

HOUSING NSW

"We really love our new home. It's the first time we've lived in a brand new place. It's a really good place to bring up a young family and the neighbours are good. We're happy here and grateful to Family and Community Services for helping us out!"

MARK, HOUSING NSW TENANT, SYDNEY



Housing NSW

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S FOREWORD

Since the NSW State Election, the housing portfolio is now shared by two Ministers – the Hon. Pru Goward, Minister for Family and Community Services and the Hon. Greg Pearce, Minister for Finance and Services. I look forward to working with both Ministers to continue to provide the best possible standard of housing services to tenants across the state.

Our achievements in 2010–11 were significant and included assisting 332,280 people to live in public, community and Aboriginal housing under existing tenancies, as well as offering 14,438 new tenancies.

In addition, over the past 12 months we housed 5,309 people who were homeless or at risk of homelessness, as well as assisted more than 15,770 clients through projects funded under the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness.

One of our key targets is to reduce homelessness among Aboriginal people by one third by 2013. To achieve this, we have established 20 Homelessness Action Plan projects that provide housing and tenancy support for Aboriginal people, and we are increasing Aboriginal representation on Regional Homelessness Committees to ensure that services are tailored to meet the needs of Aboriginal people.

Another focus for the year has been our continued support of the growth of the community housing sector. During 2010–11, we transferred ownership of 3,076 public housing properties to 14 community housing providers.

During the year, I was delighted to see the official opening of Hope Hostel, an award winning state-of-the-art men's facility to address homelessness, managed by Parramatta Mission. The development incorporates crisis accommodation with 24-hour care, as well as long-term tenure apartments that support the transition to independent living.

It was also exciting to see the completion of the first two stages of one of our major community redevelopments – the Bonnyrigg Living Communities project. This project is the first social housing public-private partnership in Australia and has delivered 77 social housing properties and offered 133 houses for sale to the private market. Over the next 12 years, the Bonnyrigg public housing area will be redeveloped to include 2,332 homes consisting of a mix of private and social housing. In recognition of our achievement, this project received the Government Leadership award at the prestigious Urban Design Institute of Australia Awards for Excellence.

Housing Pathways has been operational for more than a year and has simplified applying for social housing with Housing NSW, the Aboriginal Housing Office and 26 community housing providers by introducing one form, one process and one housing register. This has been a very successful, collaborative initiative, making it easier and fairer to apply for housing assistance across NSW.

The year 2010–11 has been a busy and productive year for our staff and it is with pride that I reflect on our collective accomplishments. I wish to express my sincere thanks to all Housing NSW staff for their continued dedication and commitment to helping some of the most vulnerable people in our society.



Mike Allen

Chief Executive
Housing NSW

Overview

WHO WE ARE

Housing NSW operates under the *Housing Act 2001* to manage the NSW Government's housing portfolio and develop broader housing strategies.

We aim to build a stronger community by providing housing solutions for people in need.

We are working towards:

- ensuring that homeless people have access to housing and are able to sustain a tenancy
- providing appropriate and sustainable social housing
- integrating social housing in communities
- increasing access to affordable housing
- delivering quality customer service
- implementing sustainable business practices.

WHAT WE DO

We work with government departments, stakeholders and non-government organisations to address homelessness in NSW. We manage the NSW public housing portfolio, support community housing and crisis accommodation and manage Aboriginal public housing for the Aboriginal Housing Office. We play a key role in developing policy and supporting relationships to increase access to affordable housing across NSW, as well as providing a range of services to help people move into the private rental market and home ownership. We also provide policy advice to government and manage the *Housing Act 2001* and associated legislation.

OUR CLIENTS

People who live in social housing provided through public, community and Aboriginal housing, represent the majority of our clients. Strong population growth in some areas, particularly in the Sydney metropolitan and coastal areas, has contributed to increased demand for housing assistance and other support services. We support a growing number of clients with complex needs including older people, people with a disability, people with mental health issues and Aboriginal people.

"We're transforming estates by upgrading properties, running tenant employment programs, capacity-building and empowering local people to take responsibility for their own communities. We're making these areas safer and people feel much happier about where they live!"

– John, Housing NSW Director Resource Planning,
Greater Western Sydney Region

Our highlights

In 2010–11, we:

- assisted more than 332,280 people to live in public, community and Aboriginal housing
- assisted 36,170 people with rental assistance in the private sector and provided 7,763 homeless people with temporary accommodation
- assisted more than 15,770 clients through projects funded under the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness
- launched 10 Regional Homelessness Action Plans as part of a four-year, \$284 million Commonwealth and state funding commitment to provide local, tailored initiatives to combat homelessness in NSW
- delivered 4,483 homes under the Nation Building Economic Stimulus Plan (NBESP)
- began major redevelopment projects in Riverwood, Tamworth and Windale to revitalise public housing areas, reduce concentration of public housing estates, as well as increase the supply of affordable housing
- invested more than \$13.9 million under the Building Stronger Communities Program to improve the built environment and develop supportive communities for social housing tenants in seven major locations
- continued affordable housing initiatives including the Affordable Housing Innovations Fund and the Social Housing Growth Fund
- designated more than 5,000 public housing properties as senior communities under the New Directions for Older Persons Strategy, and spent more than \$60 million on modifying and upgrading public housing properties to cater for older people
- launched the 2010–13 Aboriginal Employment Strategy to address targets set by the Council of Australian Governments to halve the gap in employment outcomes between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people within 10 years, as well as improve service delivery to Housing NSW clients
- received a number of awards including the 2010 Australian Crime and Violence Prevention Award, three awards from the Urban Development Institute of Australia and two awards from the Housing Industry Association
- The Registrar of Community Housing assessed 298 registrations for community housing assistance and established the regulatory system with 236 registered and compliant community housing providers.

