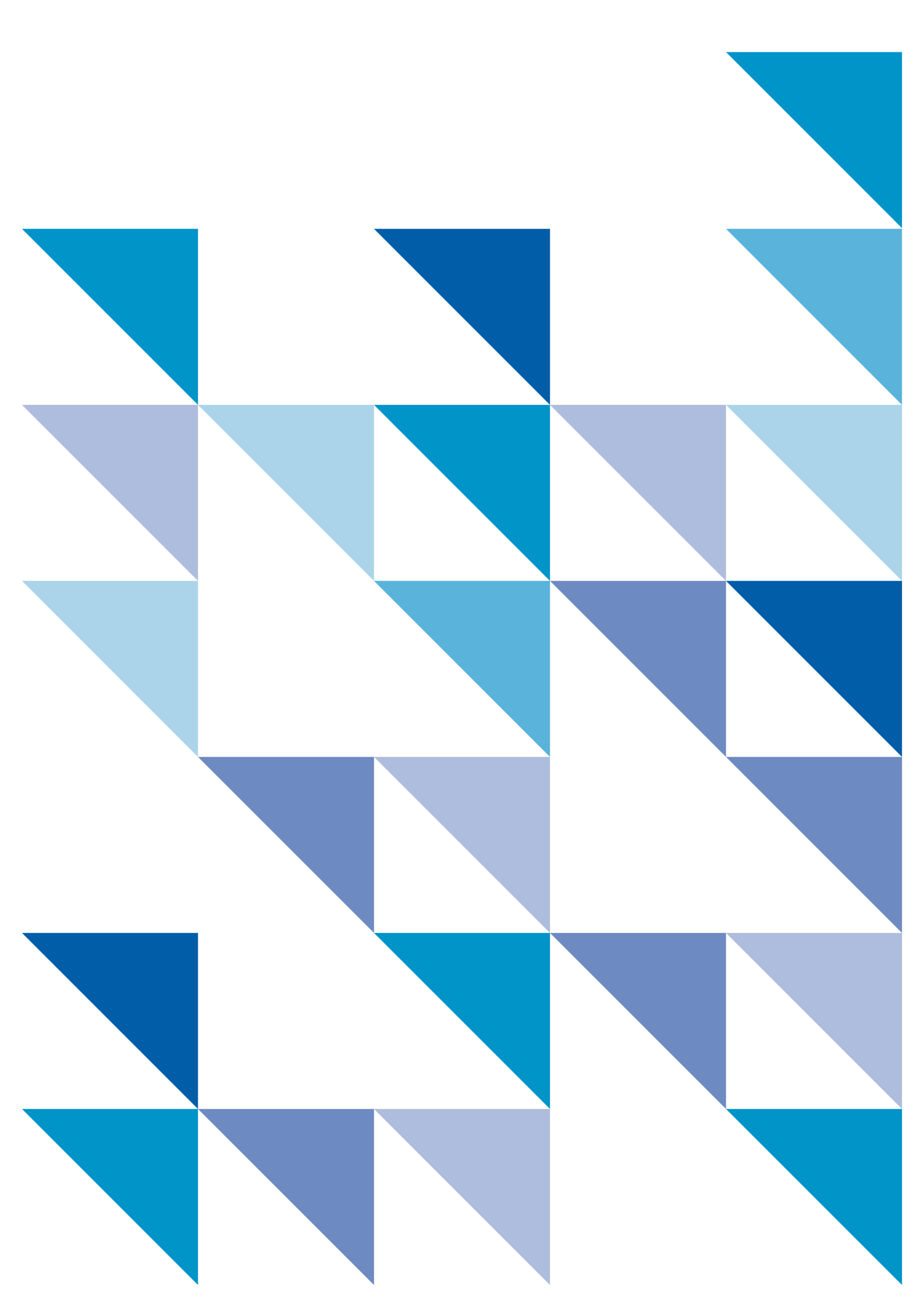


2018-21
STRATEGIC PLAN





FOREWORD

Bridge Housing's success is based on a culture of review, improvement and innovation. We don't rest on our laurels, nor do we take our achievements, our staff, and our organisation for granted. This ensures we continue to consistently deliver quality and appropriate services to our existing and future residents.

This is Bridge Housing's fifth Strategic Plan. It has provided an opportunity for us to review, revitalise and align our mission and vision. In discussion with our Board, staff and our residents we wanted to be focused on what we seek to achieve and strive for as an organisation.

