



**Queensland Youth
Housing Coalition Inc.**

2018-19

ANNUAL REPORT

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about QYHC

The vision of the Queensland Youth Housing Coalition (QYHC) is:

All young people need a safe and secure home to be included in our society and experience holistic wellbeing.

Whilst a bold undertaking, we note the various options for intervention when young people experience homelessness. Further opportunities are yet to be explored. Such interventions need to occur at the earliest possible point in time to minimise the impacts of homelessness on young people.

We accept the plethora of life issues that lead young people to homelessness but reject any notion that such issues need negatively impact their life trajectory. The experience of homelessness for young people can be short lived and rapidly resolved. There is no reason for young people to experience chronic homelessness and the associated myriad of problematic life outcomes.

QYHC is committed to improving the life opportunities and wellbeing of young people impacted by homelessness by working collaboratively across government and non-government organisations to address homelessness, through the provision of housing, and addressing the multitude of associated issues that impact wellbeing such as: poverty, access to education, health services, income, safety and social inclusion. QYHC acknowledges that connection and relationships are key for all young people and underpin our collective work.

QYHC is a not-for-profit state-wide coalition of organisations and individuals engaged across projects and campaigns. QYHC is intent on conducting research projects, informing policy and enhancing community education as well as working on workforce development activities to ensure a robust sector and community able to address homelessness and the associated issues that impact young people.

Individuals and organisations join the coalition due to their collective belief that all young people need a safe and secure home to be included in our society and experience holistic wellbeing. In doing so, they agree to participate in QYHC's policy and practice activities as well as its campaigns.

QYHC is a coalition of like-minded individuals and organisations who share social justice values, are intent on inclusion and use an evidence base to focus on strategies that ensure all young people have access to a safe and secure home.

It is important for all in our government and non-government sectors and communities to be involved:

Please follow this link to become a member or Corporate Sponsor:

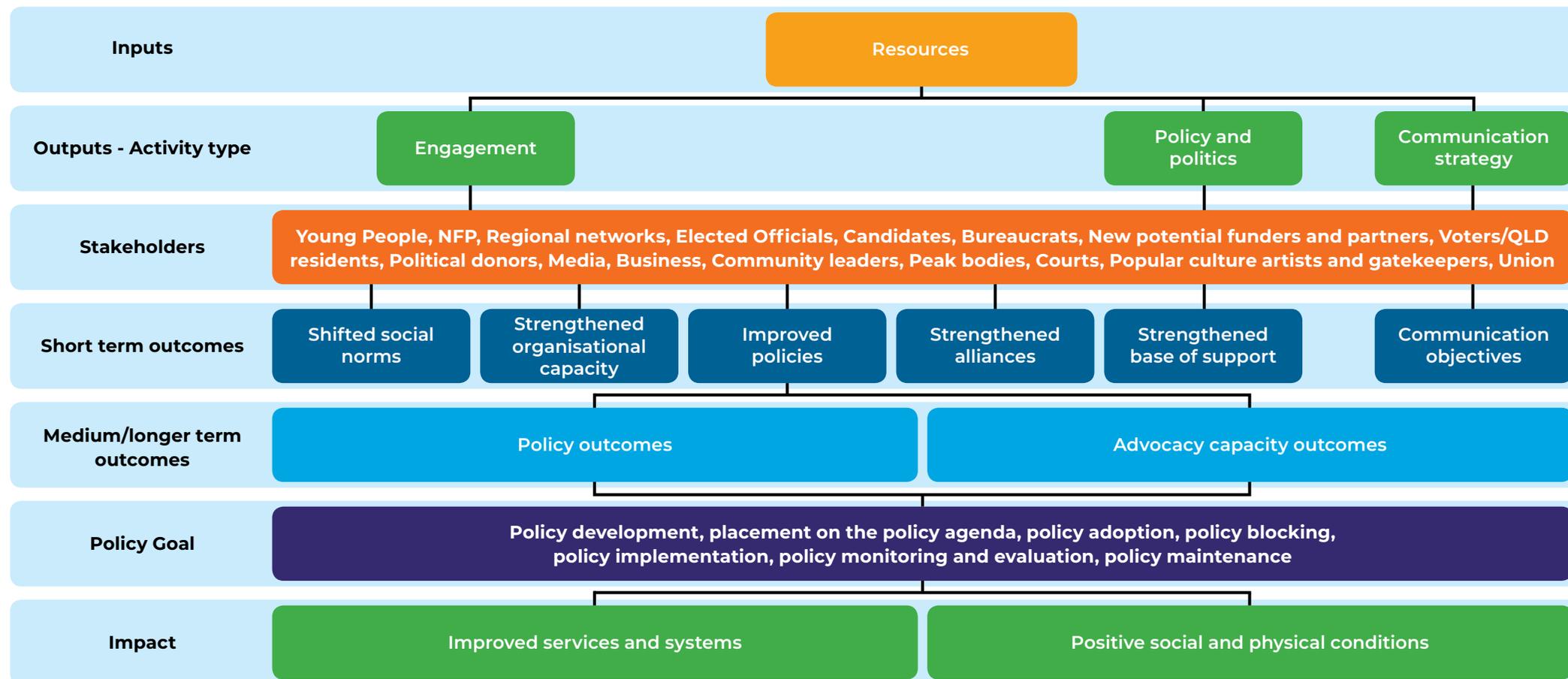
<https://www.qyhc.org.au/get-involved/become-a-member/#register>

