a video titled The Difference We Make, with staff and clients talking about our services for women who are homeless.

There is much to celebrate as we mark our 40 Years of Service, and much work to be done. I would like to recognise and congratulate everyone involved with this organisation over the years and thank the Board and Team for the extraordinarily hard work over the last few years to ensure we continue to deliver our services to those in need.

#### Alice Spizzo

Chair, Women's Housing Company Ltd



The Women's Housing Company has input into the design of its first property funded specifically for women returning to education.

### Message from the CEO

It is a pleasure to present the CEO update for 2022, following a year of enormous challenges, unexpected opportunities and incredible dedication from all involved with the Women's Housing Company. COVID-19 continued to challenge and interrupt throughout the year, however our organisation had comprehensive policies, procedures and practices in place to enable us to adapt as circumstances changed.

### Key highlights for 2022

New Maintenance Contract – we commenced our new maintenance contract with Assett Group Services, rolling out training and new systems to deliver planned maintenance in a challenging time given wet weather, labour and material shortages.

#### Industry Collaboration - we

joined PowerHousing Australia and participated in the quarterly meetings and annual conference. Sogol Rezaei was Highly Commended in the Rising Star National Awards, and I became a mentor to the Rising Stars. We also participated in CHIA NSW CEO meetings and Conference.

**Women's Safety** - we supported the Everybody's Home Campaign to fund research on domestic violence and housing, in the lead up to the National Women's Safety Summit. The research, undertaken by Angela Jackson from Equity Economics and titled Nowhere to Go, received wide coverage and formed a key input to the Summit held in September. **Together Home Program** – we were awarded an additional 15 packages under Tranche 3 for women who were homeless, totalling 45 packages across all Tranches.

### Success with Tenders

- Affordable Rental Housing (ARHSEPP) Grant - \$2.13m to purchase new housing, with Women's Housing Company's contribution
- Community Housing Innovation Fund (Domestic Violence) – \$5m to purchase new housing, with Women's Housing Company's contribution
- Together Home Transition Program (Capital) – \$5m to purchase new housing, with Women's Housing Company's contribution
- New Generation Boarding House Program for Older Women – the NSW Land and Housing Corporation to develop 9 new builds with 78 rooms to be managed by the Women's Housing Company, starting with Peakhurst.
- Randwick Council Domestic Violence Housing grant for 3 years for 3 properties to house women with children
- Woollahra Council Domestic Violence Program unanimously approved by Council for a further 3 years for 10 properties to house women with children

Australian Service Excellence Standards (ASES) – commenced project for accreditation of our Specialist Homelessness Services.



Debbie Georgopoulos

**Expansion of Team** - new Head, Community Housing Operations; permanent Business Systems Manager; and new Risk and Assurance Manager roles created.

And of course, work continued throughout the year to assess applications for housing assistance, allocate housing to women, provide support services to homeless clients, make 1,500 wellbeing calls to tenants, and provide maintenance for our properties.

The Staff Engagement Survey for 2022 reveals the strength of the team - 91% response rate, 97% of staff that responded indicated they understand and support the mission and values of the Women's Housing Company, and 100% said they care about doing the best job they can and getting good results.

The dedication and collaboration of everyone at the Women's Housing Company is truly remarkable and I am grateful to my team, the Board, our partners, funders and supporters for all their support.

#### **Debbie Georgopoulos**

CEO, Women's Housing Company Ltd Status as 'Growth Organisation' leads to increased portfolio of housing. New IT system to manage tenancy information.



Accredited under National Community Housing Standards. Increases in pensioner housing to reflect tenant demographics.

### Strategic Plan 2020-25

The Women's Housing Company's Strategic Plan 2020 – 2025 is the key document that communicates the organisation's goals and the actions that will be undertaken to progress these ambitions. The Strategic Plan is structured around a vision, purpose, values and strategies. The Strategic Plan was developed with input from staff, Directors, tenants and external stakeholders. It builds on the specialised role of the Women's Housing Company and the organisation's 40-year history and articulates an expanded role in a number of areas. Women's experience of homelessness means that many tenants have increasingly

### **Our Vision**

Empowering women to improve their lives through the provision of housing that is affordable.

### Our Purpose

Providing quality, safe, and stable housing and homelessness services for women.

### **Our Strategic Objectives**

Quality services

Providing safe and stable housing and homelessness services for women

#### Enhanced wellbeing

Linking clients to the support they need to improve their lives

**Purposeful growth** Increasing the supply of housing and homelessness services for women complex needs and require a focus on enhanced wellbeing, in addition to the delivery of quality housing. The Strategic Plan reflects the current high demand for services in the face of increasing homelessness among women and therefore balances the delivery of support to current clients with an emphasis on purposeful growth and advocacy.

#### Impactful advocacy

Leading voice in advocating for women's housing and homelessness services

Sustainable business

Continuing financial and operational sustainability



2022 Board Strategy Day

### 2002

External review of structure is undertaken to enhance capacity of organisation. Move to skills based Board.



### Strategy and Corporate Governance

The Women's Housing Company Board and committees met throughout the year to provide strong governance and strategic direction, as well as manage risks associated with COVID-19. Meetings varied from face-to-face where possible and online where necessary. The 2021 Annual General Meeting was also online, reflecting the ongoing risks posed by COVID-19 in late 2021.

To support sound corporate governance, a Board selfevaluation was undertaken, with strong results across all performance areas, reflecting the calibre of the Women's Housing Company skills-based Board.

A Strategic Planning Day was held, facilitated by Urbis, and focused on purposeful growth and impactful advocacy. The Board also considered succession planning, the recruitment of new Directors and planning to update the Constitution.

The Board continued to support the Observership Program with Angela Walsh completing her term in 2021 and Alice Robinson commencing in 2022. Up to date policies and plans were a priority for the Board and these included:

- Pandemic Policy (new)
- Vaccination Policy (new)
- Procurement Policy (new)
- Board Charter (updated)
- Equal Opportunity, Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Policy (updated)
- Board Audit and Risk Committee Terms of Reference (updated)
- Schedule of Delegations (updated)

The Board also approved and provided oversight for the Women's Housing Company Business Plan, Risk Management Plan and Risk Register, with quarterly reports provided on the status of key strategic projects and risks. To support growth, permanent roles were established to manage business systems, and risk and compliance.

The Women's Housing Company successfully completed annual compliance reporting under the National Regulatory System for Community Housing (NRSCH) and began the process for accreditation under the Australian Service Excellence Standards (ASES).