Our mission is **improving lives through affordable homes and quality services.**

Our vision is to be a **dynamic organisation, recognised for excellence in meeting housing need, improving resident wellbeing and governing responsibly.**

Our mission and vision frames this Strategic Plan, which provides a considered and measured approach to manage our substantial growth. This includes through the upcoming transfer of management rights to 1200 properties in the Northern Beaches, secured through the Social Housing Management Transfer Program. The Plan also sets us up to maintain our existing service levels and enables our ability to grasp emerging growth opportunities.

The community housing sector in NSW has undergone significant growth and change over the previous Strategic Plan 2015-18. We are now operating in more stable and positive national and state housing policy environments than ever before.

The Australian Government has recently become more active on affordable housing and continues to increase their support for the community housing sector, principally through the Bond Aggregator which will reduce the cost of finance for community housing providers. The renewed policy focus on affordable housing and the community housing sector is also mirrored by the Labor Opposition. Both parties are yet to commit to a national housing strategy and an effective subsidy (to meet the funding gap).

Nevertheless, we are confident that the growth of the sector will continue regardless of a change in government.

NSW Government's Future Directions for Social Housing will continue to frame the community housing policy environment in NSW. The forthcoming Communities Plus releases in Telopea, Redfern, Arncliffe, Riverwood and Waterloo, and the Social and Affordable Housing Fund provide further opportunities to increase our portfolio and provide further social and affordable housing. We will also continue to build on our experience and innovative initiatives such as HomeGround to take advantage of the Greater Sydney Commission's affordable housing requirement and extension of the NSW Governments affordable housing planning instruments. These programs are important but in the face of declining housing affordability for low to moderate income households, we also seek a more strategic response from the NSW Government; one that supports the important role of community housing providers as part of the solution.

This Strategic Plan sets out how we will deliver our housing services over the next three years and manage significant growth. The Plan is supported by five strategic objectives, identified as fundamental in responding to these challenges. Our objectives for 2018-2021 are:

- ▶ Quality Services
- ▶ Portfolio Growth
- ▶ Our People
- ▶ Governance
- ▶ Partnerships

Additionally, the critical success factors and actions that underpin these objectives draw upon all areas of our work. They have been developed in collaboration with staff and residents and set the framework for our annual business plans, divisional work plans and individual KPIs. They provide a blueprint for our success over the next three years.

We look forward to working with our residents, staff, directors and our partners in government, not for profit sector and the private sector in realising our Strategic Plan 2018-2021.





CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	4
About Bridge Housing	4
About this plan	7
About our operating environment	9
STRATEGIC PLAN	14
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	16
1 Providing quality homes and housing services	17
2 Growing sustainably to meet affordable housing needs	18
3 Supporting our people and improving workplace wellbeing	19
4 Governing and managing effectively	20
5 Engaging our partners and enhancing our industry leadership	21
REFERENCES	22

INTRODUCTION

About Bridge Housing

Who is Bridge Housing?

Bridge Housing is a not for profit community housing provider. We make a positive difference to the lives of people on low to moderate incomes by delivering secure affordable housing. We own and manage over 2,000 dwellings and assist over 3,500 residents across inner and middle Sydney. As of August 2019, we will own or manage approximately 3,500 properties.

Bridge Housing was formed in 2009 through the amalgamation of three inner metropolitan housing providers: the South West Inner Sydney Housing.

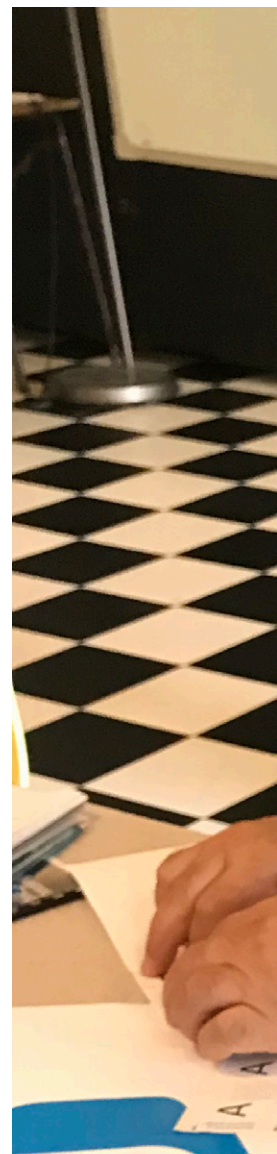
Cooperative, Burwood-Area Community Housing and the Eastern Suburbs Rental Housing Association. We currently operate in 18 local government areas in the Sydney metropolitan region. Since 2009, the business has successfully transformed from housing management to include property development financed through corporate debt.

We are a Class 1 provider under the National Regulatory System for Community Housing and a registered charity.

What properties do we manage?