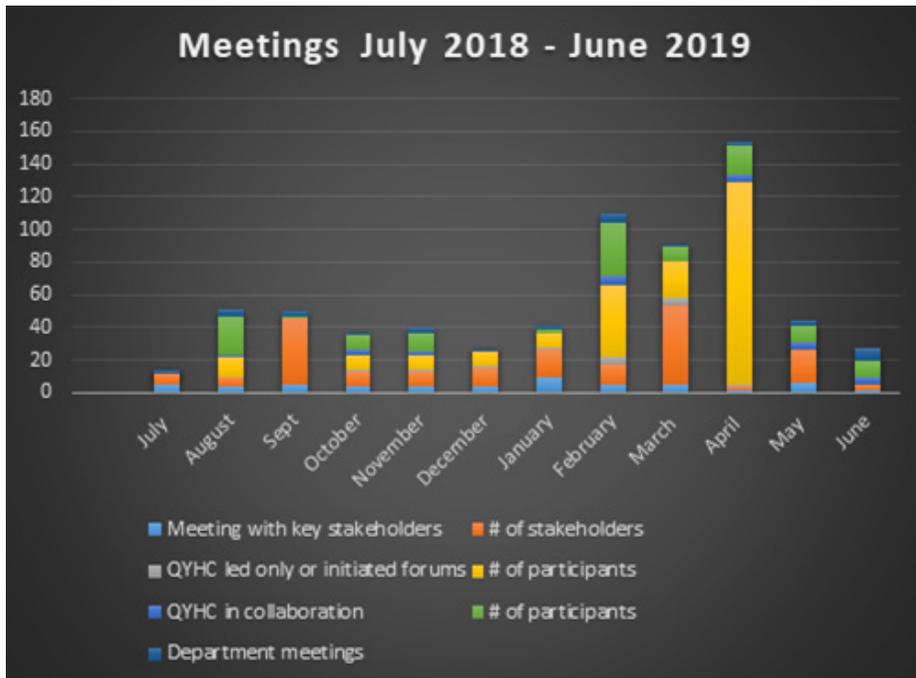


The Queensland Youth Housing Coalition (QYHC) is focused on ensuring that investment is directed to projects that meet our vision. There is much more work to do in the area of metrics for advocacy organisations. QYHC would like to acknowledge the valuable work of those who have contributed thus far, including: the Aspen Institute, J.R. McKenzie Trust, Harvey Family Research Project, Annie E. Casey Foundation (2007) a guide to measuring policy and advocacy and Shelter

SA paper 'Evaluating advocacy – a must read for all peak bodies'. In developing our Program Logic, we gratefully acknowledge the aforementioned alongside the support of Harry Wildman, Associate Director, Government and Public Sector at Ernst &Young.

