

2024 END OF YEAR UPDATE

Housing Plus and its subsidiaries respectfully acknowledge the traditional custodians of the country on which we work. We honour their stories, resilience, and wisdom, which continue to enrich and guide us in a shared journey towards a respectful and inclusive future.

WISHING EVERYONE A HAPPY, SAFE CHRISTMAS.

JUSTIN CANTELO, CEO

As we look back on the past year, we are filled with a deep sense of pride and optimism. Our organisation has continued to grow, adapt, and make a difference in the lives of those we serve.

Both our Housing Plus and Plus Community teams have shown exceptional commitment to supporting our customers and clients. Their dedication and hard work have been the driving force behind our successes, ensuring we deliver on our vision to improve lives through independence and choice.

This year has been marked by significant achievements and growth, from the launch of new initiatives to the completion of impactful projects. We have navigated challenges with resilience and have emerged stronger, thanks to the unwavering support of our customers, clients, employees, partners and community.

I invite you to read through this newsletter and our Annual Report for more details on our accomplishments of the year and our future plans.

Thank you for your ongoing support, and wishing a Merry Christmas to you and your families.





CHRISTMAS UPDATE

Office Hours Over December & January

Housing Plus and Plus Community offices will close at 1pm on Tuesday, 24 December 2024 and will re-open on Thursday, 2 January 2025.

Domestic Violence and Homelessness services will continue to operate and can be reached via phone, Monday to Friday, from 9am to 5pm, except public holidays. We will have emergency on-call Tenant Services operating Monday to Friday, from 9am to 5pm, except public holidays.

Link2Home Emergency Accommodation - 1800 152 152

Orange Homelessness Support - 1800 674 474

Central West Domestic Violence Services - 1300 384 357

Western Domestic Violence Services - 1800 940 406

Central North Domestic Violence Services - 1800 959 304

On Call Tenant Services - 1800 603 300

Report A Repair - 1800 603 300



We hope you have a safe and happy Christmas!



A YEAR IN REVIEW

WELCOMING MARIA WOODS: OUR DIRECTOR OF DV AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

In September of this year, we were thrilled to welcome Maria Woods into the position of Director of Domestic Violence and Community Services, and are pleased to share that she is already making a significant impact.

Maria brings a wealth of experience from her senior leadership and clinical roles within the Western NSW Local Health District, focusing on women's health, sexual assault, and child protection. Before joining us, she served as District Manager for PARVAN (Prevention and Response To Violence Abuse and Neglect) and Women's Health Violence Prevention, where she led a team across complex portfolios and implemented numerous innovative service initiatives.

We are so excited to have Maria on our team and look forward to the continued positive impact she will have on our services and community.



LAUNCHING OUR CUSTOMER ADVISORY GROUP

This year, we proudly launched our Customer Advisory Group, and we're excited to share that it already has four passionate members. This group is all about giving our tenants a strong voice and ensuring that their insights help shape the future of our services.

We are currently seeking more customers who wish to get involved and make a significant impact in their community. By joining, you'll have the opportunity to provide input on key projects and contribute ideas that directly impact our services. Speak to your Housing Officer today to learn more.



A YEAR IN REVIEW

OPENING THE ORCHARD DUBBO

In July, we proudly completed and opened the doors to The Orchard Dubbo, offering vital safe housing for women and children escaping domestic and family violence in Dubbo and surrounding areas. The Orchard features four self-contained units, totalling seven bedrooms, and provides a secure refuge for those in need.

Supported by both Federal and State Government funding, The Orchard Dubbo follows the innovative Core and Cluster model. This approach offers independent, self-contained living alongside essential services like counselling, legal assistance, and further education, all on-site.

Tenancy of the units began in July 2024, giving women and children in the Dubbo region a secure place to stay and access to support services when leaving an unsafe situation. We also welcomed an enthusiastic new team to operate The Orchard Dubbo. They've quickly settled in and are already providing an outstanding level of service and support to our clients.

A YEAR IN REVIEW



R U OK DAY 2024

R U OK Day was a fantastic opportunity for our teams to come together for some much-needed time to check in, connect, and focus on self-care and wellbeing.