The properties we manage include:

- ▶ **Vested and owned properties** owned by Bridge Housing, following transfer of property title from the NSW Government. These properties provide us with an asset base to secure private sector finance for investment in more housing.
- ▶ **Capital properties** owned by the NSW Government, but leased and managed by Bridge Housing. Rental income from these properties is retained by Bridge Housing and is set by the NSW Government at 25 per cent of assessable tenant income, plus 100 per cent of Commonwealth Rent Assistance.
- ▶ **Leasehold properties** we source from the private rental market and sublet to eligible applicants. The NSW Government provides a management, rent and maintenance subsidy for these properties under its Community Housing Leasing Program.
- ▶ **Fee-for-service** properties managed by Bridge Housing on behalf of external organisations through a management agreement or contract. The management fee varies depending on the level of housing and property management services we provide.
- ▶ **Specialist disability accommodation** we are a registered accommodation provider under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). Under the NDIS, Bridge Housing as the accommodation provider receives an annual contribution towards property costs and rental income stream to fund our service delivery.





What do we mean by affordable housing?

When Bridge Housing refers to 'affordable housing', we mean the full spectrum of housing services and products for people on very low to moderate incomes.

This includes social housing, key worker housing and private rental housing.

Who are our partners and stakeholders?

We work with a wide range of partners and stakeholders:

- ▶ **Tenants and residents:** We consider our tenants and residents to be our key partners. They are actively engaged through the Tenants Advisory Group, events, workshops, surveys and a wide range of other mechanisms. This includes engagement in the preparation of this plan.
- ▶ **Private sector:** We engage with the private sector through partnerships with developers, leasehold programs and engage contractors to maintain our properties. We also commission project managers, architects and builders as part of Bridge led property development and procurement programs.
- ▶ **Australian and NSW Government:** We work within the policy and regulatory frameworks set by the Australian and NSW Governments. These frameworks influence the opportunities to expand our property portfolio and deliver affordable housing services. The Australian and NSW Governments also deliver funding and programs that support our services and tenants.
- ▶ **Support partners:** We partner with over 40 support agencies to provide support for high needs groups to sustain their tenancies, as well as to strengthen communities and assist tenants to return to education and employment.
- ▶ **Local government:** We deliver our property development activities within the planning and development frameworks set by councils for their area. Local councils also provide some of the community services accessed by our tenants.
- ▶ **Community and corporate partners:** We work with community housing industry peak bodies to advocate for a strong and diverse community housing sector. We source loans for development from financial institutions. Philanthropic and corporate engagement contributes to the delivery of programs and enables organisational capacity building.



About this plan

What is the purpose of this plan?

Considered strategic planning, linked to detailed business planning and regular reporting, is a core part of Bridge Housing's corporate governance and business performance. It also drives our growth. This is the fifth strategic plan prepared by Bridge Housing. Its purpose is to provide the high level direction to the organisation for the three financial years from 2018-19 to 2020-21.

The Strategic Plan 2018-21 will be supported by annual business plans, which will contain detailed actions aligned to the strategic objectives and critical success factors set out in this plan.

What was the process for preparing this plan?

The process for preparing the Strategic Plan 2018-21 included:

- ▶ one-on-one interviews with the four members of the Senior Executive Team
- ▶ phone interviews with all eight board members
- ▶ a full day workshop with the Executive and Team Leaders
- ▶ a half day Staff Workshop, attended by over 40 staff from across the organisation
- ▶ a half day Tenant Workshop, attended by over 20 tenants and residents
- ▶ a full day workshop with the Board and the Senior Executive Team
- ▶ it also incorporated a review of a large number of existing strategies, plans and reports

What is the structure of this plan?

This plan contains three main sections:

- ▶ Section 1 includes an overview of Bridge Housing and of the plan itself, as well as a summary of key factors shaping the operating environment
- ▶ Section 2 describes the strategic objectives and critical success factors and indicators of success which together set our strategic direction over the next three years
- ▶ Section 3 contains additional information which supported the development of this plan



About our operating environment

As part of the preparation of this plan, we reviewed a wide range of factors relating to our external and internal operating environment. The following pages provide a summary of key factors which have shaped the preparation of this plan.

Property market

The Sydney property market continues to be one of the most expensive in the world despite a record supply increase over the last three years and the recent downturn in property prices. We expect these trends to continue over the next three years and beyond, making the Sydney housing market increasingly unaffordable for low and moderate income families.

Sitting at around 4.7 million people, Sydney's population is projected to grow by a further 1.8 million over the next 20 years. Around 725,000 additional homes – approximately 36,000 dwellings per year – will be required to accommodate a growing population over this period.ⁱ To maintain the current ratio of affordable housing, an additional 82,000 affordable housing properties should also be supplied over the next eight years.

