

# The Housing Connection Limited

ABN: 77 144 980 898

## Annual Report 2010/2011



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*Innovative Disability Service*

Funded by the Department of Family & Community Services:  
Ageing, Disability & Home Care

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## [The History of The Housing Connection](#)

*The Housing Connection was created by a group of parents and other interested people who in 1981 formed the Lower North Shore Disabled Persons Action Group. They had a vision for their loved ones to live rich and valued lives in the community, with appropriate support. The first step was to seek funds from the Department of Family and Community Services to establish a transition home where people with behavioural challenges who needed assistance could obtain the training and support they needed before moving onto more independent living. The funding was approved in 1985 and the NSW Department of Housing purchased a house in Roseville on our behalf.*

*In 1988 a decision was made to allow the house to become a permanent home for four people with moderate intellectual disabilities, no more than two of whom required behavioural support. This change coincided with the decision of the four people living then in the house to move to new situations.*

*In 1989 the current concept of The Housing Connection grew in response to needs identified by Parents and Relatives for the Implementation of Services (PARIS), a group of parents and a sub-committee of Action for Citizens with Disabilities together with the government Lower North Shore Developmental Disability Team. PARIS found that the most pressing need of people with an intellectual disability on the Lower North Shore was for supported accommodation. They lacked opportunities and support to develop the skills necessary to find, secure and maintain a place of their own in the local community. PARIS, therefore, approached the Lower North Shore Disabled Persons Action Group to extend their present Accommodation Support Program to another ten to twelve people, in their chosen form of accommodation in the Lower North Shore area. This represented the beginning of what is now known as Drop-In support. In March 1990, the organisation's name was changed to The Housing Connection (NSW) Incorporated. From 1995 the work of the organisation has expanded to include a number of other clients who receive support for anything from a couple of hours a week to twenty four hours each day. In each situation the goal is to enable the people we support to live rich and valued lives in the community, develop their skills and creating social networks.*

*From 2005 The Housing Connection started working with school leavers in Transition to Work programs to enable them to develop work skills. We also offer individually tailored community participation programs for those who are unable to work.*

*In July 2010 The Housing Connection (NSW) Incorporated became The Housing Connection Limited. This change in organisational status reflects our growth and the strength of our governance and management processes. However, the focus remains, as it has from inception, on supporting people to live quality lives, included in the community. Today we support around 60 individuals.*

**A Tribute to Bettina Jean Gumley**  
*21<sup>st</sup> February 1952 – 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2011*



*From her Cousin, Sue Gumley*

*For as long as I can remember Bettina has been a part of my life, I remember hanging on the splints she wore on her legs, they were cold and stiff, But looking up at her she would smile big for me and ask me how I got there? Whose car did I come in, she was 10 years older than me. I somehow knew she was different from me but it didn't seem to worry her and it didn't worry me. When she was younger she did not have the confidence in herself and others, she was not encouraged to be part of a normal life, she however was always kind to me and always exuberant, loud, colourful and happy. Later in life I was so proud of her, she taught me so many things but mainly to live right 'Now'. I moved in with Bettina in May this year and had the privilege to be with her at the end of her life. In my heart Bettina is a hero, disadvantaged all of her life, she didn't worry about that, in her last year pain every day, she didn't worry about that. What she did worry about was how are you? And what have you been doing? And of course 'in the spirit of the Now Right Now' where did you park the car?*

*From her neighbours, Cecily and Peter Gwynne*

*We first saw Bettina Jean Gumley in 1975 when we came to look at the house we now live in. She was standing outside and as we moved to go through the house, so did she. Into every room we went and so did Tina. She must have known something because we loved the house and subsequently bought it. Needless to say, the day we moved in, there she was again waiting and as we moved in, so did she. From that moment Tina became part of our lives.*

*We'd never met anyone like Tina. Always so happy, not concerned with the petty little things that so worried us and with a fantastic memory for the things that interested her. If we told a story and changed any detail in the retelling of it she would immediately correct us and let us know what it should have been. Her powers of observation were fabulous too. If we moved the least little thing around she would notice and want to know WHY?*