The program logic is framed within the vision, values and principles of the QYHC as articulated in our Prospectus. There are a range of assumptions and theoretical underpinnings within the program logic. These are (a) evidence based practice, (b) adolescent development, (c) continuum of support and (d) life course perspective. These assumptions and theoretical underpinnings are fully articulated in the QYHC Housing and Homelessness Framework.

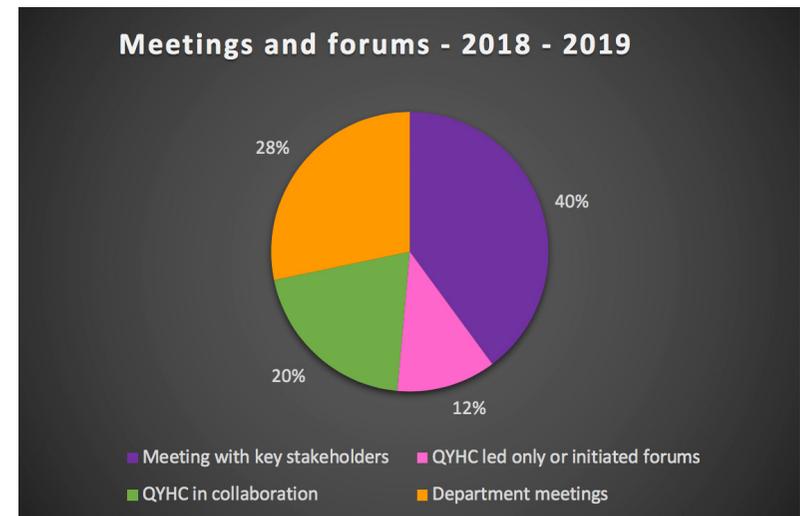




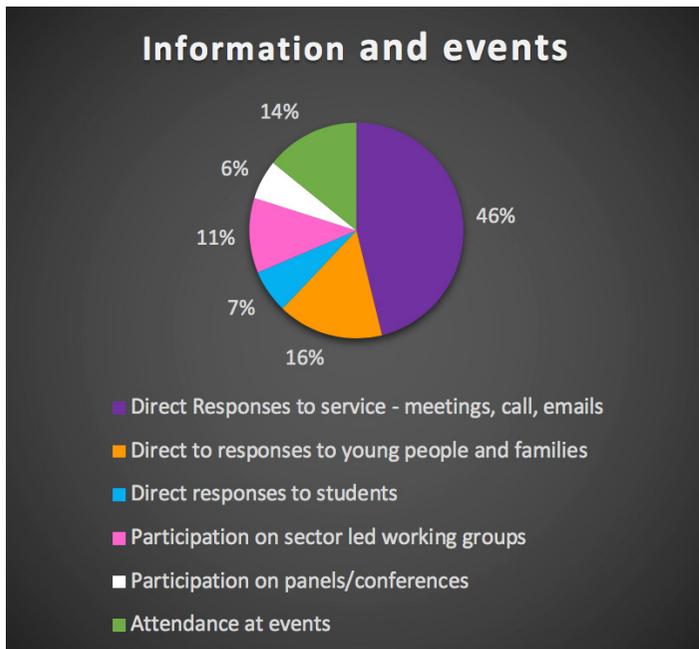
The data from the QYHC activities of 2018 – 2019 demonstrates that we spent a considerable part of the year meeting with key stakeholders and the Department of Housing and Public Works (DHPW).

This is not surprising considering the year saw the commencement of the strategic alliance between QYHC and the DHPW.