#### Directors





**Alice Spizzo** Chair

**Anna Grutzner** Deputy Chair





**Jodie Blackledge** BARC Chair & Director

Maree Girdler Director



**Tasha Burrell** Director



**Sharanya Srikanth** Director



**Stacey Hooper** Director



Alice Robinson WHC Observer for 2022

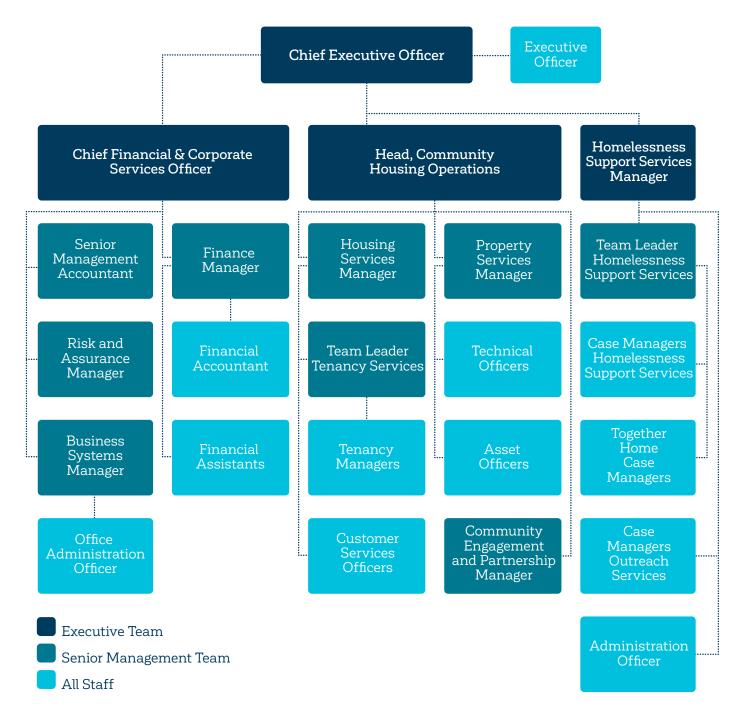


New constitution adopted and the Women's Housing Company is now housing over 500 tenants.



Major Strategic Plan is developed with a focus on growth.

### Organisational Chart

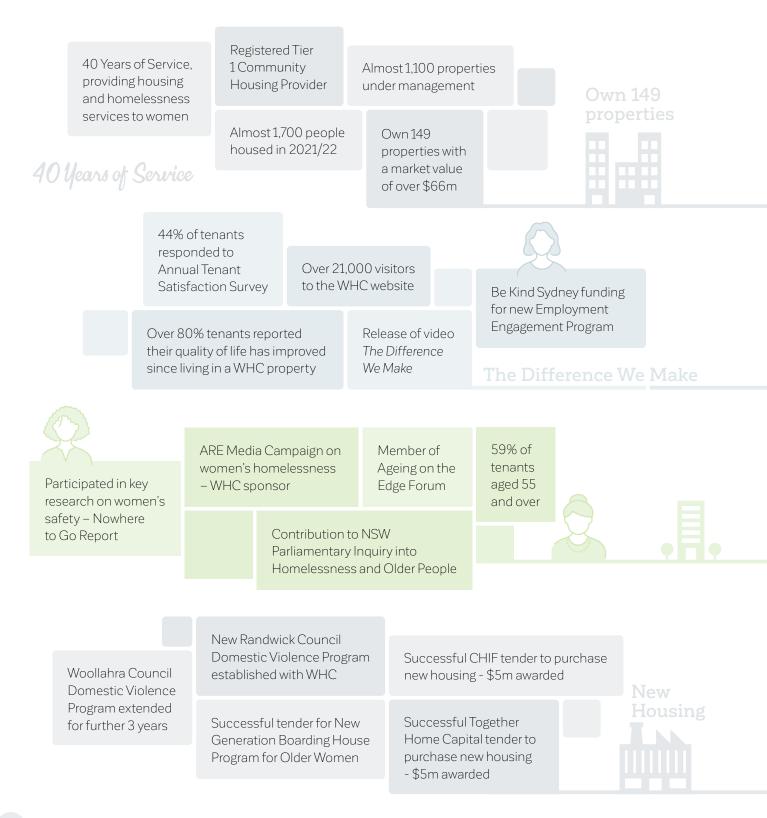




The Women's Housing Company wins Award of Excellence for Organisational Management and Governance. Relocation to larger premises.



### Highlights in 2022

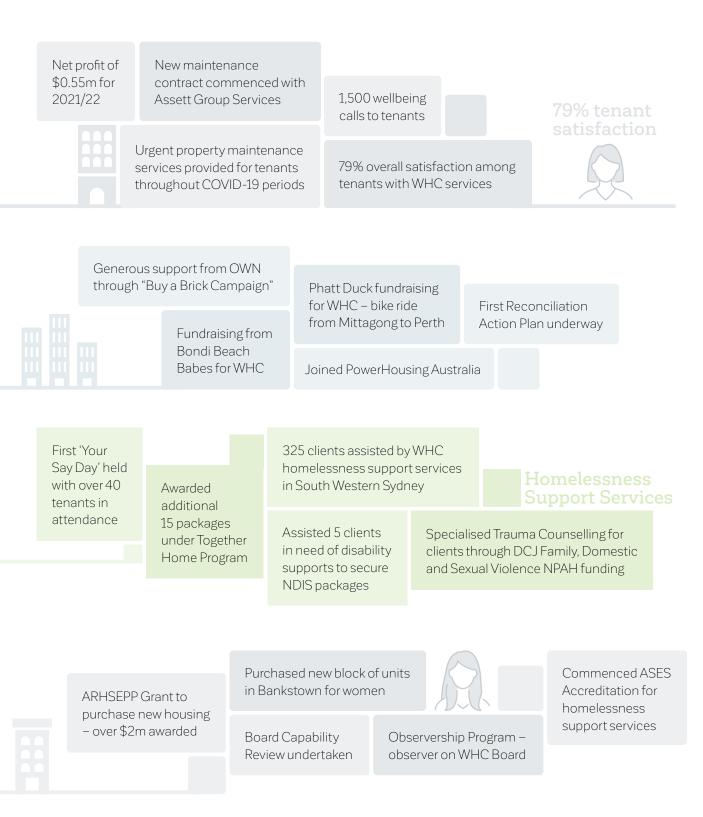




Women's Housing Company manages 600 properties in the Sydney metropolitan area.



Member of BlueCHP; a special purpose affordable housing development and asset management company to create growth for members; share resources and risk; as well as provide expertise in property development.



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### Our People

The Women's Housing Company has 39 staff, working across three sites – Surry Hills, Liverpool and Brookvale.

Some of these staff members work part time and hence the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) staff members is a little lower, being 36.5.