*Tina and I had a good 'deal' going...she would brush my hair if I'd talk about nurses, doctors, operations I'd had or news readers. But if I dared close my eyes and slow down my chit-chat, off home she'd go! Fair enough too! Because of her slight speech deviations, her funny way of saying things became part of our life. Our daughter Amanda became T'manda and eventually Tam. With this happiness that Tina brought to our lives, just by being herself, came many laughs. Whenever we had family or friends around she would always want to be part of the action...and she was. In fact she always wanted to be Star of the Show...and we were delighted for her to be centre stage.*

*Of course there were moments of sadness. Very few Christmas carols could be sung without Tina crying. We'd all be singing then notice she had gone very quiet and sure enough there she'd be with ginormous tears rolling down her face. Away in a manger was never sung!*

*How we miss you Tina. You were and are special and won't be forgotten. Love...*

### *From The Housing Connection*

As evidenced by the number of people who attended her funeral, Bettina had many friends and was inspiring in the way she met the challenges in her life. Life dealt Bettina a challenging hand of cards but she played them with consummate courage, optimism and determination so she was able to draw every shred of nourishment from her life. She had a wonderful disposition and was always a very positive person. She rarely complained, even in the later months of her illness and drew people to her through her lovely manner. She was a teacher to us all and will be deeply missed.

The Housing Connection started to support Bettina in 1996, after her father, Frank passed away. In 2002 she went on a supported holiday to Fiji for her 50<sup>th</sup> birthday. Her mother, Lorna, was admitted to a nursing home in 2003 – after which Bettina started to live independently – and Lorna died in 2005.

Bettina relished all the opportunities for greater independence that support from The Housing Connection afforded her. She learnt the skills to live more freely – banking, shopping, housekeeping, cooking, computer skills and....most importantly – going on holiday independently! How she loved that. She went on further supported holidays to the Blue Mountains, the Gold Coast and Cairns. She was well known and loved by her local tourist agencies who would give her loads of travel brochures (and cakes and sweets and birthday and Christmas presents I might add). She so enjoyed all the travel shows on TV and meeting the stars she adored. Tina had a lengthy and abiding interest in television and in particular the news readers.

Bettina loved her family, her special neighbours, her friends, her colleagues and her social educators. She had a love of life that was an inspiration. Bettina's legacy is one of optimism, kindness, generosity, compassion, trust, courage, gratitude and a determined love of life no matter what she had to contend with....as well as a trail of people who loved her, whom she welcomed into the garden of her life.

Bettina was admitted to Greenwich hospital on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2011, where she died, supported by a very large contingent of family, friends and staff.

### *From her THC Staff team*

It is with great fondness that we revisit these years spent by Tina's side; our first meeting and the subsequent ones, with its **"ongoing battle of the will"** that had to be fought every time. This determination was your will to live, to live life and live it fully.

You never knew I am certain, how much you have affected our lives Tina. Your humble and unpretentious walk through life has taught us a lot. You sure left an indelible and colourful mark in our memory, those endless dresses and tops and socks and... we always struggled to find a place for them, **where to anyway**, your dressers, drawers and wardrobes were always full! And not to mention those long streams of pearls, earrings and broaches tucked, **crammed should I say**, away in your treasure troves.

But one distinctive thing, unforgettable, was the ever familiar stomp of your walk, comforting with its regularity. This was the tempo of your life; steady, determined. Humbly, you taught us a great deal about living.

**"So good bye little red rose;  
May you ever grow in our hearts.  
and the memories of you never fade,  
even if now, we may feel from you so far apart."**

## **VISION**

*What we aspire to.....*

Rewarding and valued lives for all people with disabilities

## **MISSION**

*What we do.....*

**We:**

- Support people who have intellectual and other disabilities to live fulfilling lives in the community, as independently as possible.
- Place our clients at the centre of all we do. Their unique and individual needs determine the services we deliver.
- Support, train and value staff to make this mission real.
- Manage ourselves responsibly to ensure our long-term viability.