Teams participated in activities such as lunches, outdoor walks, remote wellbeing sessions including chair yoga and tips from a dietitian. Everyone jumped right in, and it was awesome to see so many people prioritising their health on this day.

As an organisation, we also took the opportunity to roll out our new internal Wellbeing and Benefits Initiative. This program is all about supporting our team's health and wellbeing via a new online platform.

A big shout-out goes to Lifeline Central West for joining us and sharing some practical ways to take care of ourselves and others. Their message about asking "R U OK?" really resonated and reminded us how important it is to check in with each other, while also looking after yourself.

A YEAR IN REVIEW

DELIVERING NEW ACCOMMODATION IN DUBBO

In July of this year, we were thrilled to announce the completion of six new units in Dubbo, designed to help individuals experiencing street-sleeping transition into stable accommodation.

As part of the NSW Government's Together Home Program, we're building a total of ten specialist units – six in Dubbo and an additional four units in Orange.

We're incredibly proud of our role in providing stable housing and integrated support for those experiencing homelessness in our community. As dedicated advocates for those facing homelessness and as providers of essential community housing, we're excited to deliver a small portion of what's needed to tackle homelessness in Dubbo.



These new homes have a 7-star rating under the Nationwide House Energy Rating Scheme, which will help reduce energy costs for residents. Built to the Silver Standard of the Livable Housing Design Guidelines, these homes offer optimal accessibility, allowing residents to age in place comfortably. These features are designed to ease cost-of-living pressures and promote sustainable living.

FROM CUSTOMER TO HOMEOWNER!

Sarah's* journey with Housing Plus began in early 2005, and she has been a valued customer for over 19 years. During a recent conversation Sarah joyfully revealed that she had taken the monumental step of purchasing her very own home marking a significant milestone in her life. With pride in her voice, she shared her excitement about her new home, a testament to her determination and hard work. In addition to our heartfelt congratulations, we assured Sarah that we would assist to make this a smooth transition. Sarah's success story serves as inspiration to us all and we wish her nothing but the best as she embarks on this exciting new chapter.



*Name changed to protect identity

A YEAR IN REVIEW

ANNUAL EMPLOYEE CONFERENCE

In July, we hosted our Annual Employee Conference at the Banksia Function Centre in Orange. The day was filled with insightful sessions and the exciting launch of our new 3-Year Strategic Plan.

The event kicked off with a warm welcome and a coffee to start the day on a high note. We took the opportunity to acknowledge some key achievements from the past year before diving into the details of our new 3-Year Strategy. This strategy will guide our efforts and focus over the coming years, ensuring we continue to thrive and achieve our goals.

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who participated and contributed to making this event a success. Here's to the next 12 months and a bright future ahead!



THE 2024 NATIONAL POWERHOUSING AWARDS

In November, our team had the honour of attending the 2024 National PowerHousing Awards in Canberra, and what a night it was!

We are incredibly proud to announce that our very own Housing Plus Support Coordinator, Kirsty Marcantelli, was recognised for her outstanding contributions and nominated for the Rising Star Award. Kirsty's dedication, hard work, and passion have made a tremendous impact, and we are thrilled to share that she was awarded runner-up in this highly competitive category.

Over the past twelve months, Kirsty has demonstrated considerable growth. Her initiative, creativity, and resourcefulness have shone through in her everyday work, making her an invaluable asset to our team.

Another highlight of the evening was the nomination of our Housing Plus Asset Services team, in collaboration with Birribee Housing Asset Services, for the Partnership Award. This partnership, which began in September 2022, has been incredibly impactful. Together, we've enabled Birribee to provide Asset Services (via Housing Plus) in the Bathurst and Orange region, areas where they had no existing operations, following the transfer of 163 properties into their portfolio.

The night was a celebration of our team's dedication and the power of collaboration. Congratulations to all involved!



EVENTS WRAP

WHITE TIE BALL

We are thrilled to announce that the 7th Annual White Tie Ball raised an incredible \$125,000 for The Orchard Orange — a record-breaking amount!

The event took place on Saturday, October 12, at the Orange Ex-Services Club, welcoming over 300 guests. The night was filled with elegance, entertainment, and a shared commitment to supporting those in need.

Operated by Plus Community, The Orchard Orange is not funded by the government, making community events like the White Tie Ball vital to keeping our doors open and providing much-needed comfort, housing and support.