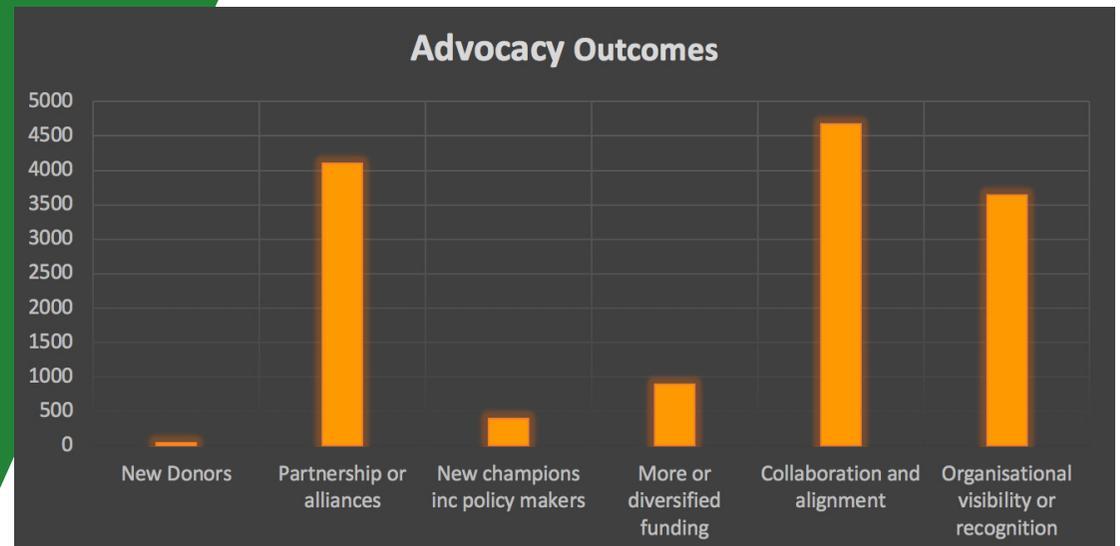
In addition, significant time was spent responding to services around the State seeking information and support from QYHC – particularly with regard to the initiatives in the Partnering for Impact and Partnering for Growth announcements from DHPW.

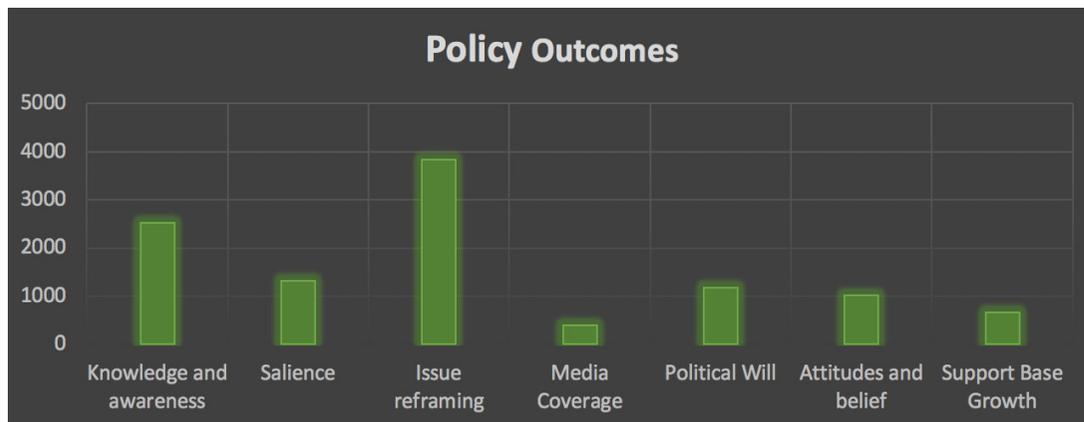


Interestingly, 16% of all activities in terms of information was provided directly to young people or their families. Whilst this is not outside the scope of the organisation to deliver, it is not a key deliverable given our limited capacity to provide follow-up and support.