## **VALUES**

*How we approach it.....*

### **Social Justice**

The principle of valuing all individuals guides us to challenge unfair practices and policies

### **Passion**

We are passionate and committed to our work

### **Integrity**

We are reliable and trustworthy, demonstrating the best practice with those we support

### **Social Inclusion**

We believe all people are entitled to the benefits of citizenship within our society

### **Respect**

We treat all people with respect and understanding

## Strategic Direction 2010-2011

### Strategic Goal 1 **Deliver quality services**

*We will deliver services to provide the best possible quality of life for the people we support.*

*We commit ourselves to remain at the leading edge of service quality*

#### **OUTCOME 1.1:**

We deliver quality independent living for people with intellectual disabilities and other disabilities.

#### **OUTCOME 1.2:**

We achieve our service delivery objectives by recruiting, supporting and retaining top quality staff.

#### **OUTCOME 1.3:**

Comprehensive systems are in place to ensure quality outcomes for clients and ensure effective management and governance.

### Strategic Goal 2 **Build a Broad Network of Strategic Partnerships**

*We will develop partnerships to provide our clients access to a greater range of services, to advocate for clients and to contribute to the development of knowledge and social policy*

#### **OUTCOME 2.1:**

We have established networks of individuals and organisations that enrich our clients' lives.

#### **OUTCOME 2.2:**

We are active members of community organisations that work to improve the lives of people with disability.

### Strategic Goal 3 **Grow Strategically**

*We will grow strategically to meet the needs of our current and potential clients and to ensure THE HOUSING CONNECTION is a provider of choice in an environment of person-centred self-managed funding*

#### **OUTCOME 3.1:**

We double the support we provide to people with intellectual and other disabilities

#### **OUTCOME 3.2:**

We have an Endowment Trust of \$1 million to increase our capacity to provide support.

 **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE****Our purpose**

The Housing Connection (THC) exists for one reason only and that is, of course, to serve our clients. As always, this remained our first priority during the year under review. Although there are always difficulties, this was again a year of achievement. Those of us who have exposure to the industry gain continual insights that demonstrate the comparative high quality of our services. Others talk of person centred services and try to move that way; at THC, we have done it from the start and that is just as it should be. The General Manager's report contains more information about client services.

**Transition from Association to Company**

The Housing Connection has outgrown its status as an 'Incorporated Association' registered under NSW law and we are now a 'Company Limited by Guarantee' under Federal legislation. This bureaucratic change makes no difference to what we do but I mention it as it does require that we report differently.

In this, our first report under our new status, you will therefore notice a few changes. For example, there is information about each of the directors. We have included this not because the directors seek publicity but because we must include this information by law. We have also taken this opportunity to upgrade the report in other ways to reflect the greater maturity of which our new status is a symptom.

**Profile of The Housing Connection**

It has been a period during which The Housing Connection gained greater industry exposure and recognition. Renée Koonin, the staff and clients presented papers at various conferences to tell others about us. The difference between THC and its peers was starkly demonstrated at the National Disability Services (NDS) National Conference on the Gold Coast and the NDS State Conference where our clients were the only people with intellectual disabilities to participate in the delivery of a paper. It was a very visible demonstration of the independence, assurance and community involvement they have gained with our support. The recognition The Housing Connection is receiving is further illustrated by the invitation to Renée to deliver a keynote address at the ACOSS conference in Melbourne.

**Major changes in disability funding**

This recognition and exposure is important and could, I think will, have real, practical consequences. As you are probably all aware, the landscape is shifting around us. At State level, the Government is increasing funding for disability services under their 'Stronger Together II' initiative, a pre-election pledge of the former Labor Government supported and delivered by the subsequent Liberal/National Government in the September budget. Federally, the major initiative, a National Disability Insurance Scheme, also has by-partisan support. These are potentially tremendously positive changes for people with disabilities but The Housing Connection Board is aware that they probably mean that we will have to obtain our funding in a different way. Organisations that deliver excellent services, are well-managed, are recognised for doing so and can continue to maintain a good reputation, will, we believe, prosper under the changes that are coming.