Increasing housing supply is important but is insufficient in itself to increase the supply of affordable housing for low to moderate income households. In 2017, Sydney's median house price exceeded \$1.0 million and the median apartment price exceeded \$730,000.ⁱⁱ This represents a 119% increase over the past ten years.ⁱⁱⁱ Rent in Sydney's south west and west has also dramatically increased. These are areas that have traditionally provided a considerable supply of affordable rental housing. For example, the median house price in Parramatta LGA has gone from \$645,270 in 2012 to \$1.26 million 2017.^{iv} The median house price in Camden LGA has gone from \$462,200 in 2012 to \$754,430 in 2017.^v

These price trends have a direct impact on private rental properties, which are becoming increasingly unaffordable and insecure for low to moderate income households. Fewer than 1% of rental properties in the Sydney metropolitan area are affordable for families on a pension or benefit. Low wage households also face considerable challenges, with no more than 4% of rental properties considered to be affordable. We consider this to be housing market failure, which this plan is designed to strategically address.

Housing affordability

Bridge Housing operates across a region marked by the highest housing costs in Australia and very low levels of affordable rental and purchase properties. With a booming population, there will be over 6 million people living in within Greater Sydney by 2036. If housing supply continues at a rate that doesn't match population growth, housing affordability will become an even greater concern in coming years.

Fewer than 20% of rental properties from Sydney to Parramatta are affordable for very low or low income households. Expensive housing also means around 150,000 low to moderate income households in Sydney are in rental stress, spending more than 30% of their income on housing.^{vi} A shortfall in affordable and available rental housing, estimated at nearly 100,000 dwellings across Sydney, contributes to affordability problems.

As a result, more people are applying for social housing and average waiting times, currently between five to ten years, continue to increase. In the three years leading up to this Strategic Plan there were approximately 60,000 applicants on the waiting list in NSW.

Levels of homelessness have continued to increase in recent years. NSW has recorded the most severe increase in homelessness of almost 37% between the 2011 and 2016 census. This equates to 37,715 people experiencing homelessness. The increases occurred across all categories of homelessness, with the largest increase found in people living in severely overcrowded properties. The number of Sydneysiders either sleeping rough or staying in a crisis or temporary accommodation increased from 737 in 2013 to 824 between in 2018.^{vii}

Housing policy

Australian and NSW Government policy settings play a significant role in shaping the operating environment of community housing providers, including Bridge Housing.

Today, both state and federal policy settings are generally more positive for the community housing sector than when the previous Strategic Plan was developed. It is hoped that, in the longer term, the insufficient supply of affordable housing will lead to more significant policy changes at both levels of government, as the housing crisis becomes increasingly front of mind for voters.

Federal Government

The Australian Government introduced a number of initiatives in the 2017 Budget to address housing affordability.^{VIII} The most significant of these for CHPs is the bond aggregator, introduced as part of the National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation (NHFIC).^{IX}

The NHFIC will provide community housing providers with cheaper loans and longer terms than are currently available from banks. This may assist Bridge Housing to refinance existing loans on better terms and free up additional money for housing development and service delivery.

However, the NHFIC will not lead to significant investment in new affordable housing supply. A new subsidy scheme will be required. Currently neither Government nor the opposition have this on the policy table, though this may change leading into the Federal election required before May 2019. The introduction of an affordable housing subsidy would provide additional opportunities for Bridge Housing, positively impacting the last year of this Strategic Plan.

The National Affordable Housing Agreement (NAHA) has also recently been renegotiated. A new National Housing and Homelessness Agreement (NHHA) comes into effect from 2018-19. The NHHA does not substantially alter the previous NAHA agreement, with funding levels remaining at \$1.4 billion per annum. The only new requirements are that states will have to develop social housing strategies and improve reporting to the Commonwealth. It is not expected these initiatives will significantly impact the NSW community housing sector over the next three years.

NSW Government

The policy environment in NSW has changed significantly since the previous Strategic Plan was developed. A number of transformative opportunities have been released and the growth and change that has occurred is set to continue into the next three years.

The evolution of the community housing sector will be supported in the coming decade by Future Directions for Social Housing. Future Directions outlines the NSW Government's vision for social housing, which includes the transfer of more social housing to community housing management. This makes providers critical actors in the successful implementation of the strategy.

Future Directions also describes the NSW Government strategy for increasing the supply and redevelopment of social housing.

Improved customer service and stronger linkages to employment and education for social housing tenants are also areas of Future Directions focus.