36,170

people assisted with rental assistance in the private sector and 7,763 homeless people provided with temporary accommodation

Our performance

PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Resources				
Total number of employees	2,565	2,604	2,575	2,485
Customers				
Number of tenancies (at 30 June 2011)				
Public housing	119,033	117,288	114,469	113,023
Community housing	16,325	16,639	18,596	24,298
Aboriginal Housing Office	4,122	4,101	4,141	4,267
Total tenancies managed by Housing NSW	139,480	138,028	137,206	141,588
Number of new tenancies				
Public housing	7,895	6,311	6,012	6,111
Community housing	3,437	3,339	4,728	7,860 [^]
Aboriginal Housing Office	400	303	362	467
Approved applicants on the Housing NSW register	43,134	39,484	43,335	46,792
Private rental assistance (includes Rentstart and Special Assistance Subsidy) – number of households	29,872	34,187	37,174	38,930
Assets				
Properties under management				
Public housing	125,171	124,086	121,662	120,380 [#]
Community housing	15,397	16,141	18,910	24,584
Crisis accommodation	1,502	1,511	1,538	1,498
Aboriginal Housing Office	4,248	4,256	4,296	4,525
Total homes under management	146,318	145,994	146,406	150,987
Number of public and community housing properties completed in the year	995	1,224	1,953	5,165
Number of affordable housing properties completed in the year		184	506	353
People assisted in social housing				
Public housing	254,400	245,800	240,800	232,600
Aboriginal housing	13,400	13,000	13,200	13,800
Crisis accommodation	39,700	40,800	41,000	37,200
Community housing	38,700	41,800	44,500	48,680
Total	346,200	341,400	339,500	332,280
Finances				
Net rental income and tenancy charges (\$M)	661 [*]	688	694	699
Government grants (\$M)	494	890	1,923	941
Maintenance and upgrading expenditure (\$M)	385	420	565	476
Property asset value (\$M)	28,014	27,937	31,929	30,926

[^] The significant growth in new tenancies for community housing is due to the increase in Nation Building Economic Stimulus Plan properties under management during 2010-11.

[#] There has been no reduction in the total number of social housing properties under management. Because of the commitment to grow community housing, 3,076 properties were transferred from public housing to community housing providers in 2010-11.

^{*} Includes other tenant charges.

Keeping people connected

For older tenants living alone, Housing NSW and the Australian Red Cross provide a reassuring service which has the potential to save lives.

Through Tenant Connect, Red Cross volunteers make a daily phone call to older tenants who may not have regular contact with friends or family, to check on their safety and wellbeing.

Currently more than 950 older tenants receive this free service. Since its launch in 2008, there have been 28 instances where the service found that a client required emergency assistance.

Participating tenants receive a daily phone call from a Red Cross volunteer at an agreed time, keeping in touch and ensuring the wellbeing of older tenants.

Maureen, who is 82 years old, relishes regular contact with the volunteers.

"I don't know what I'd do without them," she said.

"One morning I had a fall and hurt myself. No one in the building could hear me calling for help. Not long after, a Red Cross volunteer called and rang an ambulance to come and assist me.

"I hate to think what would've happened if they didn't call. I'm so thankful for their help."

Tenants aged 70 and over or Aboriginal tenants aged 45 and over who live alone in public, community or Aboriginal housing can register with the Red Cross on 1800 827 677 to receive this free service.

"I hate to think what would've happened if they didn't call. I'm so thankful for their help!"



Addressing homelessness

HOMELESS PEOPLE HAVE ACCESS TO HOUSING AND ARE ABLE TO SUSTAIN A TENANCY

People who are homeless or in and out of homelessness may be living on the street or in parks, in short-term crisis accommodation, staying with friends and relatives on a temporary basis, or living in boarding houses or in caravan parks. The causes of homelessness are complex and varied, requiring a well coordinated response across all levels of government to support the most vulnerable in our community.

Housing NSW leads, coordinates and implements a wide range of projects across government to prevent and reduce homelessness. Our aim is to address the causes and identify ways to improve the response to homelessness in partnership with other government departments and non-government organisations.

A key policy to reduce homelessness is the NSW Homelessness Action Plan (HAP) 2009–14, which is a prevention and early intervention approach to tackle homelessness. It aims to stop people becoming homeless, break the cycle of homelessness and improve and expand the service and support system. The focus of this approach is to provide long-term accommodation and support rather than frequent short-term crisis intervention.

Around 40 of the 100 HAP projects are funded under the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness 2009–13, which outlines the state and Commonwealth governments' commitment to address homelessness.

In 2010–11, we housed 5,309 people who were homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Key performance indicators

	TARGET	ACTUAL
Number of homeless people housed	5,000	5,309
NBESP properties allocated for homeless people	40%	48.8%

DELIVERING THE NSW HOMELESSNESS ACTION PLAN

We are responsible for implementing 16 initiatives under the whole-of-government NSW HAP. These include the Newcastle Assertive Outreach Service, which provides outreach services including health and medical care that is linked to long-term housing for rough sleepers in Newcastle. This project has successfully reduced the number of clients presenting at hospitals and health facilities as well as improving their access to legal services.

The Youth Hub Project, based in south western Sydney, works with young people who are leaving correctional facilities. It provides an early intervention response to young people who are at risk of homelessness and supports their move to long-term accommodation. The project also successfully links clients to employment and training opportunities, assists young people to achieve independent living and helps them successfully re-establish themselves in the community.

Community Connections, located in south eastern NSW, provides coordinated outreach, accommodation and support to a range of homeless people with complex needs including men, young people, and women and children escaping domestic violence. This program aims to provide assistance to help them transition to long-term accommodation.

All projects funded under the HAP require local partnerships to be created to ensure that clients are supported in their tenancies.

An evaluation of the HAP in 2011–12 will inform planning for National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness projects once Commonwealth funding arrangements end in June 2013.

Developed in consultation with partner agencies and communities and overseen by individual Regional Homelessness Committees, Regional Homelessness Action Plans were developed in 10 areas across the state to ensure a tailored, effective, local-level community response to homelessness from 2010–14.