**External Evaluation**

The Housing Connection invited consultants (Matrix on Board and Zakumi) to comprehensively review every aspect of our organisation, including the functioning of the Board, management team and staff as well as feedback from clients and families.

They produced a report with much food for thought and many action steps. They began by attending the last AGM so that even that was included. Separately, and in the light of the changing environment, we reviewed our strategy and settled on just a few, achievable initiatives reflected elsewhere in this report. Remember that in pursuing all these initiatives, resources are always devoted first to meeting client needs.

### **William Street Development**

At successive AGM's we have talked about the exciting building project we are undertaking in William Street, Roseville. It is frustrating to tell you that at the end of the financial year, the building work had not yet started. None of us anticipated the inordinate time it takes to get all the approvals for an ordinary, straight-forward residential building project. We are pleased to now report that building finally commenced at the beginning of October. In the meantime, we are planning for the occupation and use of the anticipated residential capacity and working with ADHC in doing so.

### **The Housing Connection Endowment Fund**

From previous reports you will also be aware of our fundraising initiatives. The Fundraising Committee met throughout the year and focussed on the marketing aspects of fund-raising. The members of the committee now have a clearer understanding of what must be done and how competitive fund-raising can be when there are so many other deserving applications for donated monies. An outcome is the establishment of an Endowment Fund. After the end of the financial year, I wrote to members to advise you that the fund is now in existence and I am glad to acknowledge the donations that we received as a consequence.

The Endowment Fund now has its own Advisory Board and it gives me great pleasure to welcome people who are new to The Housing Connection to that committee.

We will be writing to all members again about the next fund-raising initiative that I especially wish to mention here. We'll be asking members, families and all who value the services delivered by The Housing Connection to remember us in their wills. Do more. Think of anyone you know who might be in a position to leave money to us when they move on: a single aunt or uncle, a childless couple, anyone who might be prepared to leave a bequest to THC. Persuade them to think of us, too. The Housing Connection Endowment fund is structured to invest the money so that it will be delivering services to people with disabilities in perpetuity and I strongly commend it to you. Please contact Renée or myself if you need further information. As I said, a letter to members will follow in the mail.

### **The Challenge**

The Housing Connection's work is always challenging, but we are up to it. As you will be able to see elsewhere in this report, our finances are in good health. We have maintained our unbroken track-record of living within our means.

It is appropriate that I acknowledge here the support we receive from the State Government through the Department of Family Services: Ageing, Disability and Home Care, both financially and in other ways. On behalf of our clients, thank you.

### **The Housing Connection Staff Team**

I also wish to pay tribute to Renée Koonin, Anne-Louise Hickey and all the other members of the team for the important job they do so well. You really are The Housing Connection and whatever we achieve is what you achieve. Well done.

Finally, a thank you to my fellow Board members for all the time and effort you have so generously devoted to The Housing Connection. Without you, we could also not exist.

Thank you  
**Rob Eales**  
**President/Chairman**

## **MANAGEMENT REPORT**

### **Introduction**

This is an extraordinary time to be working in the disability sector. The promise of the NSW initiative *Stronger Together II* which will provide an injection of an extra \$2 billion for disability services over a five year period, coupled with the acceptance by the Federal Government of the Productivity Commission's report into a lifetime care and support program, a National Disability Insurance Scheme, offer light to the countless families who are battling a disability system that is fragmented, complex to access and inadequate to meet the needs of people with disability. In addition, the move towards person centred and self-managed funding initiatives are changing the landscape in which disability services operate.

The Housing Connection is very well placed to benefit from this changing environment. We have been 'person-centred' since we were formed.

### **Delivering on our commitment to provide quality support**

#### ***Major Achievements***

As always, the most heartening part of our work is the strength, courage and tenacity of those we support. There is a tribute to Bettina Gumley elsewhere in this Annual Report. The quality of the support offered to her during her illness, in the final weeks of her life and in organising the funeral is a testament to the quality of the staff team, under the leadership of Inna Keum.