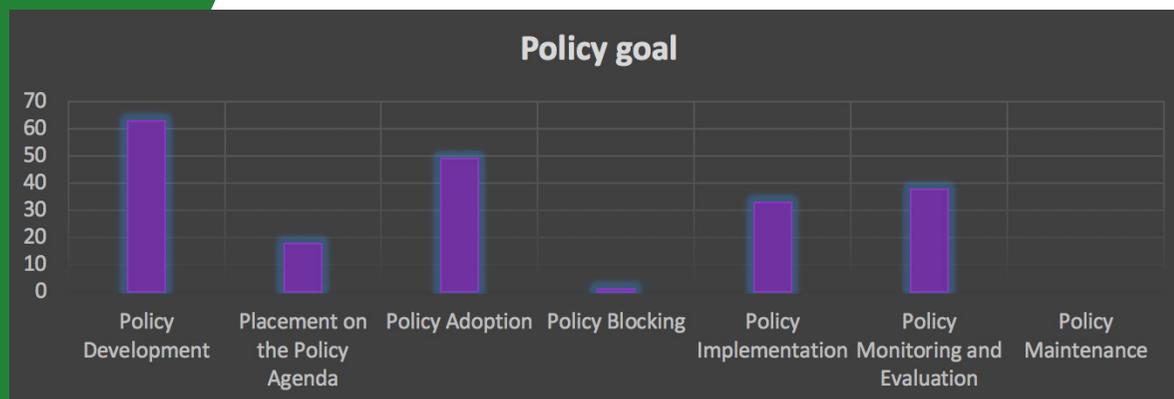
The data also provides an insight into the weight of the work in terms of advocacy and policy outcomes. The advocacy outcomes naturally focus on the organisation identifying and working with key stakeholders in collaborative areas of work to ensure alignment. The focus on diversified funding will increase given that this needs to be driven from evidence. In time, the coalition anticipates established collaboration and organisational visibility as we increase our attention on new donors, champions and funding.





Similarly, the policy outcomes have focused on knowledge and awareness of youth homelessness and housing issues and reframing issues to include young people’s needs in new policy development. Salience, attitudes and beliefs are the next areas where the weight of work has been dedicated. We are fortunate to have spent minimal time on political will, given the significant commitment to the wellbeing of young people by the current State government. Over time, we intend on improving media coverage and community support for the key issues that impact young people in our State.

The medium term outcome with regard to the contribution of our work in policy has been policy development (as we discuss with key stakeholders areas of policy gaps and barriers) and policy adoption (as we seek to have new policy implemented). However, there has been work in the area of policy monitoring and evaluation as we have participated in reviews and evaluations of policy. Less has been achieved in placement on the policy agenda, however. Considering much has been done in policy development, it is anticipated that this area might show more weight of work as we present policy options to government. Lastly there has not been many policies that we have not supported and it could be argued this is reflective of the strength of the strategic alliance.



impact statement

- Prevention and Early Intervention Project – delivery of a new service model and costing focusing on improved early intervention responses to young people and their families.
- Supporting Young People under 16 in Specialist Homelessness Services – development of new guidelines to be endorsed across-government, enabling an enhanced response to young people under 16 years of age.
- Supporting the development of the *Supportive Lodgings Model*, enhancing responses to young people who are couch surfing with a view to supporting, where possible, family reunification.
- Supporting the *Shelteristic* project which documents improved service delivery design specifications. This project has been supported by the DHPW and aims to ensure improved shelter access and experiences by young people.
- Supporting the Foyers Community of Practice across Queensland. This project seeks to ensure service delivery capital and service delivery design meets the needs of young people in Queensland.



our
partners

**QYHC is funded by and in partnership with
the Department of Housing and Public Works.**



from the management committee

To our members, the Department of Housing and Public Works, and to other partners who have contributed to our shared work this year, thank you all for being part of the Queensland Youth Housing Coalition in 2018/19.

This year has been particularly remarkable because QYHC was able to once again operate fully, as a funded service. The first year returning as a funded agency is not without its hurdles. The organisation first needed to refine an operational plan, secure and establish office space, recruit and induct staff and develop policies and procedures to guide the deliverables.

Both the management committee and the staff team were committed to exploring and investing in a partnership approach with government and non-government contributors. It's one thing to say this, but to really work in this way takes re-thinking ways of being and doing, and trial and error of new approaches. QYHC was determined to support improved engagement between service delivery agencies and Department of Housing and Public works without being the gatekeeper of this engagement. We were determined to reinforce the capacity for the stories and voices of young people and those working with them to find their way into the design of the programs, funded to support this work.

We were lucky to recruit a staff team who were both passionate about working in this way, about improving outcomes for young people and who were capable of hitting the ground running to deliver agreed pieces of work.