FORGING PARTNERSHIPS TO COMBAT HOMELESSNESS

In addition to HAP partnerships, we also work with a range of other organisations to deliver services to homeless people. The Housing and Accommodation Support Initiative is an innovative partnership between us, NSW Health and the non-government sector to support people who are receiving clinical and psychosocial rehabilitation services. Through this initiative, we provide long-term housing and tenancy management support to clients who have a high risk of homelessness.

REDUCING ABORIGINAL HOMELESSNESS

To meet a key target to reduce homelessness among Aboriginal people by one third by 2013, we have established around 20 HAP projects to focus on providing housing and tenancy support for Aboriginal people. We have also developed partnerships that provide specific support for Aboriginal people to sustain tenancies. Work is also underway to increase Aboriginal representation on Regional Homelessness Committees to ensure that service delivery is tailored to the needs of Aboriginal people.

Our Commitment to Improving Service Delivery to Aboriginal People is a five-year plan which aims to ensure that our products and services are responsive to the needs of Aboriginal households. The first action under the commitment concentrates efforts on prevention and early intervention approaches to help Aboriginal people sustain tenancies.

5,309

people were housed who were homeless or at risk of homelessness

Addressing homelessness

CONTINUED

HOUSING ASSISTANCE INITIATIVES

People who meet the social housing eligibility criteria and have an urgent, long-term need for accommodation that is unmet through the private rental market, are given priority housing status on the NSW Housing Register.

In 2010–11, 3,997 applicants were approved for priority housing and 3,905 applicants with priority needs were housed in properties managed by us.

People not eligible for social housing but experiencing short-term housing crisis may qualify for emergency temporary accommodation for up to three months while longer-term housing options are sought. This assistance enables people to access temporary housing while they arrange alternative medium to long-term housing options.

Those eligible for social housing, who do not have a safe place to stay, may qualify for temporary accommodation assistance for up to four weeks in low-cost hotels, motels and caravan parks. Temporary accommodation is provided to people when assistance to establish a private rental tenancy is not possible.

This assistance is provided by local Housing NSW offices, as well as through an after hours phone service through our Housing Contact Centre. Overall, we provided 49,741 separate instances of temporary accommodation assistance in 2010–11, an increase of 12 percent from the previous year.

Through the After Hours Temporary Accommodation Service, where clients are assessed over the phone, 24,389 telephone calls were received (an increase of 7.3 percent over the previous year), and accommodation was provided for 7,763 homeless clients.

Crisis accommodation assistance provides overnight or short-term accommodation in a Housing NSW-owned property for homeless people or those moving from crisis housing to independent living. On 30 June 2011, we operated 1,498 crisis accommodation properties, which are also available to support clients of non-government, Specialist Homelessness Services Program-funded organisations.

In 2010–11, we approved 24 additional units for priority groups at an estimated cost of \$4.8 million. Around \$9.6 million in funding was allocated to meet the ongoing costs of providing crisis accommodation services, such as repairs and maintenance, leasing costs, insurance and council rates.

Offered in 16 locations across NSW, the Private Rental Brokerage Service helps clients with complex needs to access and sustain private rental housing. We also provide tenancy facilitation where practical assistance is given to help clients find and apply for housing in the private rental market, as well as offering advice about their rights and responsibilities as tenants. The service acts as an advocate with landlords and estate agents and, in some cases, provides a tenancy guarantee of up to \$1,000 to help clients enter the private market.

For properties built under the NBESP, we set a target of 40 percent of properties to be allocated to homeless people as a priority. At 30 June 2011, 1,733 homeless people or 48.8 percent of all allocations were made for these properties, exceeding statewide targets.

24

additional units approved for priority groups at an estimated cost of \$4.8 million

Providing appropriate and sustainable social housing

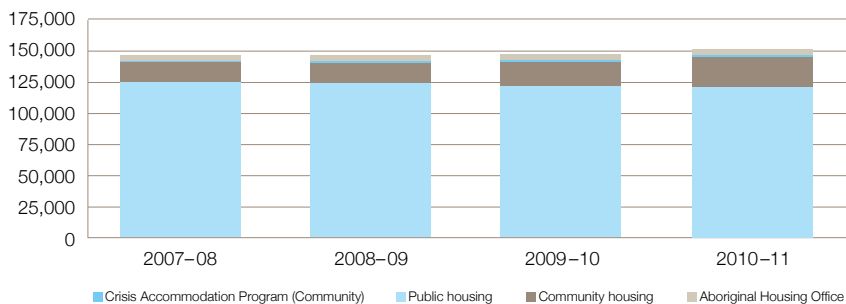
Providing appropriate and sustainable housing means that the social housing system will be well positioned to meet future demand. We delivered in excess of 5,000 new properties this year, improved the quality and standard of existing social housing through maintenance and upgrades and helped build the community housing sector's capacity to deliver more affordable and social housing.

We are continuing to deliver on objectives under the National Affordable Housing Agreement, a five-year, \$1.9 billion funding package to provide housing assistance programs including new housing construction, social housing maintenance and a range of initiatives to increase the supply of affordable housing.

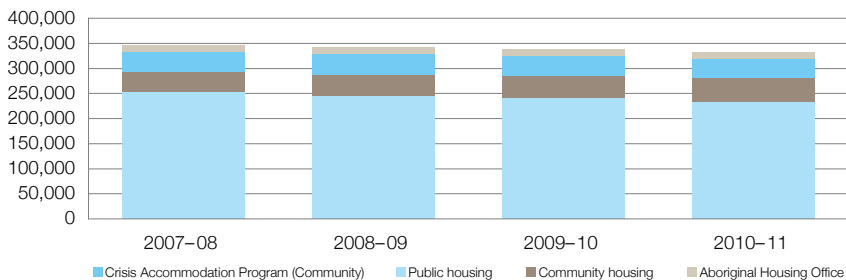
Key performance indicators

	TARGET	ACTUAL
Number of property management transfers to community housing providers	1,500	3,076
NBESP average home cost	\$300,000	\$298,500

Total number of properties managed by social housing providers as at 30 June 2011



People assisted in social housing



MANAGING THE HOUSING PORTFOLIO

In 2010-11, we delivered 682 new homes under the annual new supply program. The majority of these comprised one and two bedroom homes meeting the current social housing demand for smaller properties.