As part of the growth strategy, we are supporting new clients, many of whom have very complex support needs who need the very carefully tailored support The Housing Connection provides. We almost doubled the size of our Transition to Work program and this team has been very successful in assisting clients to develop work skills and obtain relevant work experience. One client, previously a TTW client in another service, has obtained permanent part-time reception work at THC.

Another major success has been the opportunity for clients to present papers at conferences.

- Susan Adrian, Michael Minahan and Charlotte Addison presented a paper: *Walk in our Shoes: People with Disability Share their experience of Person Centred Practice* at the NDS State Conference in February 2011.
- Susan Adrian also participated in the presentation by the Centre for Disability Studies, University of Sydney at the national ASID conference in September 2011.

As part of our External Evaluation, clients and family members were interviewed about their experience of the support offered by THC. The report arising from these interviews, *Connected Conversations*, concluded:

Although a relatively young organisation there is a strong legacy. The organisation is values driven and the focus on individual care is shared by people who use the service. One size does not fit all and people like and value the individual attention they receive from The Housing Connection. They like the fact that they know the staff and they know each other and more importantly that they are known. This was further enhanced when people focused on how support to be independent, to live in the community looked like for them.

When people were asked to describe what The Housing Connection felt like they used words like safe, family, fun, good. What was overwhelmingly obvious was the fact that people value relationships. They felt like they belong. They know everyone and everyone knows them.

### **Organisational Developments**

There has been great emphasis during the past year on building the organisational capacity to prepare ourselves for the changing funding environment.

### ***External Evaluation***

Matrix on Board, with Zakumi Consulting, completed a very thorough and favourable external evaluation of all aspects of the organisation. This report analysed twenty six different aspects of the service and provided a roadmap on options for THC to pursue in each area. This has formed the basis for our Strategic Actions and Operational plan for 2011 - 2012.

### ***Profile of The Housing Connection and Community Networks***

In the past year there was an emphasis on raising the profile of The Housing Connection within the disability sector and beyond. The reason for this is to ensure we are well placed to benefit from and ensure the unique service is projected in the new funding environment. This networking takes many forms including conference presentations, membership of key committees (including the NCROSS Sector Development Forum, a policy advice group on the not-for-profit sector, and the NDS Accommodation Sub-Committee) as well as attendance at key disability sector forums. Our relationships with other organisations including Link Housing, Woods Cottage, Recreation Rendezvous, ShoreCare are particularly valued.

The external evaluation remarked that:

The organisation positions itself wisely and, for its size, plays a much greater sector leadership role than would normally be expected... (Its') profile within the industry is remarkable for a small, local organisation like The Housing Connection. While maintaining this profile, and the associated networking activities, is time intensive, it is one of the best "loss of government funding" risk mitigation strategies available to the organisation.

### ***William Street Development***

After so many delays we are excited to report that building at the William Street development commenced early October. A number of clients have already indicated their interest in living in the new residences and we are working with ADHC to identify new clients who could benefit from this model of support.

### **The Board**

The Housing Connection is extremely fortunate to be served by an enormously skilled and committed Board. Every Board member makes a contribution way beyond the governance of our organisation and their contribution is deeply valued. Each of the

Board sub-committees has a special function and we appreciate work of all members on the Board and these committees:

- **Support Allocation and Monitoring Committee (SAM)**
- **William Street Development**
- **Fundraising Committee**
- **The Housing Connection Endowment Fund Advisory Board**
- **Finance and Audit Committee**

## **Management**

The Housing Connection operates with a small, but effective, management team. During the year we had to deal with the significant loss of Peter Rutkin after many valuable years of service. Sadly for THC, Robyn Balfour has recently left THC to take on new challenges. We certainly feel their absence!

The management team has worked cooperatively to address the multi-faceted challenges we face every day. A special thank you to Anne Louise Hickey whose leadership after twenty years of service continues to inspire us all. Thank you to Robyn Balfour, Tom Teh, Katina Velkou and Laurence Bathurst for your important roles in this team.

## **Staffing**

It may be trite but it is true...the greatest asset we have is our staff – their values, skill and commitment are the only resources that make THC the amazing organisation that it is. A special thank you to the Project Coordinators – Julie Bannerman, Laurence Bathurst, Charlie Doane, Inna Keum and James Pickering for your dedication and leadership. Thank you to each member of staff for all you bring to those we support.