Social Housing Management Transfer program

NSW's Social Housing Management Transfer (SHMT) program is the largest of its kind in Australia. It will involve transferring over 14,000 dwellings to nine community housing providers from mid 2018 to mid 2019. The program will have a significant impact on successful providers, including Bridge Housing, as most will grow by over 50% through these transfers. The Bridge Housing portfolio will increase from 2,000 to 3,500 dwellings by mid 2019.

The SHMT program will increase industry capacity and size. Providers will need to approach growth and organisational change with agility to ensure successful transition. Further transitions and the vesting of properties will be dependent on the successful execution of the SHMT program. The transition of Northern Beaches tenants has been identified as a key outcome in this Strategic Plan.

Communities Plus

The Communities Plus program is a key component of Future Directions. It is a new way to deliver integrated housing in NSW and presents CHPs with a unique opportunity to grow the number of social housing properties under management. The program will require CHPs to partner with the corporate sector and private developers to manage social and possibly affordable housing. Successful community housing providers and partners tendering for Communities Plus projects will enter a 20 year management agreement with the Land and Housing Corporation.

Communities Plus seeks to deliver 27,000 dwellings over 10 years, 6,000 of which will be new dwellings. The program will be delivered on seven major sites and in 24 small neighbourhood projects. Bridge Housing is well positioned to participate in the Communities Plus program, particularly for Redfern and Waterloo sites located within the organisation's traditional area of business.

Social Affordable Housing Fund

The Social and Affordable Housing Fund (SAHF) is the other major existing supply program in NSW. The second round of SAHF is currently underway. Securing a SAHF Phase 2 package will have a significant impact on successful CHPs as it will substantially increase portfolio sizes and capacity to deliver additional affordable housing supply independent of government.

Successful CHPs and consortia in SAHF Phase 1 were those primarily with access to concessional land, such as faith based organisations. Competing with these organisations will be difficult in Phase 2, particularly given high tendering costs. As a result, Bridge Housing will need to carefully consider benefits and risks of each SAHF opportunity throughout the period of this Strategic Plan.

Planning mechanisms

The NSW Government has been increasingly resorting to planning system levers to secure affordable housing. New levers include:

- Greater Sydney Commission's District Plans requiring an affordable housing level of 5 to 10% across new developments in Sydney ^x
- Department of Planning and Environment extending State Environmental Planning Policy No. 70 – Affordable Housing (SEPP 70) from one to five councils
- NSW Government's land development agency, Landcom, requiring 5 to 10% of its development sites to be affordable housing ^{xi}

These changes represent a shift towards a more systemic approach to using planning levers and a move away from ad hoc and arbitrary Voluntary Planning Agreements.

The impact of these policy measures will become more evident in the third year of the Strategic Plan as the new planning policy regime is implemented. It will provide opportunities for Bridge Housing to increase affordable housing supply and build its existing affordable housing portfolio, through both fee for service management and ownership.

Economic drivers

The Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA)^{xii} has forecast 3.5% economic growth over the next three years to 2020. Inflation is projected to remain at 2.25% over this period, although building materials cost inflation is projected at 4%. Cash rates are still historically low and have been hovering 1.5% lower than over the previous three years.

The RBA notes that much of the GDP growth comes from investment in public infrastructure. There is increasing evidence about the link between housing and productivity.^{xiii} This strengthens the community housing sector's advocacy for investment in affordable housing close to jobs and education.

Despite the cooling of the housing market, access to affordable housing for lower income households is not projected to improve. This is related to the systemic and long term trend of increasing numbers of younger households being unable to enter into home ownership. This trend is exacerbated by recent stagnant wage growth. However, low cash rates present an opportunity for Bridge Housing to lock in cheap debt. This, combined with the cooling of the market, may provide Bridge Housing with a greater ability to procure or undertake development of multi unit blocks.

Employment and education

The RBA forecasts a lower unemployment rate at around 5%, with long term unemployment remaining high. These trends, paired with the casualisation of the workforce, will result in the lack of wage security and ability to negotiate a wage rise. They will also reduce the ability of people to access leave.

A Future Directions key driver is to increase workforce participation of existing tenants and improve education outcomes. Over the coming three years, Bridge Housing will continue improving tenant outcomes and enabling greater community participation through initiatives that will further assist tenants and residents to join the workforce.

Changing and ageing household

As elsewhere in the developed world, Australia is seeing ongoing growth in the number older persons households. These households will face increasing affordability challenges in the Sydney market. Many of these older households are likely to be single person and female. This demographic trend will see increased demand for support services as tenants age.

Bridge Housing is responding to the growth in older person households through proactive partnerships with service providers. We are also investing in innovative housing solutions that enable tenants to age in place. Developments such as the new multi unit block in Glebe (providing 158 fit-for-purpose, older person units) will provide a blueprint for work that supports the needs of residents now and into the future.