One example of the type of projects delivered under the annual new supply program are the six new developments completed during 2010-11 in Abbotsford and Concord

in the Sydney metropolitan area. Consisting of 90 units, these properties are specifically designed to cater for older people and formed part of the New Direction in Affordable Housing for the Inner West Strategy.

Built at a cost of \$29 million, the developments consist of a mix of one and two bedroom units and feature generous living areas, modern finishes, as well as sustainable features such as photovoltaic panels, solar hot water units and rainwater tanks.

Providing appropriate and sustainable social housing

CONTINUED

The management of these properties has been handed over to community housing providers Community Housing Limited and St George Community Housing and the properties are an outstanding example of how social housing properties can achieve environmental design objectives and address the challenges inherent in our ageing population.

The Strategic Asset Management Plan sets the future direction for asset management activities and facilitates joint planning across the social housing sector. The plan sets out how to maximise effective services by integrating policy priorities with asset planning and governance, as well as engaging stakeholders across the social housing sector.

As part of the growth strategy for the community housing sector, Housing NSW has implemented a Property Transfer Program where the management of public housing properties is transferred to community housing providers. Through the Property Transfer Program, the management of 1,058 properties was transferred to community housing providers in 2010–11. Housing NSW and providers worked closely to ensure a smooth transition for tenants.

MAINTENANCE

Shifting focus from a responsive to a planned maintenance program has seen a significant improvement in timeliness to urgent and priority maintenance.

From 2009–10 to 2010–11, maintenance contractors increased compliance for urgent maintenance from 88.4 percent to 97.2 percent and for priority maintenance from 74.3 percent to 93 percent compliance. A review of maintenance contracts and performance has begun, with new contracts to be in place in 2013.

The Disability Modification Program is helping people to live safely and independently in their homes. During 2010–11, we spent \$7.3 million to upgrade 1,743 properties, improving tenants' quality of life and providing the option to stay in their existing home rather than living in a nursing home or care institution.

We established the Fire Safety Program to ensure that all properties continue to meet fire safety standards. In 2010–11, \$17.5 million were spent upgrading 4,755 properties to ensure that safety requirements are met.

DELIVERING THE NATION BUILDING ECONOMIC STIMULUS PLAN

The NBESP was introduced by the Commonwealth Government to support economic growth and generate employment at the height of the global financial crisis. The aim is to significantly increase the supply of social housing through the construction of new properties and the upgrading of existing stock.

Under the NBESP, we completed 5,412 homes by 30 June 2011, with 4,483 delivered in 2010–11, at an average cost per home of approximately \$298,500.

As a provider of new homes to the community housing sector, we were eligible for the Input Tax Credit (GST credits) entitlement for construction costs on properties that have been completed and handed over to a community housing provider. As a result, we have been able to reinvest the claims to fund and deliver an additional 354 NBESP dwellings, including 227 which have been completed in 2010–11.

To date, the \$30 million NBESP Bedsit Program has converted 315 outdated bedsits into more appropriate one bedroom accommodation.

GROWING THE COMMUNITY HOUSING SECTOR

An effective social housing system requires a strong, diverse and well-regulated community housing sector.

In April 2011 we transferred ownership of 3,076 public housing properties to 14 community housing providers across NSW. Increasing the sector's level of property ownership is a key strategy to help grow the stock of social housing. As non-government organisations, community housing providers are able to leverage these assets to access funding not available to government, and as charities, they are also entitled to a range of tax exemptions when purchasing new properties.

In 2010–11, building works valued at \$71.9 million began to deliver 280 new community housing dwellings in high demand areas. Community housing providers also received \$472,000 to continue 5,708 leases and lease an additional 41 properties to allocate to eligible social housing tenants.

We are introducing a new performance reporting framework for community housing providers. This framework takes into account the growth of the sector and reflects the separation of our role as contract manager from the Community Housing Registrar's role as regulator.

This year, the Registrar's focus has been on engaging with community housing stakeholders and establishing the regulatory system under the *Housing Act 2001*, as well as implementing the Provider Assessment and Registration System under a service agreement with the Aboriginal Housing Office.

The *Housing Act* provided a two-year transitional period to assess community housing organisations receiving assistance from us for registration. At the end of the transitional period on 1 May 2011, the Registrar for Community Housing conducted 411 assessments, with 298 assessments completed in 2010–11. The regulatory system is now fully established, with a regulated community housing sector of 236 providers.

GROWING ABORIGINAL HOUSING

Under the Commonwealth-funded Remote Indigenous National Partnership, which aims to improve housing in remote Aboriginal communities, Housing NSW and the Aboriginal Housing Office delivered 41 new houses in remote locations including Bourke, Lightning Ridge, Walgett and Coonamble and refurbished 241 properties owned by Aboriginal community housing providers. Despite flooding and wet weather causing a six-week delay, NSW exceeded its targets, building an extra five houses and refurbishing an extra 13 properties.

The partnership also purchased 18 properties in regional NSW to provide accommodation for Aboriginal people who need to relocate to pursue training, education or employment opportunities.

Providing appropriate and sustainable social housing

CONTINUED

Capital supply 2010–11

CAPITAL WORKS EXPENDITURE (\$)	TOTAL 2010–11		
	COMMUNITY HOUSING (\$M)	PUBLIC HOUSING ¹ (\$M)	TOTAL (\$M)
Acquisitions	10.72	81.69	92.41
Construction	0.01	325.69	325.70
Redevelopment	61.13	442.92	504.05
Conversion	0.06	3.39	3.45
Total	71.92	853.69	925.61

DWELLING COMMENCEMENTS (UNITS)	CAP*	CHAP**	PUBLIC HOUSING ²	TOTAL
Acquisitions	7	27	234	268
Construction	-	-	160	160
Redevelopment	-	246	442	688
Conversion	-	-	83	83
Total	7	273	919	1,199

DWELLING COMPLETIONS (UNITS)	CAP*	CHAP**	PUBLIC HOUSING ³	TOTAL
Acquisitions	11	48	205	264
Construction	-	-	1,207	1,207
Redevelopment	12	135	3,543	3,690
Conversion	1	-	3	4
Total	24	183	4,958	5,165

DWELLINGS HEADLEASED	CAP*	CHAP**	PUBLIC HOUSING ⁴	TOTAL ⁴
Short and long-term				
Net new leases	-	41	(119)	(78)
Total dwellings leased	236	5,786	3,263	9,285

1 Public housing expenditure includes Nation Building Economic Stimulus Plan (NBESP), strategic projects expenditure of \$14.1 million and project development expenditure of \$14.5 million.