The knowledge and skill of Maria Leebeek was welcomed back with open arms. She set to work rebuilding the foundations using traditional approaches like meetings and forums as well as establishing an online community via UBegin, to identify successful models, and progress sector projects and strategies. Maria is well known for her flexible and inclusive way of working, equally demonstrated

by this kind of approach and her willingness to co-locate with Housing and Public Works Programs staff on a part time basis to give day to day life to this partnership. Be sure to read the Executive Director's report for more detail regarding operational outcomes this year.

We are, of course, sad to have lost Maria recently. Maria moved on to her new role as the Gold Coast Youth Service CEO in early November. We at the Coalition are indebted to her for her contribution once again this year. She is moving closer to her home and we understand her need to do so. The Gold Coast Youth Service is very fortunate to have gained her expertise. At the same time, we are fortunate that Maria has handed the baton to Lorraine who has taken the reins of QYHC. Lorraine began her work in the youth homelessness sector in the mid' 1990s and has been a significant contributor to the sector and QYHC in many ways since. I'm confident that QYHC remains in good hands.

The Prevention and Early Intervention Project (PEIP) was a large piece of work requiring collaboration across multiple Departments and careful consideration by stakeholders to inform potential model design. We are grateful to the wisdom and energy of Tanya Turrell for guiding this piece thus far. This project has received 12 months additional funding on the back of this important work.

Other highlights for me this year include the review of and recommendations to improve the experience of young people aged under 16 years who are experiencing homeless, as well as the delivery of another successful Platform 1225 event. Special thanks to Caitlin King for managing this annual forum. It is always well attended and feedback regarding the content very positive. As usual, the young panellists stole the show this year with an incredibly thought-provoking session informed by their experiences.

Those contributing behind the scenes deserve mention here as well. Meloney Menerey contributed wholeheartedly to the organisation's smooth operation as Administration Support Officer. The organisation has also been supported by Penny Gordon, expertly and warmly facilitating our planning and development work on a regular basis.

Finally, I want to thank the Management Committee. It has been an absolute honour to work alongside Alice Thomson, Megan Murray, Christine Hastwell, Brett Johnson and Cate Ryan this year. I am often awestruck by the energy and



commitment of these wonderful characters, engaging actively and thoughtfully in their own time, often after long days in their day jobs.

This year is my last year as Chairperson of the Queensland Youth Housing Coalition. It is an organisation with a rich history and it has been wonderful to play a small part in that over the years. But QYHC is and always will be more than an organisation to me. In my mind, QYHC is a conduit for each of us who wants to actively contribute to improve housing outcomes for young people. I will certainly miss the time at the table with my colleagues as a committee member but I will always be, like you, committed to this shared endeavour.

Adam Barnes
Chairperson



from the executive director

Passion, commitment and innovative approaches to addressing youth homelessness are core to the work of QYHC and critical to answering the question – how best can we make a difference and how do we know we have achieved it?

I want to acknowledge the work across the public and not-for-profit sector in being open to exploring how we can do things differently and in a more agile manner. Together, we have been able to create better policy and practice frameworks for systematically responding to young people who are experiencing homelessness, at risk of homelessness or in need of affordable housing with or without support.

I would like to thank the Management Committee at the Queensland Youth Housing Coalition, led by Adam Barnes, who kept me grounded and focused on what we wanted to achieve, how we wanted to achieve it and reflecting on whether what we were doing would make a real difference. I also want to thank Minister de Brenni and the leadership team within the Department of Housing and Public Works, as the strategic alliance would not have been realised without their desire to be focused on how we can better work together to address youth housing and homelessness. Doing things differently and being innovative cannot be achieved without pain points - however these have been few and far between. Together, we have been able to develop a strategic alliance that is strong, healthy, sustainable and achieving impact.

I would also like to acknowledge the support of Harry Wildman who has greatly assisted me in creating a program logic and data metrics to capture the work of a state-wide youth advocacy organisation. I think it is essential to be accountable – this means being able to demonstrate that the organisation relates to the core issues that are being faced by young people experiencing homelessness. The data in this report is reflective of this work.