## **Training**

Staff training is always a priority and various members have attended a wide range of programs. Internally, we continue to offer the Certificate IV in Disability Studies to all those who do not have recent, appropriate qualifications. We have also extended this opportunity to the staff of Recreation Rendezvous. We have also contracted SAL consulting to provide regular clinical training for staff as well as clinics to provide their expertise to staff teams to assist with particular staff.

## **Operational/Administrative**

The administrative and financial operation of The Housing Connection has been extremely smooth and efficient. We continue to improve our computer hardware and Internet access and are in the process of upgrading the website to make it more user friendly and to increase our Search Engine Optimisation.

## **Occupational Health and Safety**

THC underwent an external occupational health and safety audit and the report indicates we are performing better than the industry standard in ensuring the health and safety of our staff.

## **Conclusion**

The Strategic Goals for this year were to:

- Deliver Quality Services
- Build a broad network of Strategic Partnerships
- Grow strategically

We have successfully achieved the benchmarks we set and look forward to another productive year. As always, our focus is on the quality of life of those whom we serve.

## SUPPORT ALLOCATION MONITORING COMMITTEE REPORT

Every year is a challenging year for The Housing Connection. At times the challenges seem insurmountable, but with extraordinary leadership from our General Manager, Renée Koonin, and from Anne Louise Hickey our dedicated and inspired Manager: Client Support, the Project Managers and the Project Co-ordinators and their teams have met those challenges with integrity, humour, generosity of spirit and a lot of hard work.

The Committee met on average every 4 – 6 weeks and once again were given wonderful insights into the hopes and dreams of the clients, and the very imaginative, but also practical ways in which staff members provide support to reach agreed goals. Some clients have goals which seem almost impossible, but with a step by step approach, a way is found. Some clients have very modest goals and these are treated with equal care and attention, encouraging independence and choice.

Peter Rutkin and Katina Velkou provided more of the organisation and structure for the committee this year, and both brought enthusiasm and professionalism to their roles.

Three wonderful clients told their stories in contrasting and highly individual ways, at the NDS National Conference this year and the slogan for the conference “Walk the Talk” could not have been more luminously illustrated. Seeing them standing tall, supported with glowing pride by The Housing Connection staff brought tears to many eyes.

The past months have been very sad and emotionally demanding for the team led by Inna, who supported one of our long term clients through a terminal illness, ensuring that she was cared for, supported and loved to the end. It was so sad, but also uplifting, as the team and all Bettina’s wonderful circle of family, neighbours and friends found ways to amuse, comfort and engage her. All the clients and staff at The Housing Connection were touched by Bettina’s life and arranged a funeral expressing in so many different ways, the very essence of her life.

I have highlighted these two examples of extraordinary achievement but there are others great and small, troubling and uplifting happening at THC on a daily basis. Some of the most extraordinary work is done with clients who have very complex high support needs. Increasingly it seems that ADHC sees The Housing Connection as the service which will meet such need and this brings added challenges.

The SAM Committee has been less rigorously reported to the Board during the latter part of this year in particular. The Committee is confident that PFP’s are being thoroughly prepared; that clients are meeting their goals and more; that staff and management are doing whatever it takes to meet the support needs of clients and assist them to live full and independent lives. However with staff stretched to their limits the formality of reporting took a back seat.

The idea of doing “Whatever It Takes” is deeply embedded in the fabric of THC and I applaud it. However there have been times over the past year, when I have watched with growing concern the demands that this philosophy makes on our management and staff. There is no doubt that THC provides excellent support to our clients. It is in many

cases the kind of support which few people on this planet experience at any time in their lives. It is truly extraordinary.

A big thank you to Doug Talbert and Joyce Man, who brought wisdom and skill to our meetings, supporting clients and staff alike. And a big welcome to Sally Corbett and Julie Smiles who are returning to the Committee. Both are familiar to The Housing Connection clients and have served this committee well over many, many years. The Housing Connection is fortunate to have such loyal and capable friends – and we, the Committee, are fortunate to enjoy our association with this remarkable organisation.