2 Public housing commencements include strategic projects, 78 units and NBESP stage 2, 135 units.

3 Public housing completions include strategic projects, 4 units, Stage 1 NBESP, 16 units and Stage 2 NBESP, 4,467 units.

4 The decline in headleasing supply numbers is due to the strong rental market. The higher demand than supply provided fewer opportunities for Housing NSW to increase headleases or replace losses in existing leases.

* Crisis Accommodation Program

** Community Housing Assistance Program

Integrating social housing into communities

Housing NSW is about more than just bricks and mortar. We also aim to provide an integrated approach to improving the social, economic and physical landscape of social housing communities.

Our strategy is to increase private ownership and availability of private rental properties in concentrated public housing areas to promote a broader residential mix, stimulating greater social and economic opportunities. This approach also complements policy initiatives to increase the supply of affordable housing by offering former public housing properties for sale to the market.

We invest in a range of programs to help increase tenants' social and economic participation and in infrastructure projects to improve the physical environment in social housing areas.

REDUCING CONCENTRATIONS OF DISADVANTAGE

Tenure diversification is part of a number of strategies to reduce the level of disadvantage that can occur in public housing estates.

These strategies may be linked to areawide renewal and infrastructure development and will address a range of policy objectives, such as increased supply of social and affordable housing.

The aims of these strategies are to:

- improve social and economic participation
- improve the quality of assets
- build more socially mixed communities.

This may range from small-scale local projects to large-scale investments in estate redevelopment and urban renewal.

We received \$53 million in funding under the Commonwealth Government's Housing Affordability Fund to undertake urban renewal work in Rosemeadow, Bolton Point, Claymore, Chester Hill, Glebe, Prospect, Redfern/Waterloo, Seven Hills, South Randwick, Villawood East and Wentworthville. The funding will contribute to social housing area renewal including redevelopment, estate deconcentration and master planning projects. Properties will be offered for sale to eligible purchasers at discounted prices, helping to create a better mix of public, community and private housing types.

To create more mixed income communities and affordable housing, we are also working with the private sector on urban renewal. Through public-private partnerships, we are delivering new assets and associated services, capturing the benefit of private sector financing to create communities with 70 percent private and 30 percent social housing. These projects include the following:

Airds/Bradbury

The Airds/Bradbury public housing area comprises around 1,200 properties in Airds and 250 in Bradbury. Over the next 15 to 20 years, this project will revitalise the area by improving homes, public spaces and local services as well as providing new opportunities for residents.

In conjunction with Landcom, a new master plan for the Airds/Bradbury area has been finalised which will see around 600 homes completed for social housing residents and around 1,400 properties for private ownership.

One Minto

One Minto is about building a strong new community through a mix of new private and public housing and open spaces. Together with Landcom, we have built 125 private homes and 20 seniors' units, and sold around 192 newly-created lots. Around \$10 million will be spent on community facilities completely rejuvenating the area.

Upon completion of the project, of the total 1,150 homes in One Minto, 350 homes or 30 percent will be public housing homes.

Integrating social housing into communities

CONTINUED

Bonnyrigg

Under Australia's first social housing private-public partnership, the first two stages of the Bonnyrigg Living Communities Project have been completed, providing 77 social housing homes and 133 private houses for sale. This 12-year project will see the area transformed to comprise 1,633 private homes and 699 social housing properties.

Other projects

Other projects underway to reduce concentration of public housing and regenerate communities include:

- the Windale Transformation Strategy, which will approach the market to generate innovative ideas to reuse and redevelop a number of ageing townhouse complexes
- the Coledale Revitalisation Strategy, which will refurbish social housing properties and offer 150 homes for sale to low-income owner-occupiers, including eligible Housing NSW tenants
- the Orange Regeneration Partnership Plan, which will introduce a broader mix of tenancies through the sale of 249 public housing properties to owner-occupiers.

In 2010–11, the \$60.2 million Inner West Strategy to boost supply of social housing in Sydney neared completion, with close to 200 newly-built homes handed over to community housing providers. One of the strategy's highlights this year was the completion of the \$29.5 million Lilyfield social housing project. This 88-unit architecturally-designed development is the first social housing project in Australia to receive a coveted 5-Star-Green Star rating for environmental design excellence.

Revenue for the Inner West Strategy has been met from the sale of high-value Housing NSW properties in Sydney's Millers Point. Additional properties are being sold in Millers Point to help fund the \$170 million Cowper Street Glebe Redevelopment Project, which has the potential to deliver up to 486 private, affordable and social housing properties. Construction of the final 27 Inner West Strategy properties in Camperdown is expected by early 2012.

REGENERATING COMMUNITIES

Over the past four years, the \$66 million Building Stronger Communities initiative has tackled the physical, social and economic aspects of community disadvantage in 22 social housing estates across NSW. Projects include redesigning community parks, housing upgrades, sporting programs for young people, community arts to build pride and identity, and a number of training courses. In each location, community hubs were established or expanded and community advisory groups created to help implement the initiative.

An evaluation is being conducted by City Futures, University of NSW. The final evaluation report will be completed by the end of 2011, with outcomes to inform future estate renewal activity.

By improving educational, training and employment opportunities for tenants, we encourage the social and economic participation needed to create strong, vital communities. Through the Building Stronger Communities program, 718 social housing residents benefited from training, traineeships or apprenticeships, employment opportunities and support to start their own businesses.