There has been a 59% increase in the workforce since 2018, being commensurate with the 56% growth in income over that same period. Our recent growth has facilitated the creation of new specialist roles, such as the Head of Community Housing Operations, the Risk and Assurance Manager and the Office Administration Officer. These new roles support the delivery of services in a manner which meets our many and varied regulatory, legislative and contractual obligations.

Our team is diverse in terms of age, qualifications, cultural backgrounds and languages spoken. These skills and diversity contribute to our professional, dynamic and collaborative work environment, ensuring we are able to provide high quality social and affordable housing, and homelessness services for the women we support.



Team at Business Planning Day 2022

### Staff Survey 2022

We were delighted with the following results from our most recent staff survey:

- 97% of staff understand and support the mission and values of the organisation
- 96% of staff are clear about their role at the Women's Housing Company
- 97% of staff consider that the Women's Housing Company is an ethical place to work
- 96% of staff have good working relationships within the company

Our survey results also identified some areas for improvement in relation to cross-team collaboration and grievance handling. Work is underway to strengthen practice in these key areas.

#### **Business Planning**

After a prolonged period of working from home due to COVID-19 restrictions, we were excited to get together in March for our annual business planning day. Urbis very generously donated the use of their office and it was a great opportunity for our staff to get together and share their ideas. For our new staff members who had joined the company in the midst of the COVID-19 lockdown period, it was the first time they had met some of their colleagues.

### Training

Our staff received an average of 12.5 hours of training each over the year, including topics such as:

- Wellbeing and Mental Health Awareness
- Emotionally Intelligent Leadership
- Safe Work Practices; First Aid; Fire and Emergency training
- Housing Pathways
- Improving Transitions from Rehab to Stable Housing
- Substance Abuse
- Keeping Women out of Prison
- Asset Management; Property inspections
- Refreshers in regard to key corporate policies such as Privacy, Code of Conduct, Conflict of Interest and Equal Opportunity, Discrimination and Harassment
- Payroll, Tax and Financial Accounting updates
- Financial Modelling and Forecasting
- Power Query; Power Bl
- Cyber Resilience; Digital Risks
- Managing Risk
- The Art and Science of Negotiation

2009

Class 2 status awarded under new pilot community housing registration system. Portfolio increases to 654 properties. 2010

Participation in new common access system for NSW - Housing Pathways. Increased specialisation leads to designated roles and establishment of senior management team. The first tender for community housing providers to obtain title to existing capital properties is announced.







Historic handover of title for 100 existing capital properties. Appointment of new Auditors. Donation of \$52,000 software products from Microsoft. Upgrade of server system and software.



### Working with Others

#### Working with partners is central to how we achieve good outcomes, and the key areas include:

- Social Housing Management Transfer Program
  - Formal partnership with Bridge Housing, together managing over 1,200 social housing properties in the Northern Beaches
  - Review of Social Housing Service System Coordination Plan completed, and new 3-year plan developed.
- Specialist Homelessness Services Partnerships
  - Formal partnerships with specialist homelessness services, providing tenancy and property management services, supported by formal Memorandums of Understanding. Support partner organisations include:
    - Flourish Australia
    - Jenny's Place
    - Nova for Women and Children
    - St Vincent de Paul Society
    - Launchpad Youth Community
      Warrina Domestic and
    - Family Violence Services
    - Welsey Mission
    - Women's and Girl's Emergency Centre (WAGEC)
    - YWCA

• Housing First Partnerships

Formal partnerships to deliver Housing First programs, providing secure housing with wrap around support for women experiencing long term homelessness.

- STEP to Home the Supported Transition and Engagement Program with Bridge Housing, Metro Community Housing and Neami National; funded by the NSW Department of Communities and Justice. The Women's Housing Company has housed 15 women through this program.
- Together Home the Together Home Program is a \$177.5m investment by the NSW Government, supporting over 1,072 people street sleeping in NSW into stable accommodation linked with support. The Women's Housing Company has committed to housing 45 women through this program.
- Cross-sector partnerships
  - Ageing on the Edge NSW Forum - coalition of over 90 organisations and individual advocates to address housing and homelessness related issues for older people. This year, the coalition made a submission to

the NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into Homelessness Amongst Older People. The Inquiry members visited a Women's Housing Company block to speak to tenants about their experiences and the impact of social housing.

- Sisters of Mercy the Women's Housing Company provides tenancy and asset management services for a property owned by the Sisters of Mercy North Sydney.
- Kathleen York House a 24hour residential drug and alcohol rehabilitation program for women and their children, operated by the Alcohol and Drug Foundation NSW. The Women's Housing Company provides asset management services for this program.
- Woollahra Council this funding partnership has just been extended for a further three years, allowing the Women's Housing Company to provide a home for women and children escaping domestic and family violence. Families are supported by local services and properties are leased from the private rental market with assistance from Woollahra Council.



30 Years of Service. New Strategic Plan developed. Senior Management Team recruitment completed. Consolidation of service delivery activities. Specialisation in operational roles completed. Tenant participation activities reactivated.

- Randwick Council a new funding partnership, allowing the Women's Housing Company to provide a home for women and children escaping domestic and family violence, with support delivered by local services.
- Women's Community Shelters - collaboration on projects addressing the needs of mutual client groups.
- Real estate agents and property owners - relationships with over 140 agents and individual property owners.

- Partnerships with donors and supporters
  - NSW Women
  - Sydney Community Foundation
  - Iceni
  - Bondi Beach Babes
  - Older Womens' Network
  - Phatt Duck

Housing Industry Memberships

- Community Housing Industry Association (CHIA and CHIA NSW)
- PowerHousingAustralia
- Homelessness NSW
- Shelter NSW



Older Women's Network Buy a Brick Campaign – Handover of Cheque



Establishment of Homelessness Support Services, providing crisis and transitional housing for single women in South Western Sydney.

### Tenant and Community Engagement

COVID-19 once again impacted our ability to get together as the state of NSW entered a lockdown in July 2021. This saw an extension to the closure of common rooms and inperson tenant engagement activities.

Tenant Advisory Group meetings continued, using a hybrid of in-person and online options to conduct our five annual sessions. This allowed tenants to stay connected and provide feedback to the Operations team as representatives of all Women's Housing Company tenants.

As COVID-19 restrictions eased towards the end of the year, we held our inaugural "Your Say Day" event. The event will be held annually and is designed to review the Annual Tenant Satisfaction Survey results and allow tenants the opportunity to provide feedback and speak to senior Operations managers. Over 40 tenants attended the event at the Redfern Community Centre, and Women's Housing Company staff and tenants worked together using co-design methods to identify service improvements and tenant priorities. Lunch was provided by Two Good Co., a social enterprise offering employment for women who have experienced homelessness, domestic violence and trauma.