A big thank you to the Orchard Fundraising Committee, our event partner, Grounded Electrical, sponsors, donors, attendees and staff who made the night such a success.



GOING NUTS IN THE BUSH

The second annual "Going Nuts in the Bush" event in Orange was a vibrant and heartfelt celebration, bringing the community together to dance the Nutbush and support those affected by Domestic and Family Violence.

Held at Robertson Park on November 29, the event saw a fantastic turnout. The crowd was filled with energy and solidarity as everyone joined in the dance, honoring the memory of Tina Turner—a beloved icon and survivor who used her voice to advocate for victims of Domestic and Family Violence.

This year's "Going Nuts in the Bush" was part of the global 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence campaign, which runs from November 25 to December 10. This campaign aims to raise awareness and inspire action to end gender-based violence around the world.



A smiling woman with glasses is shown from the chest up, standing in a well-lit clothing closet. She is wearing a dark top and a watch on her left wrist. The closet shelves are filled with various items of clothing.

SERVICE SPOTLIGHT: SUPPORT COORDINATION

A special shout out to our Support Coordination service, which plays a critical role in helping our customers sustain their tenancies. This service provides wrap-around support, connecting tenants with essential services to help them navigate challenges and maintain stable housing environments.

In the past year alone, our Support Coordination team completed 2,039 service requests. Since the program's launch in 2020, in response to the impacts of COVID-19, we have successfully completed 5,964 service requests. These have included financial assistance, necessary home modifications, and access to mental health services, all of which are essential in helping our tenants thrive.

Our Support Coordination team continues to be an indispensable part of our purpose, working tirelessly to connect tenants with the right services and provide ongoing support. We are immensely proud of the positive difference this service has made in our community, ensuring that our tenants not only have access to housing but also the tools they need to thrive.

RHONDA'S STORY

One standout example of the impact of our Support Coordination service is the story of Rhonda, a Mudgee resident and long-time tenant. After suffering a stroke in 2020, Rhonda faced the daunting prospect of moving into a nursing home. However, our Support Coordination team remained in touch during her hospital stay, ensuring she felt supported. With their help, necessary home modifications were quickly arranged, allowing Rhonda to return home and maintain her independence.

When asked about the Housing Plus Support Coordination team, Rhonda says:

“The support I received from Housing Plus has made a significant impact on my life. They are more than just a housing provider; they represent friendship and ongoing support.”



SERVICE SPOTLIGHT: OPPORTUNITY PATHWAYS

Are you interested in gaining employment, working more hours or exploring training opportunities? Opportunity Pathways may be the program for you. Opportunity Pathways is a program that works with people, 17 years of age or older, who are linked in with social or community housing providers to create and achieve their own goals around employment and education.

HOW WE CAN HELP

- Employment
- Training & qualifications
- Workshops
- Coaching and mentoring
- Case management
- On-the-job support
- Financial assistance to help obtain work



Contact us today
on 1800 940 409
or speak to your
Housing Officer!

REBECCA'S* STORY

- Opportunity Pathways assisted Rebecca by initially linking her in with longer term mental health supports and Skillset, resulting in Rebecca maintaining good mental health and gaining casual employment in the trades sector.
- Opportunity Pathways assisted Rebecca to build the confidence and practical skills to address barriers in her life, while navigating the workforce. Opportunity Pathways also purchased work clothing that was not provided by the employer.
- Rebecca reports she loves her job, and has been offered a permanent part-time contract, she plans to continue with her current employer whilst working toward her long-term goal of progressing up the career ladder to eventually become a team leader and hopefully one day move into upper management.

*Name changed to protect identity

We have program
coaches working in
Orange, Bathurst,
Dubbo, Oberon,
Cabonne, Cowra,
Blayney, Wellington,
Narromine, Parkes
and Forbes.



A SPECIAL CHRISTMAS THANK YOU

Thank you to all the organisations and individuals who kindly donated gifts and goods this holiday season. Merry Christmas from the teams at Housing Plus and Plus Community.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT IN 2024



2024 PUBLICATIONS

Read more about this year's achievements and future plans here:



2023-24 ANNUAL REPORT



2025-28 STRATEGIC PLAN