Housing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People

Indigenous disadvantage continues to remain high^{xiv} as does the number of homeless or inappropriately housed Indigenous Australians.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tenants make up over 8% of Bridge Housing residents, and we recognise the importance of respect and inclusion. We will continue our commitment to supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents through the provision of culturally appropriate services, through the implementation of our Reconciliation Action Plan and through the preservation of appropriate partnerships with Aboriginal agencies, service providers and by working with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tenant Advisory Group.





National Disability Insurance Scheme

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is changing how people with a disability choose to live. It is likely that the NDIS will trigger a major increase in demand for suitable housing and create additional opportunities for community housing providers. However, in NSW the NDIS has recently driven the outsourcing of group homes to the disability services sector, resulting in fewer instances of building new individual dwellings.

To harness the opportunities that the NDIS has presented, community housing providers have become developers and owners of group homes. Providers have also partnered with existing disability service organisations to supply tenancy and property management services. Bridge Housing has followed the management route and partnered with Achieve Australia.

Over the course of this Strategic Plan, we will continue building our understanding of the mechanics of the NDIS through our partnership. We will also continue reviewing the potential for us to undertake development and ownership of independent housing for people with a disability.

We remain committed to ensuring all Bridge Housing developments meet, at minimum, the Liveable Housing Australia silver level standards. In addition, we will ensure accessible housing is included in our developments. An example of our approach is shown in our 38 unit development in Parramatta, of which six apartments meet the higher adaptable housing standards under the Building Code of Australia and provide a higher level of access for people with disability, including participants in the NDIS.



Strategic Plan



Mission

Improving lives through affordable homes and quality services



Vision

A dynamic organisation, recognised for excellence in meeting housing need, improving resident wellbeing and governing responsibly

Our values

What do we mean by this?



Socially responsible

We are a **socially responsible** organisation with a commitment to social inclusion and improving the lives of the people and communities we support.



People focused

We are a **people focused** organisation. We keep our applicants and resident's needs at the core of all activity and decisions, empathise with their needs and deliver our services with fairness, respect and sensitivity. We value and support our employees to enable them to perform at their best and achieve their full potential.



Committed and passionate

We are **committed** and **passionate** and put our hearts and minds into our work. We value and encourage **innovation** and continually seek to improve our performance.



Build relationships

We **build relationships** based on trust and respect to create positive outcomes for the people and communities we serve.



Professionalism and integrity

We act with **professionalism** and **integrity**. We take responsibility for our decision and actions and provide a consistent high quality service. Our decisions are based on sound judgment and our culture engenders good governance, transparency and honesty.



bridge housing Helen Tighe

Strategic objectives

Providing quality homes and housing services

- 1.1 Engage our residents and strengthen local communities
- 1.2 Uphold a customer focus across our services
- 1.3 Deliver quality, proactive tenancy management
- 1.4 Successfully transition and embed new residents in the Northern Beaches
- 1.5 Maintain properties to a high standard that meets resident needs

Growing sustainably to meet affordable housing needs

- 2.1 Increase the number of properties we own through tenders, procurement and development
- 2.2 Increase the number of properties we manage
- 2.3 Take an adaptive approach to our organisational structure which supports growth and change

Supporting our people and improving workplace wellbeing

- 3.1 Attract, recognise, reward and retain quality staff
- 3.2 Develop, train and support our people
- 3.3 Create a more flexible, fit for purpose workplace
- 3.4 Retain and build on our positive organisational culture as we grow

Governing and managing effectively

- 4.1 Maintain strong corporate governance and organisational management
- 4.2 Maintain strong financial management, risk management and operational performance
- 4.3 Meet our regulatory and compliance responsibilities
- 4.4 Undertake leading practice in strategic and business planning, monitoring and reporting
- 4.5 Adopt evolving technologies that improve resident outcomes and organisational performance
- 4.6 Measure and report on the outcomes of our services

Engaging our partners and enhancing our industry leadership

- 5.1 Communicate proactively and work closely with our partners and stakeholders
- 5.2 Build on our strong brand and reputation
- 5.3 Increase our philanthropic engagement and support
- 5.4 Advocate strongly for continued growth and development of the community housing sector



1 Providing quality homes and housing services

At Bridge Housing we recognise our residents not only as customers, but as citizens with the right to participate in decisions that affect their lives.