2014

Looking ahead, we are developing an employment program funded by Be Kind Sydney and NSW Women. The program will connect with local employment providers to run workshops to build selfconfidence, efficacy and agency, resulting in women empowered through employment. And with COVID-19 highlighting the need for digital literacy, we are using funds thanks to Be Kind Sydney to develop a program that will help tenants get online with confidence.

In the coming year, we look forward to increasing our engagement and creating more pathways for tenants to have successful tenancies and achieve their goals.

#### **Tenant Satisfaction Survey**

The Women's Housing Company conducts annual tenant satisfaction surveys to seek information from tenants on the quality of services, to inform service improvements, and to report high-level results to the NSW Registrar of Community Housing.

The Community Housing Industry Association NSW (CHIA NSW) conducts the Women's Housing



Inaugural Your Say Day

2016

Significant focus on tenant engagement and needs of older women, to reflect the increase of older women in social housing. Relocation to larger premises.

Company survey as an independent third party. As well as measuring key satisfaction ratings against thresholds set by the National Regulatory System for Community Housing (NRSCH), results are benchmarked against a CHIA NSW benchmark indicator set comprising data from 47 community housing providers across Australia.

Results are also compared to previous years and separated into Social Housing Management Transfer (SHMT) tenants and others to allow the Women's Housing Company to monitor the impact of the 2019 transfer and allow for historically variable satisfaction ratings amongst SHMT tenants.

Overall, the results are very positive and largely stable against the previous year, with no statistically significant differences between 2021 and 2022.

Around four in five tenants (81%) reported that their quality of life has improved since living in a Women's Housing Company property. This is a 1% increase from 2021. This result is 6% above the CHIA NSW benchmark of 75%, making it one of the better-performing indicators compared to peer organisations.



Women's Housing Company Tenant Advocates

Indicator	NRSCH Threshold	WHC 2022
Overall satisfaction	75%	79%
Condition of home	75%	80%
Quality of life	75%	81%



700 properties under management. New housing for older women in Woolloomooloo. First development application submitted for New Generation Boarding House. Change to Constitution to expand services to women with children.

### Housing Services

The Women's Housing Company saw a modest increase in tenancies in 2021-22. As at 30 June 2022, the Women's Housing Company owned or managed almost 1,100 properties, providing a home to over 1,700 women and children throughout the year.

Most of the increase was due to the Women's Housing Company's continued commitment to Housing First programs. The Together Home Program entered its third year, and with it came funding to house an additional 15 women escaping homelessness. The Together Home Program is a \$177.5 million investment by the NSW Government, aiming to support over 1,072 people street sleeping across NSW into stable accommodation, linked to wraparound support. Support for our Together Home tenants is provided by the Women's Housing Company's specialist homelessness service.

The Woollahra Council Domestic and Family Violence Accommodation and Support Program, delivered by the Women's Housing Company and funded by Woollahra Council, reached its third year of operation and was extended for a further three years by Council. This unique program was established to respond to local needs and address the shortage of affordable housing in the area that is available to women and their children escaping domestic and family violence.

The Program provides secure, medium-term housing, allowing local women to leave unsafe situations whilst maintain access to local services and vital support networks, with the goal of exiting into sustainable private long-term housing. The program delivers ten homes to local women and their children, and in the first three years, one tenant exited into the private rental market, two tenants moved interstate or overseas, and one tenant was able to exit into home ownership.

The Women's Housing Company looks forward to building on the success of the program in the coming year.

Following the outcomes of the Woollahra Program, the Women's Housing Company entered into a partnership with Randwick Council to deliver three new medium term housing options with appropriate support for local women escaping domestic and family violence in Randwick.

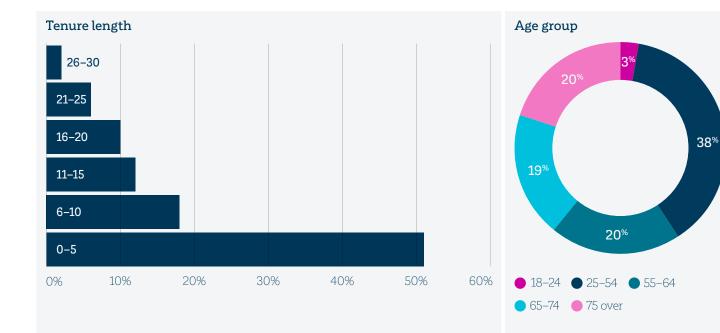
Programs such as these are highly aligned to the Women's Housing Company's purpose, and these specialist, localised responses from Councils should be highly commended as they respond swiftly to local needs.

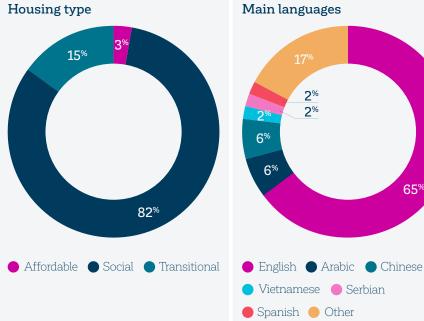
For much of the year, Tenancy Managers were unable to visit residents in their homes due to COVID-19 restrictions. To ensure tenants' wellbeing throughout the various lockdown periods, we continued to provide support by making wellbeing phone calls, ensuring a sense of connection. We made 1500 well-being calls during 2021-2022.



Step to Home Evaluation Launch

- New portfolio for women with children who have experienced domestic violence. Successful in tender for Northern Beaches Social Housing Management Transfer Program with Bridge Housing 850 properties under management. Lead for two specialist Homelessness Services, incorporating new service for CALD women.
- Expansion to Hunter and Coffs Harbour.



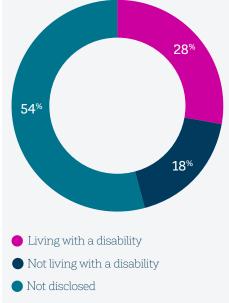


Main languages

2% 2%

65%





### 2018



## ÂÂ

Awarded Tier 1 CHP status by Registrar for Community Housing. Over 1,000 properties under management. Successful transition of new Northern Beaches social housing portfolio to the Women's Housing Company and Bridge Housing. Woolloomooloo Women's Housing Project wins two UDIA NSW awards.