Across NSW, 209 tenants were also provided with skills, training and employment through a number of maintenance-based initiatives. This included the Maintenance Reform Program Social Obligations and the Handypersons Program, which is a fast and efficient minor repair service available to social housing residents which also provides employment opportunities for skilled social housing tenants.

In Greater Western Sydney, young social housing residents are employed as part of the Rapid Graffiti Removal Project, managed by Boystown and funded by Housing NSW. Ten participants are recruited over 12 months to work with a program supervisor employed by Boystown to remove graffiti from our properties in the Mt Druitt area. Participants are strongly supported by Boystown staff through case management assistance and pre-employment training group workshops.

This program has significantly reduced graffiti on public housing properties around Mt Druitt and has improved the aesthetic appearance of the area. Elderly residents have also indicated that they feel safer seeing the graffiti team working in their suburb.

Our Youth Scholarship Program assisted 200 young people living in social housing to complete their Higher School Certificate or equivalent by providing a one-off grant of \$2,000 for education related items such as tutoring, books and computers. The program is delivered in partnership with the Department of Education and Communities as well as local schools.

INCREASING SOCIAL INCLUSION

Ensuring that tenants play an active and productive part in their community is a priority for us. To help achieve this, we provide \$800,000 in annual funding for the Housing Communities Program to enhance social cohesion and community wellbeing in 10 high need social housing locations. The program funds community development workers in local councils or non-government organisations to work with residents and local stakeholder groups to deliver community engagement and development projects.

To ensure that tenants have the opportunity to provide feedback about our policies and services, we convene the Social Housing Tenants Advisory Committee, comprising 12 tenants from public, community and Aboriginal housing who meet quarterly.

Operated by non-government organisations in nine locations across the state with a \$1.5 million annual budget, the Tenant Participation Resource Services Program delivers information, advocacy and referral services to social

housing residents and applicants and supports and promotes tenant participation in their communities. These services also build tenant capacity, foster engagement in housing processes and provide feedback to us about tenant needs.

We also fund a range of local community development programs, reflecting different local needs and priorities including:

- specialist community development Client Service Officer positions
- neighbourhood centres, community technology centres and community gardens
- place-based and partnership projects in western Sydney estates
- concierge services in selected high-rise properties to improve security and create opportunities for tenant training and employment
- purpose-built accommodation with onsite support services for homeless people and people on low incomes in need of affordable housing in the inner city.

718

social housing residents benefited from training, traineeships or apprenticeships, employment opportunities and support to start their own businesses across seven Building Stronger Communities locations

Increasing access to affordable housing

Affordable housing must be appropriate for the needs of low-to-moderate income households, priced so that people are able to meet housing costs and other basic needs such as food, clothing, transport, medical care and education.

We continue to work closely with the private sector and community housing providers to develop innovative models to increase the supply of affordable housing. We provide services to improve access to affordable home ownership, as well as offering advice, brokerage and products that assist people on lower incomes to rent in the private market.

In 2010–11, we delivered 353 additional affordable housing homes through the National Rental Affordability Scheme and the Social Housing Growth Fund.

Affordable housing projects in 2010–11 included:

- Boarding House Financial Assistance Program expanded
- Housing Affordability Fund projects awarded \$53 million
- existing affordable housing initiatives continued including the Affordable Housing Innovations Fund and the Social Housing Growth Fund.

INCREASING THE SUPPLY OF AFFORDABLE RENTAL HOUSING

The Commonwealth's National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS) aims to address the shortage of affordable rental housing by offering financial incentives to the private and community housing sectors to build rental homes for low and moderate-income households with rents set at least 20 percent below market rates. Since the beginning of the program, 977 homes in NSW have been completed under the NRAS program. NSW committed approximately \$85 million over 10 years to deliver 2,080 new units under the first two funding rounds. For the two further funding rounds offered by the Commonwealth Government during 2010–11, NSW has set aside in excess of \$200 million for the delivery of 5,000 new homes to be completed from 2011–12 to 2015–16.

Under the Social Housing Growth Fund, a state and Commonwealth partnership to increase the supply of social and affordable housing, we partnered with community housing providers to deliver 537 new homes since the program began. Working with the community housing sector has increased access to project funds, with providers able to leverage around 30 percent of project costs in the form of debt and equity, enabling the construction of an additional 241 homes. One of a number of key criteria to be met under the program was that projects support people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness to secure long-term accommodation. To date, approximately 38 percent of all completed

homes have been tenanted by people who were homeless or at risk of homelessness.

During 2010–11, we continued to provide a range of services to community housing providers, private sector developers and local government to assist them in delivering affordable housing projects and programs. These services include providing advice about the opportunities for securing funding, as well as information on planning incentives available to assist in the delivery of affordable housing projects.

Our Local Government Housing Kit helps councils understand housing needs and issues in their area and to develop responses to these local housing needs. During the year, we updated the kit based on feedback to improve its effectiveness and ensure its continued relevance for councils. We also expanded the Boarding House Financial Assistance Program to attract developer applications for new boarding houses. As a result, seven applications have been approved to deliver 133 new rooms in boarding house developments.

Under the State Environmental Planning Policy (Affordable Rental Housing 2009), we are able to deliver social housing developments quicker to increase the availability of properties for low-income earners. Following the Department of Planning and Infrastructure's review of the policy in 2010–11, we will work closely with the department to ensure that we implement the necessary amendments.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING INITIATIVES

In 2010–11, we continued work on a number of projects funded under the Commonwealth's \$53 million Housing Affordability Fund. These projects involve selling former public housing properties and vacant land to low-to-moderate income home buyers. As well as increasing the supply of affordable housing, these projects will support public housing estate deconcentration and establish more diverse communities. From 2011–12 to 2019–20, 750 properties will be made available to the affordable housing market.