During the 2015-18 plan we worked with our residents to deliver Building Bridges, our award winning community building and engagement strategy. We are continuing this work during 2018-21 as we deliver our second edition of Building Bridges. This will include initiatives focused on reducing social isolation, engaging young people and celebrating and strengthening connections across our diverse resident communities. It will also include the Bridge to Work tenant employment program, delivered in partnership with CoACT.

One of our biggest achievements under the Strategic Plan 2015-18 was our success in the Social Housing Management Transfer Program. We were thrilled to be awarded the Northern Beaches package, with our partner, the Women's Housing Company. In late 2019, we will take over management of 1,200 additional properties. In 2018-21 we will therefore have a strong focus on welcoming our new Northern Beaches residents and seamlessly transitioning tenancy and property management services on the Northern Beaches.

We are also committed to maintaining strong services for our existing residents throughout this time of growth. This means continuing our customer focused approach and continuous improvement processes. It means maintaining our focus on property maintenance, which has resulted in 96% of our properties meeting or exceeding social asset standards. As well as allocating a percentage of units, in all new developments, that are accessible for disabled people. Which will enable us to continue to increase our provision of housing for people with special needs.

In addition, Bridge Housing takes a place-making approach to the planning, design and management of our homes and communities. We provide detailed direction on our housing design and place-making approach through Places People Want to Live and in detailed design briefs to architects and planners. We are committed to providing housing that is built to high design standards, seeking housing that is accessible, adaptable and sustainable.

Critical success factors

- 1.1 Engage our residents and strengthen local communities
- 1.2 Uphold a customer focus across our services
- 1.3 Deliver quality, proactive tenancy management
- 1.4 Successfully transition and embed new residents in the Northern Beaches
- 1.5 Maintain properties to a high standard that meets resident needs

Indicators of success

- ▶ Maintain or improve satisfaction rates for current tenants
- ▶ Improve satisfaction rates for Northern Beaches tenants
- ▶ Maintain our property standards above industry benchmarks
- ▶ Increase resident participation rates in programs and initiatives



2 Growing sustainably to meet affordable housing needs

Between 2015 and 2018, we added over 400 homes to our property portfolio. While we are very proud of this achievement, we also extremely aware of the magnitude of the housing affordability problem in Sydney.

Having become a successful small scale developer of affordable housing, our next step is to increase our contribution to supply affordable housing supply. We know this will take creative thinking, careful planning and strong collaboration with new and existing partners.

We will also need to take advantage of strategic opportunities, such as the NSW Government's Communities Plus program and its Social and Affordable Housing Fund. A significant emerging opportunity is the introduction of affordable housing targets and other changes to the planning system.

An example of our innovative approach is shown in the establishment of HomeGround Real Estate Sydney, our not-for-profit real estate agency. Having launched HomeGround in early 2018, over the next three years we will focus on embedding and growing this business.

Critical success factors

- 2.1 Increase the number of properties we own through tenders, procurement and development
- 2.2 Increase the number of properties we manage
- 2.3 Take an adaptive approach to our organisational structure which supports growth and change

Indicators of success

- ▶ Deliver development commitments on time and within budget
- ▶ Increase the number of properties owned
- ▶ Increase the number of properties we manage

3 Supporting our people and improving workplace wellbeing

We pride ourselves on attracting exceptional staff, maintaining a positive culture and providing meaningful development opportunities for our staff.

Our industry leading approaches are driven through Stay, Say and Strive, our people and culture strategy. They include our White Ribbon accreditation which, among other initiatives, has resulted in provision of paid leave for staff who are victims of domestic violence and 12 weeks paid parental leave for staff with three or more consecutive years of service.

In 2018-21 we will be creating an intern, graduate and trainee program, as well as focusing on growing our next generation of leaders. We will also be developing a Diversity Plan and reviewing our Total Rewards Program, including a review of our remuneration strategy.

Our investment in our people is recognised in our employee engagement level, which is very high. In 2018-21, we will continue to measure staff engagement through our annual Employee Opinion Survey. This enables us to understand emerging issues and concerns, and to work with our staff to address them.

An ongoing challenge is retaining staff engagement as we continue to grow. A key focus for 2018-21 will be on establishing a strong culture in our new Northern Beaches office. The establishment of this second office will be an important milestone in our growth.

Another focus is on relocating our central office to a workspace which aligns with our culture and accommodates our growth.

Critical success factors

- 3.1 Attract, recognise, reward and retain quality staff
- 3.2 Develop, train and support our people
- 3.3 Create a more flexible, fit for purpose workplace
- 3.4 Retain and build on our positive organisational culture as we grow

Indicators of success

- ▲ Maintain employee engagement rates above community housing sector benchmarks
- ▲ Ensure staff turnover is at or below industry benchmarks
- ▲ Maintain up to date development plans for all staff
- ▲ Maintain reportable Work, Health and Safety incidents at zero

4 Governing and managing effectively

Bridge Housing has a very strong reputation for its corporate governance and effective management. The organisation is governed by a skills based Board of eight Directors with impressive professional, corporate and community services backgrounds. Over the 2015-18 Strategic Plan period we refreshed our board, welcoming four new Directors.