### Property Services

### **Repairs and Maintenance**

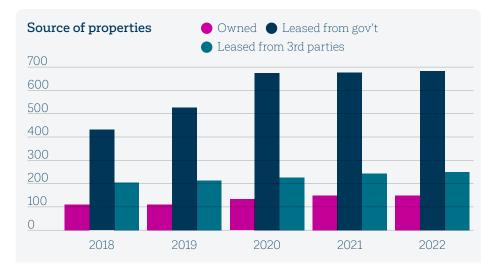
In 2020, the Women's Housing Company commenced an open tender process for maintenance services to prepare for the cessation of the Northern Beaches Land and Housing Corporation (LAHC) maintenance arrangements and centralise the delivery of maintenance services across our entire operating region. Following a competitive tender process, Assett Group Services (AGS) was engaged as our primary contractor from 1 July 2022. Prior to our go live date and in the first year of operation, the focus has been embedding new processes and working to ensure service continuity. The Women's Housing Company Property Services Team and AGS have been in regular communication throughout the year to identify and address issues and challenges as they arise, with both organisations committed to continuous improvement.

As with most activities this year, COVID-19 caused disruption to the delivery of our maintenance services. With the lockdown commencing in NSW in July 2021, the Women's Housing Company made the decision to only attend to urgent repairs for a period of approximately six months, with the intention of minimising the risk of COVID-19 to our tenant community.



New Peakhurst Block Under Construction

The Women's Housing Company also put all planned maintenance works on hold until March 2022. However, even with a late start, we completed \$1.6m worth of planned works across 25 buildings, including 100 units and 25 associated common areas. The Women's Housing Company conducted 280 property inspections as part of the cyclical maintenance program and achieved our target to inspect all our properties over a rolling three-year period. These property inspections inform our 20year Asset Plan and identify planned



2020

Pendle Hill Older Women's Housing Project delivered 22 brand new social housing units for women aged 55 and over.

Purchased two blocks in Campsie, providing 16 units of social and affordable housing to older women, women with children and key workers. Expanded partnership with Woollahra Council to provide housing for women and children escaping domestic violence.

New packages through Together Home Program for homeless women.

Multiple gifts and funding received during COVID-19 to support tenants with food hampers, sanitizer, mobile phones and data packs.



New Peakhurst Block Completed

maintenance needs for future years. This process has been augmented by improvements to our IT system, enhancing our ability to collect and maintain property condition data.

Due to unprecedented weather conditions from January to June,

we responded to additional requests for assistance regarding leaking rooves, overflowing drainage and the associated repairs addressing mould and other weather-related issues. The Women's Housing Company worked closely with our contractors



and tenants to address the increased maintenance demands.

All of the above challenges led to disappointing results in the 2021-22 Annual Tenant Survey. Whilst 80% of tenants reported being happy with the condition of their home and their neighbourhood, only 72% of tenants said they were satisfied with their repairs and maintenance service, down from 75% the previous year and falling below the NRSCH benchmark of 75%. To address the reduced satisfaction, the Women's Housing Company is:

- reviewing and updating our Customer Services Standards
- providing additional training and support to the team
- undertaking visits and calls to check the completion of repair work
- closely monitoring monthly maintenance turnaround times and tenant feedback via our monthly survey



Granted \$1.1 million by the NSW Government to upgrade social housing properties to support women in need across Greater Sydney From 1 July 2021, the Women's Housing Company has a new contract with Assett Group Services to deliver all repairs and maintenance for our properties.

### Property

Following the successful completion of the first two of three sites of the New Generation Boarding House Program, delivered in partnership with the Land and Housing Corporation, the Women's Housing Company was successful in tendering for Stage 2 comprising 9 additional sites. This program was developed to respond to the rising trend of older women at risk of homelessness and was designed to provide long term housing for single women aged 55 and over. The second site in Peakhurst was completed in June 2022. The Women's Housing Company has provided advice during the design process, providing feedback on the size, amenity and focus on aging in place. Feedback included maximum ground floor accessible units; maximum private space, courtyards, and balcony areas; the importance

of secure and safe accommodation; the inclusion of lifts to enable; maximum accessibility; and low maintenance building materials.

The Women's Housing Company was successful in tendering for a number of capital grants totalling over \$12m. The Women's Housing Company will also contribute to this funding and in total deliver 35 new homes. In June, the first project in Bankstown was completed, delivering seven one bedroom units and a community room for single women. Meanwhile, the selection of three older style blocks of units in Lakemba and Wiley Park has meant a total of 24 units across the three buildings will be added to the property portfolio in the coming year.

In 2021-22 the Women's Housing Company managed a range of property types including:



Executive Team, Debra Venables, Debbie Georgopoulos, Erna Cameron and Christina Hough

### Capital (leased from Government)

Properties leased from the NSW Land and Housing Corporation the Women's Housing Company is responsible for maintenance, allocation and tenancy management. A net increase of 6 properties were added to the portfolio during 2021-22.

### Leasehold properties (leased from third parties)

Properties leased from the private rental market - the Women's Housing Company signs a Residential Tenancy Agreement under the NSW Residential Tenancies Act (2010) and then sublets the property to eligible applicants from the NSW Housing Register. A net increase of 6 new leasehold properties were added to the portfolio during 2021-22 as a result of additional Housing First tenancies.

#### Owned

In 2011, the Women's Housing Company was awarded title by the NSW Government to 100 properties, across 15 separate locations. Since then, additional properties have been acquired and the owned portfolio is 149 properties. This will increase in the coming year with further acquisitions in the pipeline.

### Homelessness Support Services

### Highlights

- Australian Service Excellence Standards (ASES) accreditation work in preparation for the external assessment
- Specialised Trauma Counselling for clients extended through DCJ Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence NPAH funding
- 3 clients secured properties in the private rental market
- 21 clients accepted offers of social housing
- 5 clients in need of disability supports were approved for National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) packages

During 2021-2022 the Specialist Homelessness Service (SHS) jointly supported 325 clients across the South Western Sydney region with a range of services including crisis refuge accommodation, transitional supported housing, case management, and outreach services. Both SHS programs met and exceeded their contractual targets in often challenging circumstances during COVID-19. The service operated in a COVID-19 safe environment, a key focus being the continuity of service delivery. During the period from July 2021 through to January 2022 skeleton staff maintained the crisis refuge delivering essential case management services, and all other staff worked from home on a rotating roster providing daily support services via telephone in order to minimise COVID-19 risks from staff and clients circulating.



Board Visit to Liverpool Office

Due to COVID-19, weekly charitable donations of fresh food to the service ceased for a period and staff provided additional brokerage assistance to clients isolating in the community who were struggling with access to food and other essential items. In February 2022, staff returned to the office and all regular face to face case management services resumed, operating within COVID-19 safe work practices.