We are also working with the private sector on urban renewal projects in Airds/Bradbury, Bonnyrigg and Minto to create more mixed income communities and increase affordable housing opportunities for first home buyers and low-income earners. With Landcom we have built 125 private homes, 20 seniors' units and sold 192 new lots in Minto and, as part of the Bonnyrigg Living Communities Project, built 77 social housing properties and 133 private homes for sale.

ACCESSING ASSISTANCE TO RENT IN THE PRIVATE RENTAL MARKET

Housing Pathways has changed the way people apply for social housing, with one common application form, one process and one housing register.

The introduction of Housing Pathways has facilitated a collaborative partnership between us, the Aboriginal Housing Office and 26 participating community housing providers to deliver appropriate assistance to meet our clients' needs.

We provide practical assistance to help people search and apply for housing in the private rental market. This helps by reducing the pressure on the social housing system by providing financial assistance to people who can afford to rent in the private sector.

We recognise that establishing a tenancy in the private rental market can be difficult and may have high set-up costs. The Rentstart scheme provides a range of financial assistance for eligible clients to enable them to enter or stay in the private rental market. The level and type of assistance provided is based on the client's individual circumstances and needs.

Private rental subsidies help eligible clients with a disability and people living with HIV/

AIDS. Women and those with children escaping domestic or family violence may be eligible for short-to-medium-term support through the Start Safely private rental subsidy scheme. Start Safely aims to:

- reduce the number of women and children who are forced into homelessness due to domestic and family violence
- reduce the number of women who return to dangerous home environments from crisis accommodation
- reduce time spent in temporary accommodation, which is often inappropriate for women and children escaping violence
- reduce time in crisis accommodation by assisting transition into safe, secure accommodation
- provide a long-term housing option in the private rental market with short-to-medium-term government assistance.

The subsidy is linked to a support program that includes other private rental assistance products and domestic violence services. During the year, 291 clients were approved for Start Safely assistance.

Rentstart – types and numbers of assistance provided

	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11
Bond	19,797	20,804	19,289
Advance rent	11,592	13,776	13,318
Rental arrears	1,579	2,012	1,759
Temporary accommodation (assistance)	36,751	44,415	49,741
Total number of Rentstart assistances	69,579	81,019	84,107

Delivering quality customer service

Improving how services are delivered to clients is a priority, requiring skilled staff to explain and offer services that are tailored to customer needs. To deliver a quality customer service, we seek to continually improve access for clients applying for public, Aboriginal and community housing, by streamlining processes and offering a variety of ways for clients to access services, including the internet, telephone and face-to-face.

IMPROVING ACCESS TO HOUSING ASSISTANCE AND SERVICES

After its first full year of operation, Housing Pathways created a single entry point for people applying for social housing with us, the Aboriginal Housing Office and 26 community housing providers across NSW. Public and community housing applicants now complete a single form to apply for properties managed by us, the Aboriginal Housing Office and 26 participating community housing providers. One statewide waiting list has been created, simplifying the process for applying for housing assistance across NSW.

This new approach is being closely monitored in partnership with community housing and non-government sectors involved in the Housing Pathways Advisory Council.

We also implemented actions in the Disability Action Plan (2009–13) and the Multicultural Framework (2009–14) to better respond to the needs of our tenants.

Our Housing Contact Centre is a one-stop-shop for tenants,

applicants and the general public to access our services. It is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, receiving and making an average of 3,000 calls per day and over one million calls annually.

To improve services to our clients, our Housing Contact Centre has introduced a new monitoring program to ensure that a high level of service is provided to clients and has also implemented state-of-the-art forecasting and staff scheduling systems to anticipate peak call periods and reduce client waiting times.

In 2010–11, the Rentstart scheme continued to expand, with 70 self-service kiosks installed across the state, and a further 20 planned over the next two years. The kiosks provide clients with a convenient way of accessing our bond and advance rent service, providing access to telephones, faxes and other facilities.

We have continued to work with Businesslink to deliver the Service Delivery Solutions Project to develop a new direction for the delivery of our products and services. In 2010–11, new telephony standards were introduced to improve the quality of telephone services at local offices. As a result, most of our offices are now answering client calls, on average, in less than one minute.

Key performance indicators

	TARGET	ACTUAL
Urgent maintenance (4-hour response) repairs fixed in the first visit	100%	97.2%
Priority maintenance (24-hour response) repairs fixed in the first visit	100%	93%

IMPROVING ABORIGINAL PEOPLES' ACCESS TO HOUSING

Under the NBESP allocation targets, community housing providers are required to make 10 percent of new properties available for Aboriginal clients. As a result, in 2010–11, 439 homes constructed under the NBESP were allocated to Aboriginal households, helping to house around 652 clients.

Community housing providers continued to develop partnerships with Aboriginal housing providers to manage properties and tenancies on a fee-for-service basis.

On 30 June 2011, a total of 6,235 Aboriginal people were living in 1,928 community housing dwellings, an increase of 27.7 percent on the same time last year.

The Remote Indigenous Housing National Partnership, managed by us and the Aboriginal Housing Office, also provides funding for housing for Aboriginal people in remote communities to address overcrowding, poor housing conditions and severe housing shortage.

Our Aboriginal reference group promotes improvements to service delivery for Aboriginal people and acts as a key advisory group in developing workforce strategies. During 2010–11, a range of recruitment and training activities were targeted to Aboriginal staff, including an Aboriginal staff mentoring program and formal traineeship schemes to recruit, develop and retain Aboriginal staff.

We delivered training programs to encourage cultural sensitivity, including a two-day course on Aboriginal culture for client service staff and training to help non-Aboriginal staff engage more effectively with Aboriginal clients.

IMPROVING OTHER SERVICES

We continued to work with other FACS divisions and other departments to assist clients with complex needs. For example, we have continued to contribute to the protection and wellbeing of children through the NSW Government's Keep Them Safe Strategy. During 2010–11, we participated in family case management pilots with families living in social housing and supported online training for frontline staff on using the Mandatory Reporter Guide.

The Youth Action Plan guides our response to meeting the accommodation needs of young people aged 12 to 24. During 2010–11, we joined Community Services in hosting the youth homelessness forum to bring together youth accommodation service providers to share knowledge and develop strategies to improve outcomes.