The role of state-wide organisations like the Queensland Youth Housing Coalition is not only to critique policy but to strengthening our democracy through the facilitation of strong sector networks and mechanism through which the voices of young people and the services



that support them are heard. One of the things that I noticed when I started this position about a year ago was the low level of networking activity and the level of sector engagement in networks. Historically this activity has been quite active and enabled trust and reciprocity to be built. In particular, networks allow the flow of information and shared learnings and success in practice and policy. These networks are then able to build collaborations, participate in coordination and advocacy activities including campaigns where required. It seemed that competitive funding environment combined with a strong output focused contractual arrangement has limited the capacity for the not-for-profit sector to come together and network. Fundamentally these changes have impacted on social capital building behaviour of not profit organisations - the question is whether this is in the best interest of the end-user i.e. people who are experiencing homelessness. This lack of coming together also places the sector in the unenviable position of not having critical friends. Critical friends being those that can positively challenge each other in terms of their practice, critique government policy and work together to develop new innovation around policy and practice. The other thing that seems to have been lost is the value of the networking as an intrinsic component of a healthy democracy. All networks may not necessarily directly benefit young people but working together to reduce homelessness, critiquing social policy all have social benefits which in turn have flow on social and economic benefits - both for the individual and the community. As a result, QYHC worked to develop a digital engagement strategy that would not unnecessarily take time from services where it wasn't needed and focussed the networking in this digital environment on high impact projects that would make a policy issues that were of direct benefit to young people – driven by an evidence base. I would like to thank Cameron Cross from uBegin who was able to develop a bespoke solution for us – the QYHC Blast. The uBegin platform/QYHC Blast is not limited to the NFP sector but can engage the public and private sectors as well service users. Showcasing these high impact projects at our annual Platform 1225 enabled the sharing of success and about how these innovations are working.

Lastly, I want to thank the QYHC staff Tanya Turrell who has done a magnificent job in the Prevention and Early Intervention Project and Meloney Menerey who provides our administrative support. They have been incredibly supportive both personally and professionally and it has been a joy to be able to share not only an office together but a bit of our lives.

Maria Leebeek
Executive Director



“ Passion, commitment and innovative approaches to addressing youth homelessness are core to the work of QYHC. ”



financial report

Queensland Youth Housing Coalition Inc. (QYHC) has continued to grow and re-establish itself as a statewide advocacy organisation over the last financial year through our strategic alliance with the Department of Housing and Public Works (DHPW). We would like to thank the Department of Housing and Public Works for their commitment to young people in Queensland, in particular those who experience homelessness and marginalisation, as we continue to work side by side to deliver projects and services across Queensland. It has been a pleasure working with my fellow Management Committee members and I'd like to especially thank all the staff for their hard work this year. QYHC has continued to grow successfully due to their commitment and tireless work.

Income for the 2018 -2019 Financial Year was \$442,342.73. This is excluding income in advance from Department of Housing and Public Works of \$116,717.93 for the 2019 – 2020 Financial Year. Total expenses for this activity were \$440,558.56, leaving a surplus of \$1,784.17. The generated surplus is made up of interest earned on QYHC organisational funds and membership fees received. Please see below. We were successful in receiving a \$1,000 grant from StreetSmart and would like to thank them for their ongoing support of QYHC to explore avenues to engage with young people.

QYHC organisation funds

We opened the Financial Year with a balance of \$82,513.98.

We have closed the 2018 -2019 Financial Year at \$84,297.65, an increase of \$1,784.17 that is made up of interest received and membership fees. QYHC holds \$79,682.67 of these funds in an interest bearing fixed account.

Audited Financial Statement

Our Audited Financial Statement has been prepared by Haywards Chartered Accountants who have declared that Queensland Youth Housing Coalition Inc. is in a viable financial position.

Appointment of Auditor

I propose that Hayward Chartered Accounts be appointed as the auditors for the 2019 – 2020 financial year.

Christine Hastwell

Treasurer



highlights

of 2018-2019 Financial Year

Youth Housing and Homelessness Framework

The “Youth Housing and Homelessness Framework: an integrated approach to innovation and policy initiatives” outlines the engagement process that applies to QYHC stakeholders. This process recognises that different engagement strategies need to be developed for diverse stakeholders. Strategies require a clear approach, with consistent communication through a range of media channels and transparency and accountability in terms of the ownership of material.