### Australian Service Excellence Standards Accreditation Project

The NSW Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) requires all funded Specialist Homelessness Services to be accredited under the Australian Service Excellence Standards (ASES). Plans to commence the accreditation project in 2021 were significantly disrupted due to COVID-19, and the commencement was delayed until January 2022 with a target date to complete all tasks required for the onsite assessment by August 2022. A Project Control Group was formed to develop and implement the ASES workplan and regular meetings ensured the team stayed on track and met each required milestone in preparation for the assessment. Having designated internal resources proved to be a critical element in completing the self-assessment of evidence against the ASES standards. An external consultant was engaged to



undertake a policy review against the standards, and training was delivered to staff. Through the collective efforts of the teams involved across the organisation, the service was well prepared to undertake the external assessment in August 2022 and achieve accreditation.

#### Client Data 2021-2022

- 14 client supported in Crisis Refuge accommodation
- 44 client supported in transitional supported housing

#### Women's Homelessness Support/ Accommodation Program supported 164 clients

- 15% Aboriginal
- Main reasons for seeking assistance: Domestic and Family Violence 34% Housing Crisis (eg eviction) 19% Financial Difficulties 15%
- Clients diagnosed previously by a health professional with a mental health condition 58%
- Clients currently receiving mental health services 32%

#### Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Outreach Program supported 161 clients

• Main reasons for seeking assistance: Domestic and Family Violence 22% Housing Crisis (eg eviction) 3% Financial Difficulties 37%

- Clients diagnosed previously by a health professional with a mental health condition 43%
- Clients currently receiving mental health services 22%

#### In the words of our clients

- "The Women's Housing Company is fantastic; I appreciate all the help and support provided by the service. They have assisted with my needs providing basic housing necessities for my home at my lowest point, with a low income all during my pregnancy. Much appreciated and blessed such services exist." Client, 36 years old
- "Your service is better than anyone else I have been with, I really get on with Marie, she does a lot for me and I am confident that Marie is looking after my interests." Client, 64 years old

- "Everything changed after getting support from this service. I have a home, if it wasn't for the support I received, I would be back in jail because that was my life for the last ten years" Client, 51 years old
- "Overall, it was a great experience working with you and the service provided was fantastic. You saved us from a world of trouble and heartache. I can't thank you enough for all your hard work." Client, 22 years old
- "They are the only service I've come across that are proactive. You don't even have to ask for help and they help with things like an OPAL card and phone credit. They actually get things done. For the first time in 5 years, my life is actually on track and stable" Client, 41 years old
- "I have been here twice and I couldn't ask for better help and no judgement at all." Client, 49 years old



Break the Bias International Women's Day – WHC Team Members



40 Years of Service Almost 1,100 properties under management Two specialist homelessness services Recognition as specialist women's organisation across housing and homelessness

The Australian Services Excellence Standards (ASES) accreditation process called out the following strengths for the Homelessness Support Services:

- Relationships with
  external stakeholders
- Committed and passionate staff
- Non-judgemental
- Approachable and accessible
- Case Study

#### Lila, 41 years old\*

Lila self-referred to the service in October 2021 whilst in temporary accommodation. Lila had experienced sexual assault in the past year - she had a history of trauma, mental health issues, substance abuse, and more recently had experienced multiple short periods of incarceration with a legal • Clients are at the centre of every decision

### In the words of our partner agencies

- "Mutual trust to help our clients and the community"
- "I have been working with the Women's Housing Company for years and have the highest respect for their work." Partner Agency
- "The Women's Housing Company is my go-to service: when I send a referral I know it will be addressed quickly, with compassion and with the best interest of the client in mind." Partner Agency

case pending. As there were no vacancies for accommodation, outreach support was initially offered. Lila expressed the need for sexual assault counselling and support to secure permanent housing as she was recently approved for priority social housing assistance. Lila was able to access the in-house specialist trauma counsellor and she began attending weekly counselling appointments. The Case Manager worked with Lila to follow up on her housing application and provide supporting documentation and in May 2022 Lila accepted a social housing offer with a community housing provider. As Lila expressed to her Case Manager, having housing and support has given her a sense of stability and security for the first time in eight years, and an opportunity for a fresh start.

### Case Study

#### Eve, 24 years old\*

A referral was received in February 2022 from Eve's NDIS support coordinator. Eve has an intellectual disability, a hearing impairment, complex mental health issues and was in Temporary Accommodation after exiting custody due to illegal drug use. She had a complex trauma history in foster care, had experienced severe domestic and family violence with an ex-partner and relocated recently from Nowra to Sydney to engage with supports around her recovery from addictions. Eve was referred and assisted in engaging with Head to Health community mental health services who worked with her regarding harm minimisation relating to her drug use, and she was also referred to specialist trauma counselling. Eve moved into transitional accommodation in April 2022 and was offered a social housing property shortly after. Due to Eve's vulnerabilities and the location of the property, the service advocated for the offer to be considered unsuitable. In August 2022, she was offered a newly built social housing property in the central business precinct in Liverpool. With stable housing, Eve stated this property allows her to feel a part of the community due to location, access to services and public transport. She receives regular support from her NDIS support workers in the community and ongoing occupational therapy to improve her quality of life.

### Financial Summary

### **Financial Performance**

The Women's Housing Company recorded a surplus of \$0.55m in FY2022. This was 58% higher than the surplus of \$0.35m generated in FY2021.

Revenue from tenants increased by \$0.58m or 6%, reflecting both a larger portfolio under management and an increase in the average rent generated per property. Government funding for housing and homelessness services decreased by \$0.56m or 8%, however this mostly reflects a \$1.1m non-recurring capital stimulus program reimbursed by the NSW Government in FY2021.

When adjusted for the non-recurring stimulus funding, Operating Revenue grew by 7%, mostly reflecting an expansion of the Together Home housing first program.

Property repair and maintenance costs were \$1.11m lower than the previous year, mostly reflecting the non-recurring stimulus property upgrade program funded by the NSW Government in FY2021. A reduction in lifecycle property maintenance was offset by increased responsive and cyclical maintenance costs due to wet weather and higher tenancy turnovers. Rents paid in regard to leased residential properties increased by 9%, which mostly reflected a 7% increase in the leasehold portfolio under management.

Staff costs increased by \$0.34m or 10%, which reflected both the indexation of wages, as well as the creation of new roles to support recent growth.

The increase of \$0.05m in Other Administration expenses mostly reflected non-recurring costs associated with property acquisitions and sales.

When adjusted for the non-recurring costs related to the FY2021 property upgrade stimulus program, Operating expenses increased by 5%, being lower than the 7% increase in adjusted Operating Revenue.