We also worked with the Create Foundation to promote the Rent It, Keep It Guide – a tenancy education package designed for community workers who need to engage with their clients about housing issues. The guide is aimed at participants with limited literacy levels as well as people who have had little experience in the private rental market or have had problems with their tenancies in the past.

In 2010–11, the five-year New Directions in Social Housing for Older Persons Strategy came to an end, with the completion of 1,271 homes for older people and more than 3,000 properties under construction. The strategy also established senior communities which are public housing complexes for older people who want to live near other older people with similar interests and needs. These communities are generally located in areas where public housing is suited to older people with access to shops, transport and other services. More than 5,000 public housing properties have been designated senior communities under this program. In addition, more than \$60 million have been spent on modifying and upgrading public housing properties for older people and people with a mobility related disability.

We fund Tenant Connect, a free service managed by the Australian Red Cross designed to reduce isolation and improve wellbeing for tenants aged over 70 years, or over 45 years for Aboriginal tenants. Tenants who participate in the service receive a free daily telephone call from a Red Cross volunteer, with around 950 tenants currently registered for the service.

For tenants aged over 60 (or Aboriginal tenants aged over 45), we run the Keeping In Touch program, where we telephone older tenants with whom we have not had any contact over the previous six months.

We are committed to providing efficient and professional services to our tenants and the general public. During 2010–11, our efforts were focused on training staff to deliver quality customer service outcomes, and a number of educational programs were offered including the Certificate IV in Social Housing – providing skills in client service delivery, Certificate IV in Property Services, Diploma in Management, Certificate IV in Management and Certificate IV in Project Management.

To celebrate exceptional performance, we have the biennial Chief Executive Awards. The awards acknowledge staff commitment to customer service, integrity and innovation.

Sustainable business practices

By implementing sustainable business practices, we are able to provide more efficient and effective services to people in housing need. Sustainable business means not only introducing cost saving measures, but also focusing on how we conduct our day-to-day operations. We will continue to achieve efficiencies in areas such as staff training, streamlining business processes and shared corporate services. We are also implementing a range of environmental programs designed to make our properties more energy efficient to reduce household expenditure for our tenants.

IMPLEMENTING NEW INFORMATION SYSTEMS

The November 2010 launch of our new IT system, HOMES, represented one of the most significant changes in our history. The software replaces an outdated system and is used to manage clients and assets. Data migration was achieved in a single cutover period, and a quarterly program of work is in place to make necessary system modifications. For the first time, community housing providers participating in Housing Pathways have direct access to our IT system to jointly manage clients applying for social housing.

With the launch of HOMES, an Enterprise Data Warehouse (EDW) was created to provide high-level statistical management reports.

RISK MANAGEMENT

In July 2010, we launched the enterprise risk management framework to address risks affecting all aspects of the organisation, particularly strategic, business, operational and project risk. A dedicated Risk and Insurance Unit provided ongoing support including workshops, training and advice.

In 2009, along with the Aboriginal Housing Office, we established the Audit and Risk Committee to oversee and monitor current governance, risk and control frameworks. In 2010–11, the committee met on six occasions.

Our Tenant Fraud Unit investigates all allegations of fraud. During the year, 1,395 allegations were received, 416 of these related to fraud. Of the investigations closed during the year, five percent were found to be fraud and 13 percent were non-disclosure. In addition, \$599,652 of debt was recovered and an extra \$173,164 in rent collected due to rental adjustments. Over the past 12 months, the Tenant Fraud Unit has provided advice and support through fraud and non-disclosure training courses, which 80 staff attended.

Key performance indicators 2010–11

	TARGET	ACTUAL
Unscheduled staff absenteeism	5.17%	4.80%
Home energy assessments completed	20,000	24,331

CREATING ORGANISATIONAL EFFICIENCIES

In 2010–11, we developed a new business process to improve the management of occupational health and safety (OH&S) risk to contractors required to undertake maintenance at the properties of high-risk tenants. This program will be implemented over the coming year.

An organisational efficiency plan reduced corporate overheads, and significant cost savings were realised in telecommunications, stationery and air travel through the greater use of NSW Government contracts.

Further savings against budget were negotiated in the areas of general insurance (\$689,000) and workers' compensation (\$849,347) based on current claims.

ORGANISATIONAL REFORM

In 2010–11, we made a significant contribution to the Corporate and Shared Services Reform Program for FACS. We focused on three priority areas – OH&S, managing sick leave, and performance management and development.

During the year, we conducted an audit of OH&S systems and client service worksites, implemented an OH&S e-learning program and established a corporate OH&S and Injury Management Committee.

We analysed current sick leave rates and included targets in executive performance agreements.

Performance management and development focused on aligning employee work plans with our strategic business objectives. We also piloted a performance management training program, Giving and Receiving Feedback, with further training scheduled for managers during 2011–12.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Our Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2008–09 to 2013–14 guides our sustainability initiatives. A range of programs to improve the energy efficiency of our homes were implemented during 2010–11 including:

- the Home Power Savings Program, a partnership with the Office of Environment and Heritage to help social housing tenants to reduce their power bills. During 2010–11, 24,331 home assessments were completed, with tenants receiving a free power savings kit and advice on reducing energy costs
- the Solar Hot Water Program, to replace old electric storage hot water heating systems with 1,754* solar hot water systems, saving households on average \$148 in energy costs per year
- retrofitting 5,001* homes with ceiling insulation to improve the thermal comfort and reduce heating and cooling costs for tenants located in hot and cold climates.

During 2010–11, residential developments in Lilyfield and Redfern achieved a 5-Star-Green Star rating by the Green Building Council of Australia – the first social housing projects in Australia to achieve this rating.

* Figures reported for solar hot water systems and ceiling insulation are reported for installations from 1 July 2010 to 21 June 2011.

1,754

old electric storage hot water heating systems were replaced with solar hot water systems, saving households on average \$148 in energy costs per year