**Maralyn Lawson**  
**Support Allocation & Monitoring Committee**

 **CLIENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT**

Susan and I would like to thank Renée, Anne Louise, Julie, Yun, the Board and most of all the clients for letting us be their client reps.

2011 has been a big year for most of us. And part of being client rep is keeping in contact with the clients. We have had lots of birthdays, get togethers and supported holidays, clients moving house, starting with new jobs and sadly one client's father also passed away.

Next year Susan and I hope to organise more outings and catch ups with clients. We wish you all a merry Christmas and a happy new year.

**Anne Fletcher**  
**Susan Adrian**  
**Client Representatives**

 **STAFF REPRESENTATIVE REPORT**

It has been a great year to be a staff representative on the Board of The Housing Connection. There are two of us and the insight we gain into the functioning of The Housing Connection is a very enlightening experience. The staff and the clients within their projects are achieving so much and at such a rate that sometimes landmark achievements can be brushed aside (been there, done that, what's next) to make way for the next brilliant accomplishment on behalf of the client and staff together. We have been able to report some of these to the Board but I'm sure we miss out on some worthy accomplishments. Rest assured, though, what we miss is often ably picked up and reported by our General Manager.

In our reports we have also:

- been able to convey the appreciation of staff for the decisions, messages and gifts (Christmas vouchers!!) from the Board;
- described external and internal extraordinary projects our staff and clients have been involved in;
- sought and received positive support from the Board for the current and ongoing wage case for community based workers with people with a disability;
- flagged the pride we all feel in the success and the growth of the TTW project;

- described our work with our client representatives to plan social outings and celebrations;
- lamented the loss of valuable staff as they move on to greater things and farther shores; and
- celebrated the number of staff who have returned to us from said greater things and farther shores and from final year student placements with us.

We hope we have represented our staff well this year. We are aware that there is scope to develop the role and practical systems of the staff representative position to better glean information from the staff to keep the Board well-informed. And there could also be a more formal way in place to better inform staff of the Board function. Already we are receiving a much appreciated monthly email report back to staff from our General Manager.

**Yun Yoo and Julie Bannerman**  
**Staff Reps**

## FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

### **Income Statement**

Revenue for the year 2010-2011 was up on the previous year by 14.5%. The total funding from ADHC was up by 9%. This included a payment in anticipation of the Equal Remuneration Order in 2011-2012 that could significantly increase our labour costs. Fee-paying client income decreased by 17% in the year.

As well as being boosted by increased Interest Income, our Revenue had a gain of \$66,742 due to the recapture of depreciation when the Eastwood Property was transferred at cost. The property was transferred to a former client's new service provider. Other Income benefitted from the payment of an insurance claim and the recognition of revenue that was previously held on the Balance Sheet.

Employee related expenses continued to be well-managed and as a proportion of our operating revenue were in line with the previous year. Managing labour costs will continue to be a challenge given the pending award decisions and the need to attract and retain high quality staff.

In this financial year The Housing Connection reported a surplus of \$343,764. This figure includes \$99,604 that has been transferred to the Property Reserve and \$66,742 from the disposal of the Eastwood Property that has been transferred to the Capital Reserve. The resultant operating surplus of \$177,418 included a number of non-recurring amounts as noted previously and continues to be enhanced by the high interest rates available on deposits in Australia.

### **Balance Sheet**

At 30 June 2011 The Housing Connection had Retained Profit of \$692,837 and Total Equity of \$1,347,799.

Our cash balance at June 30 was \$3,364,298 which includes the balance of funds from ADHC to construct the client accommodation at William St. Contracts have been signed and construction on this development has commenced in early October, 2011. It is anticipated that the building will be completed in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of the 2011-2012 financial year.

## Outlook

Going into the fiscal year 2011-2012, we have two major unknowns – the level of interest rates on deposits and the extent of the staff award increases. However on balance I anticipate that we will be able to maintain an operating surplus in 2011-2012.

I would like to acknowledge the hard work and diligence of Robyn Balfour and Tom Teh.