### **Financial Position**

Net Assets increased from \$34.16m to \$34.7m. Key changes in the Statement of Financial Position included:

- Cash, cash equivalents, and bank term deposits collectively increased by \$10.95m, mostly reflecting the receipt of funding from the NSW Government for property acquisitions
- Other current assets increased by \$0.52m, mostly reflecting a property maintenance grant that was receivable at the reporting date
- The book value of land and buildings decreased by \$0.39m due to depreciation
- Other non-current assets decreased by \$0.66m, mostly reflecting the depreciation of the Right of Use Assets for leased properties, partially offset by a deposit paid for a property acquisition
- Contract liabilities increased by \$9.43m, reflecting funding received in advance for the Together Home Program, as well as capital funding for property purchases
- All other liabilities increased by \$0.45m, mostly reflecting an increase in trade creditors and GST liabilities.

### Cash Flow

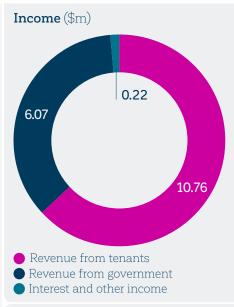
There was a net increase in the balance of cash and cash equivalents of \$16.16m over the financial year.

Net cash generated by operating activities was \$16.99m, including non-recurring capital grants and several other grants that were received in advance of the delivery of associated services by the Company.

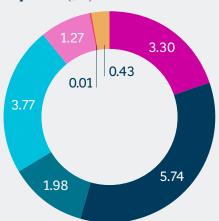
Other cash flow changes worth noting included:

- \$0.135m was paid as a deposit for a property purchase
- \$5.2m was received from the proceeds of term deposits
- Rent payments of \$5.86m were made across the year, comprising both principal and interest payments for leased properties.

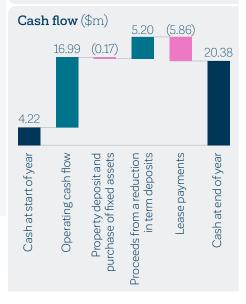
Note that references to Financial Performance have been adjusted for the impact of AASB16 Lease Accounting Standard.



#### Expenses (\$m)



- Repair and maintenance of properties
- Rent paid for leased properties
- Other property expenses
- Staff wages, on-costs & contractor costs
- Other administration expenses
- Lease accounting impact
- Depreciation & amortisation



### Financial Performance compared to previous year

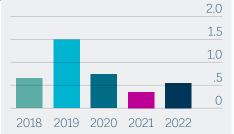
The table below contains a more detailed analysis of the financial performance for the year and provides a comparison to the previous year:

(\$'m)	For the financial year ended			Commentary	
	30 June 22	30 June 21	% change		
Revenue from tenants	10.76	10.18	6%	3% of the increase reflects the larger portfolio under management in FY2022. The remaining increase of 3% reflects the indexation of rent charged to tenants.	
Revenue from Government	6.07	6.63	-8%	The decrease mostly reflects \$1.1million of non-recurrent stimulus funding received from the NSW Government in FY2021. This decrease in funding was partially offset by the expansion of the Together Home Program and also the indexation of recurrent program funding.	
Other operating income	0.18	0.26	-31%	The decrease mostly reflects lower insurance recoveries.	
Total operating revenue	17.01	17.07	0%		
Repair and maintenance of properties	3.30	4.40	25%	The reduction mostly reflects \$1.1million of property maintenance in FY2021 that was funded by a non-recurrent Government stimulus program. FY2022 included higher responsive repairs and cyclical works as a result of wet weather and growth in the portfolio, whereas FY2021 included significant costs associated with the refurbishment of properties acquired during the year.	
Rent paid for leased residential properties*	5.74	5.29	-9%	The increase mostly reflects a 7% increase in the portfolio of leasehold properties under management, which in turn reflects an expansion of the Together Home Program.	
Other property expenses	1.98	1.96	-1%	The increase reflects rates, utilities and other costs associated with the larger portfolio under management, higher bad and doubtful debts and the indexation of costs. These increases wer partially offset by lower temporary accommodation costs and property expenses incurred within the homelessness programs.	
Staff wages, on-costs and contractor costs	3.77	3.43	-10%	The increase mostly reflects the indexation of wages for existing staff and newly created roles to support recent growth, partially offset by roles that were temporarily unfilled. New roles included the Risk and Assurance Manager, Office Administration Officer and an additional Case Manager for the Together Home Program	
Other administration expenses*	1.27	1.22	-5%	A large portion of the increase relates to due diligence and other costs associated with property sales and acquisition projects, being one-off costs. Higher costs associated with our homelessness services and the Together Home Program were fully offset by associated Government funding.	
Lease accounting impact	0.01	0.10	94%	Timing difference impact of AASB16 Lease Accounting, resulting in higher lease expenses during the earlier years of leases.	
Total operating expenses	16.07	16.40	2%		
EBITDA*	0.94	0.67	41%		
Depreciation and amortisation	(0.43)	(0.40)	-8%	The increase mostly reflects the full-year impact of properties added to the Company's portfolio during the previous year.	
Interest income	0.04	0.07	-47%	Lower interest rates in FY2022.	
Profit on sale of fixed asset	-	0.01	-100%	Profit from the sale of a motor vehicle.	
Surplus	0.55	0.35	58%		

\*Adjusted for AASB16 Lease Accounting Standard

#### **Key Performance Indicators**

Surplus (\$m)



This graph illustrates the excess of revenues over expenses, excluding the impact of grants for property acquisitions.

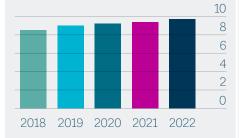
The result for 2022 was positively impacted by higher rent from tenants (particularly those on Job Seeker benefits) and also the expansion of programs.

More generally, costs such as property maintenance, wages, insurance and council rates have been increasing at a faster rate than revenue, resulting in pressure on the profit margin. This has been exacerbated by the higher depreciation charge associated with a larger owned property portfolio and lower interest rates on invested funds.

The following non-recurring factors have also impacted results:

- Improved results in 2019 reflected the scale back of planned maintenance due to the diversion of resources towards a funded stimulus maintenance program
- 2020 benefited from COVID-19 related Government stimulus funding
- 2021 results were negatively impacted by \$0.64m spent refurbishing newly acquired blocks

#### **Rent Revenue per Property** (\$k)



This graph illustrates rent revenue per property under management during the year.

Given that most of our properties are occupied by single person households, the average rent we collect is lower than for other community housing providers. This in turn constrains our ability to cover costs, and hence is a KPI that we carefully manage.