The Youth Housing and Homelessness Framework is underpinned by an evidence base methodology that identifies youth homelessness/housing issues in Queensland. The methodology commences with data analysis from a range of sources to determine scale and scope of the issue. This data is compared to other State and Territory data sets and explored as phenomena in national and local research. Concurrent to the data and research analysis is the gathering of data from youth homelessness/housing services and the experiences of young people and their families – this is important as this process may identify data and research gaps.

The evidence collected in relation to youth homelessness in Queensland can then be explored to determine whether there is a policy gap or barrier. This can then generate systemic advocacy with its focus on policy and policy advocacy which is defined as “intentional activities initiated by the public to affect the policy making process”¹.

Policy advocacy is vital for enhancing a democratic environment and civic participation, being able to engage in community education on key social justice issues and gaining community support for addressing homelessness, influencing decision makers and seeking law reform.

¹Gen & Wright. (2013). Policy advocacy organizations: A framework linking theory and practice



Prevention and Early Intervention Project

The Prevention and Early Intervention Project (PEIP) has made significant progress over the last year, examining options for the implementation of a trial of place-based case management approach across schools, youth services and homelessness services to support young people at risk of homelessness.

The establishment of the PEIP Reference Group with members from the community and both State and Commonwealth government was one of the highlights of the project. The Reference Group had 100% attendance and was invaluable in guiding and informing the exploration of an early intervention and prevention project for South East Queensland.

Another highlight was the engagement with regional stakeholders, who were enthusiastic about the possibilities of working in schools to identify young people and their families who are at risk of homelessness, before they are in need of crisis responses.

Our partnership with the Department of Housing and Public Works has generated a new way of working which has contributed to the progress of this piece of work to date. The final project report for Phase 1 has been delivered to DHPW and we are hopeful that it will enable the Queensland Government to deliver on their commitment to maximise investment in early intervention under Partnering for impact to reduce homelessness in Queensland.

Platform 1225

The question posed this year for Platform 1225 was: Social Inclusion – How do we fare? It was an exploration of fairness, equity and access. The overarching message of Platform 1225 2019 was: If we believe in a socially inclusive and fair society, we need to find ways of ensuring that all are included. The event featured a panel of young people who offered their insights, experiences and wisdom alongside thought provoking keynote speakers and presenters. Platform 1225 began the complex conversation about social inclusion for all young people regardless of the complexities they face.

With Comedian, Host, TV and Radio Presenter Kat Davidson as MC, those who joined us in unpacking this complex issue were treated to a wealth of expertise such as that of Keynote Speaker Aimee McVeigh, a distinguished community lawyer and leading human rights advocate who was a driving force behind the Queensland Human Rights Act. Aimee reflected on her presentation at the 2017 Platform 1225 Forum and noted how nice it was to think back to that presentation when she originally spoke at the inaugural Platform 1225 to encourage participation in a Human Rights Act for Queensland Campaign; to now being able to speak about the Human Rights Act as a reality.

Nikki Chenoweth, a descendant from the Guugu Yimitrir, Nymal Naymal and Kalkadoon Aboriginal language group talked about poverty behind closed doors. She spoke about her lived experience of abject poverty and how simple acts of kindness and inclusion from neighbours and friends changed her life from one of experiencing the level of poverty few could imagine to one of social inclusion.





She's now an accomplished artist and manager of a non-government organisation.

Associate Professor Cameron Parsell delivered a presentation entitled OUR poverty of ambition. He noted that the responsibility for homelessness and those disenfranchised and excluded is on all of us. Particularly those of us who are privileged enough to work in academic circles, organisations and governments. "Everyone is the same as us and we have to ensure our response to them is the same social response we'd ask for ourselves" was Cameron's core message. From that message, he took attendees on a journey of understanding the way in which we respond to homelessness and social exclusion and posed many more questions.

Participant feedback from this event was overwhelmingly positive. QYHC was humbled to host such high calibre presenters.



Platform 1225 was sponsored by:

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