**Jeff Kelly**

**Chairman, Finance/Audit Committee**

## THE HOUSING CONNECTION'S WORKPLACE

As a people focused organisation our employees are our greatest asset. They are a passionate and committed team dedicated to providing the best service possible to support our clients and their families.

### The Housing Connection Staff

The Board, Renee and Anne Louise would like to take this opportunity to thank all the staff, past and present for all their dedication and hard work. Without your efforts The Housing Connection could not be the service it is.

General Manager:	Renée Koonin
Manager: Client Services	Anne Louise Hickey
Project Managers:	Katina Velkou Laurence Bathurst
Accountant:	Thomas Teh
Administration Officer:	Katharine Coward
Administration Assistant:	Kelsey Cheney

### 24 hour Community Living

#### **Roseville Project**

Project Coordinator:	Charlie Doane	
Senior Social Educator:	Rodney Martin	Phil Wareham
Social Educators:	Marina Avagyan	Steve Bachmayer
	Ina Blomerus	Henry Durant
	Melanie King	Dinesh Mainali
	Simon Menzies	Emma Sim
	Bishnu Simkhada	

#### **Edward Street Project**

Project Coordinator:	Julie Bannerman	
Senior Social Educators:	Carol Huckstadt	
Social Educator:	Mi Hae Ghong	Shikshya Karki
	Barbara Madureira	Karin Martine
	Goma Panta	Emma Sim
	Usha Simkhada	

## **Drop-In Community Living**

### **Individual Funding Project**

Project Coordinator:	Inna Keum	
Senior Social Educators:	Celina Magill Yun Yoo	Rodney Martin
Social Educators:	Hanna Jung Mark Shepherd	Bernadette Ryan Sarah Steen

### **Artarmon Individual Funding Project**

Project Coordinator:	James Pickering	
Senior Social Educator:	Helena Buljan	
Social Educators:	Karin Martine Jethro Miller	Simon Menzies

## **Transition to Work**

Project Manager:	Laurence Bathurst	
Senior Social Educator:	Niluxshi Thurairatnam	
Social Educator:	Matt Davis Janice Stewart Faye Maramara	Mark Shepherd Sacha Zunic

### **Staff who left The Housing Connection in the last year:**

Brian Dunne (6/11/10)  
Mike Rowlands (10/12/10)  
Chris Jackson (2/12/10)  
Peter Rutkin (21/4/11)  
Jenny Yang (4/7/11)  
Laura Cole (6/10/11)  
Robyn Balfour (14/10/11)  
Jean-Pierre Lombard (24/10/11)  
Lucy Noble (4/11/11)

## **Acknowledgements**

The Housing Connection would like to thank the following individuals and organisations which are just a few of the many that have supported our work throughout the year:

Gordon Duff, NDS  
Celine George, volunteer  
Cecily & Peter Gwynne for their ongoing support & friendship  
JPS Training, Jacques Stap  
Kwik Kopy Chatswood, Alastair & Andrew Bannerman  
LINK Housing, Sheryl de Vries & team  
Eileen Lyons, Dept of Education  
Nick Logan Pharmacy  
Nathan Olsen, ADHC  
SAL Consulting  
ShoreCare  
Sydney Employment Development Services  
United Way

**The Housing Connection would like to thank the following organisations for their continued support:**

Department of Family and Community Services: Ageing, Disability and Home Care (ADHC) for their ongoing financial support.

**Grants were received from:**

Help Street Foundation

Willoughby City Council

*Your assistance and support is greatly appreciated and helps significantly in enabling the organisation to focus our resources on client support. Thank you!!!*



## FINANCIAL REPORT

### Governance Information

- ✦ Bank: Westpac Bank
- ✦ Auditors: Lomax Financial Group
- ✦ Australian Company Number: 144 980 898

### Regulatory Information

- ✦ Company limited by guarantee
- ✦ Endorsement as a deductible gift recipient
- ✦ Endorsement as a income tax exempt charitable charity
- ✦ Notice of endorsement for charity tax concessions

### CONTACT US

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