The changes in this KPI over the last 5 years reflect:

- A 5% increase in 2019 due to the transfer to our management of 100 properties used to provide housing to single women and their dependent children this had a significant impact on average household sizes and hence rent revenue
- The indexation of statutory (Centrelink) benefits and wages, which in turn has increased average rent charges. The average rent for 2022 was particularly impacted by significant changes in Job Seeker statutory benefits in March 2021

#### **Repairs and Maintenance Expenditure** (\$m)



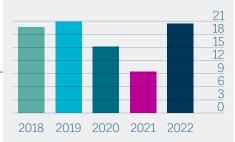
Expenditure on the maintenance of properties reflects a commitment to ensure that they are safe, secure and kept to an appropriate standard.

The general increase over time reflects a requirement to replace significant property components such as kitchens and bathrooms as they reach the end of their useful lives. The increase in 2021 also reflects approximately \$0.64m spent on the upgrade of newly acquired blocks of units.

The \$1.1m decrease between 2021 and 2022 also reflects:

- \$1.1m of capital works completed under a non-recurring stimulus program in 2021, funded by the NSW Government
- A minor reduction in planned lifecycle maintenance
- Increased cyclical and responsive maintenance costs because of wet weather and higher volumes of tenancy turnovers

Cash & Term Deposit Balances (\$m)

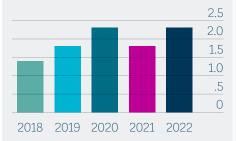


This graph illustrates the aggregate value of cash, cash equivalents and term deposit balances at the end of each financial year.

The cash balance (inclusive of term deposits) at 30 June 2022 amounted to \$20.4m, an increase of \$11m on the previous year's balance.

The higher than usual balance at June 2022 mostly reflected capital funding from the NSW Government for property acquisitions and funding received in advance for the Together Home Program. Approximately \$12.2m was spent within 3 months of 30 June 2022 for property acquisitions.

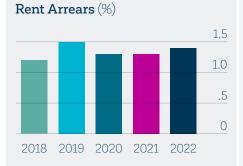
Vacancies and Voids (%)



This graph illustrates the number of rental days lost due to vacancies and voids as a percentage of the total available days.

In general terms, the increase over time reflects a higher proportion of transitional tenancies (which turnover more regularly). The results for 2020 and 2021 have also been negatively impacted by periods where tenants could not be allocated to newly acquired properties (e.g. due to upgrade work). COVID-19 lockdowns resulted in lower rates of tenancy turnovers in 2021 and hence a lower vacancy rate.

The relatively high rate in FY2022 reflects a higher level of tenancy movements now that COVID-19 has eased, as well as challenges sourcing maintenance contractors and materials. This KPI continues to remain an area of focus for the Women's Housing Company.



This graph illustrates the value of rent arrears at the reporting date as a percentage of the rent revenue charged to tenants over the preceding financial year.

The higher balance in 2019 reflected a high level of arrears for transitional tenancies that had recently been transferred to our management. This KPI improved for 2020 and 2021 as a result of focused attention and management.

Although the 2022 result of 1.4% is well within the industry benchmark of 2.5%, it is nonetheless higher than historic arrears and will be a key focus area for the Tenancy team in 2023.

Number of Tenancies Managed



This graph illustrates the total number of tenancies managed during the year, including tenancies that have concluded each year.

The steady increase in the number of tenancies managed each year reflects the growth in our properties and programs, and in particular:

- The higher proportion of transitional tenancies, being medium term tenancies that turn-over more regularly
- The transfer of 100 properties and associated tenancies to our management in 2019 that are used to provide housing to victims of Domestic and Family Violence
- The transfer of 151 properties and associated tenancies to our management in 2020 as part of the NSW Government's Social Housing Management Transfer Program



### Acknowledgements

A huge thank you to the many individuals, groups, and organisations that supported the work of the Women's Housing Company throughout the year. We're grateful for the many generous contributions to our work, including funders, pro bono partners, and donors.

AON Risk Services Australia	Fresh Living	NSW Department of	SLR Consulting Australia Pty Ltd	
APS Foundation	Flick	Communities and Justice	Social Ventures Australia	
Australasian Housing Institute	Flourish	NSW Justice Victims Services	Sony Music Publishing	
Assett Group Services	Holding Redlich	NSW Land and Housing	South Western Sydney Local Health District	
Attache	Homelessness NSW	Corporation		
BDO Australia	HousingIS	NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture	St Vincent de Paul Society	
Beaumont Consulting	H&R Cleaning	and Trauma Survivors	STOPline	
Belinda Knierim, Blur Projects	Iceni Group	NSW Women's Week	StrataSense	
Bitar M Construction	J B Glamorgan Pty Ltd	Older Women's Network	Strong Teams Consulting	
Bondi Beach Babes	Jenny Teh	O'Learys Electrical	Street Smart	
Brand Data	Jenny's Place	Oz Harvest	Surroundscape	
Brian Pender	JLL Australia	PCYC Liverpool	Swaab	
Bridge Housing	Kathleen York House	Phatt Duck	Sydney Gutter Cleaning	
Buoyancy	Knight Frank Australia	Phillips Builders	Sydney Community Foundation	
Business Network Solutions	La Luna Lifestyle	Phoenix Continuity	Thread Together	
City of Sydney	Launchpad Youth Community	Services Pty Ltd	Urbis	
Community Housing	Lenore Marrone	Phoenix Fire	UTS Business School	
Industry Association NSW	Lee Road Consulting	PowerHousing Australia	Warrina Domestic and Family	
CompliSpace	Link2Home	NSW Registrar for	Violence Specialist Services	
Credwell	Link Housing Community Housing		Well Done	
Deep Space	_ Liverpool City Council	Randwick Council	Wesley Mission	
Doric Property Inspections	Liverpool City Police	Re-Love	Women's Housing Company	
Dress for Success, Sydney	Local Area Command	Rentokill	contractors for repairs and maintenance	
ECSTRA Foundation	Liverpool Women's	Rescue U Plumbing	WLANSW	
ETFSure	Health Centre	Richard Lloyd Recruitment	Wednesw Women's and Girls	
Emocean Studios	Liverpool Catholic Club Quilters	Royal Botanic Gardens	Emergency Centre Women's Community Shelters	
Flourish	Lockey	Community Greening Team		
Gilchrist Connell	Jobs Australia	The Royal Botanic Gardens	Woollahra Council	
Good360	Mercy Foundation	SDM	WorkVentures	
Good Shepherd ANZ	Microsoft Australia	SGCH	YWCA	
Grant Thornton	MMJ Real Estate	Share the Dignity	Viqarunnisa Alumni Australia	
Grill'd - Broadway	Neami National	Shelter NSW		
Green Valley Domestic	Niki's Natural Wipes	Sisters of Mercy, North Sydney		
Violence Services	Nova for Women and Children	Skilled Health		



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