The organisation is led by an Executive Team with expertise in managing the diverse business operations associated with the provision of affordable housing. Bridge Housing has a strong culture of strategic and business planning, as well as regular monitoring and reporting. We continue to win awards for our transparency and corporate reporting.

In 2018-21 we will further strengthen our corporate planning and reporting by introducing the Difference We Make. This will provide a robust framework to measure the effects of our services, in alignment with the NSW Government's Human Services Outcomes Framework.

We will also undertake our next big ICT step change, driven by our 3 year Information Technology Strategic Plan. This includes initiatives such as expanding our self service portal, improving mobile working for our staff and upgrading of our hardware and infrastructure environment.

We remain financially sustainable and continue to deliver positive annual operating profits. We also continue to perform strongly against industry wide performance measures. Our level of rent arrears and time properties are vacant are well below benchmarks. These commercial outcomes are supported by strong resident engagement, such as the highly successful Hand Up arrears management program.

Critical success factors

- 4.1 Maintain strong corporate governance and organisational management
- 4.2 Maintain strong financial management, risk management and operational performance
- 4.3 Meet our regulatory and compliance responsibilities
- 4.4 Undertake leading practice in strategic and business planning, monitoring and reporting
- 4.5 Adopt evolving technologies that improve resident outcomes and organisational performance
- 4.6 Measure and report on the outcomes of our services

Indicators of success

- ▶ Meet all compliance and regulatory requirements
- ▶ Maintain performance against financial and operational KPIs
- ▶ Meet budgeted financial outcomes
- ▶ Maintain or reduce rent arrears and days void or vacant





5 Engaging our partners and enhancing our industry leadership

The contemporary community housing industry is highly competitive. To take advantage of strategic opportunities, we need to continue to promote our strengths and achievements.

In recent years we have made big strides in our marketing and communications, including refreshing our website and significantly increasing our social media presence. We have a strong voice within the community housing industry, demonstrated through our active participation in industry networks, events and campaigns.

We need to continue to keep our communications fresh and our voice heard. We also need to actively maintain our relationships with partners, both to increase our ability to meet affordable housing need and to provide outstanding services for tenants.

In 2018-21, areas of additional focus will include using excellent communications to support our growth in Northern Beaches and increasing our philanthropic engagement.

Critical success factors

- 5.1 Communicate proactively and work closely with our partners and stakeholders
- 5.2 Build on our strong brand and reputation
- 5.3 Increase our philanthropic engagement and support
- 5.4 Advocate strongly for continued growth and development of the community housing sector

Indicators of success

- ▲ Increase social media and digital traffic
- ▲ Continue to be recognised through industry awards
- ▲ Maintain or increase attendance and presentations at conferences, seminars and cross sector forums
- ▲ Increase the number of philanthropic and corporate partnerships

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- ^{iv} Economy.id (2018) <https://economy.id.com.au/parramatta/housing-prices>
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- ^{vii} City of Sydney, Street count (2018) <http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/community/community-support/homelessness/street-count>
- ^{viii} Reducing Pressure on Housing Affordability (2018) www.budget.gov.au/2017-18/content/glossies/factsheets/html/HA_11.htm
- ^{ix} National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation (2017) <https://treasury.gov.au/consultation/c2017-222774/>
- ^x Greater Sydney Commission, A Metropolis of Three Cities (2018) www.greater.sydney/greater-sydney-region-plan. See [Objective 11 Housing is more diverse and Affordable](#)
- ^{xi} Landcom, Housing Affordability and Diversity Policy (2018) www.landcom.com.au/approach/housing/
- ^{xii} Reserve Bank of Australia Statement on Monetary Policy, February 2018
- ^{xiii} Improving the Economic Arguments for more diverse and affordable housing models for Sydney (2018) <https://cityfutures.be.unsw.edu.au/research/projects/delivering-affordable-housing-improving-economic-arguments-housing-interventions/>
- ^{xiv} Closing the Gap (2018) <https://closingthegap.pmc.gov.au/>







The background of the page is a repeating pattern of squares, each divided diagonally from the top-left to the bottom-right. The triangles are filled with various shades of blue, including a vibrant cerulean, a deep navy, a light sky blue, and a muted, dusty blue. The pattern is offset between rows and columns, creating a dynamic, woven visual effect.

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