



Community Housing
FEDERATION OF VICTORIA

Annual Report 2010

*Quality, affordable rental homes
for fairer and better communities.*

A middle-aged man with a grey beard and sunglasses stands with his arms crossed. He is wearing a dark blue long-sleeved shirt under a bright yellow high-visibility safety vest with reflective silver stripes. He is positioned in front of a white van with its rear door open. The background is slightly blurred, showing some trees and a building with green shutters.

**MY
HOME**

helped me get back to work

CONTENTS

- 3 Tenant story: James Little | 4 From the Chairman | 5 CEO's Report |
- 6 Tenant highlight: Rebecca Luk | 7 Policy & Projects | 8 Sector Development |
- 9 Vital Stats | 10 Membership & Organisational Talent |
- 11 Tenant highlight: Christine & Janette | 12 Tenant highlight: Leah Pernu |
- 13 Treasurer's Statement | 14 Income and Expenditure Statement |
- 15 Assets and Liabilities Statement | 16 Independent Audit Report |
- 18 Tenant story: Gavin Pearce

Tenant Story

◀ James Little

After losing everything he owned in a 2002 boarding house fire, James finally got the housing break of a lifetime in 2010 when he was offered a brand new self-contained studio apartment in Richmond.

“The place has never been lived in, it has a lovely view over Richmond and has a back balcony where the magpies come each morning to scab some breakfast. While I still have that lingering fear of being homeless again in the back of my mind, I've definitely put the coat rack up and hung my hat on it,” he says.

“I've got a good relationship with my landlord, Yarra Community Housing, and they've told me I can stay here until they carry me out in a box, and I'm happy with that. That kind of security of tenure has had such a positive impact on the quality of my life.”

Another critical element to that quality of life is James' ability to start working again. Having studied journalism and social sciences at university, he has a strong interest in Australian literature and community issues, and is a presenter (aka 'Jimbo') on the Roominations program, Thursdays at 12 noon on Community Radio 3CR on 855AM. Roominations is the only radio program on air that provides homeless people with a soapbox to discuss issues.

James is also working on a project-by-project basis with a business that installs office fitouts across the Melbourne area.

From the Chairman

I have been fortunate to be the Chairman of CHFV during one of the most remarkable and unusual times that the community housing sector has ever seen. It wasn't that long ago we were wondering if the CSHA would be renewed, and where and how we were going to build new housing.

With the election of the Rudd Government and their immediate pledge to work and fund projects that would alleviate homelessness and the housing crises facing Australia, few of us in the sector could have anticipated just how much change was about to occur around us.

Significant money, in the order of hundreds of millions, were injected into the sector from the Commonwealth and the State. True, some of it was primarily intended to insulate the economy from the global financial crises, but that community housing was chosen as one of the primary agents for the use of this money is in itself highly significant.

My day job is primarily with the aged (homeless) and it is worth noting that the aged care industry did not receive any Nation Building/Jobs Stimulus money. The fact that housing was chosen and not aged care speaks both to the relative interest that the Government had in the two sectors but also to the strength of the housing lobby compared to the disjointed aged care industry.

With the exhaustion of most of the funding, our sector now faces renewed problems: The perennial one of insufficient housing, but also now the issue of Housing Associations which have been aggressively grown by Government policies and now face a dramatic diminution of funding and the real risk of losing much of their newly acquired skilled workforce.

Through all of this and many other associated policy arenas, CHFV has worked primarily with the Office of Housing to ensure that with these rapid changes the interests of our members and our housing clients are met. In this, we have been aided at first by Brian Pound and more latterly Jacqui Watt who joined us as CEO from the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations.

Jacqui has brought with her a wealth of knowledge, great enthusiasm and a willingness to get on with the job. We all welcome Jacqui to Australia and hope that she enjoys her time in the role.

With the 2010 AGM my three year position as Chairman expires. It has been a privilege to work with a group of inspiring people both at Board level and within the Office of Housing. In particular, I would personally like to thank Minister Richard Wynne whose passion for housing and the willingness he showed to always make himself available to discuss the issues that needed further exploration has been greatly appreciated.

Finally, I would encourage all members of CHFV to consider becoming Directors — the organisation is only as strong as its members and their willingness to work for the collective good.

Bryan Lipmann, AM



CEO's Report

I was delighted to join CHFV as its new CEO at the end of March 2010 and am pleased to offer some thoughts on the last year's activities. For a membership body, the members are the life blood of the organisation and their support must always be sought and received as the organisation moves forward.

To enter the Victorian community housing sector at a time of such growth and funding is extremely encouraging. The reason I am encouraged is not because the Federal and State Governments have decided to invest in community housing over the last three to four years — as a function of every person's human right to safe and secure housing this should be happening as a matter of course — and it is evident that the current governments recognise this.

The real reason for my optimism is my observation of how the community housing sector has responded to this opportunity. It is clear our members were well-prepared and determined to ensure the money invested in this sector of the housing market was well spent. Their performance has been admirable, not just in terms of growing housing stock, but also in working with government and the regulators to meet the high degree of transparency and accountability required when a sector is given \$750million of taxpayers money.

Another major development for community housing during the 2009-10 period was the release of The Road Home — Homelessness White Paper in April 2009. At the highest level, what this white paper recognises is that homelessness and affordable housing are irrevocably linked. As a consequence the working relationships and collaboration that CHFV and its members are developing with the homelessness sector will continue to grow strongly.

As important as it is to look back and review our progress, it is also crucial to keep a steady eye on the horizon and be clear and purposeful in our direction.

In the second quarter of 2010, much time was spent with the Board discussing how to take CHFV and its members forward in a strategic way. As part of this discussion with Board members, it was important to consider how far CHFV has come since its inception, and to reflect on how the operating environment is changing. At the same time, I visited many members across Victoria and gained a real sense of their issues.

This insight contributed to the development of a new Strategic Plan, which included the aim of developing new member services. A supporting Communications Strategy was also developed, and I'm pleased to say that both of these documents have the Board's full support.

Going forward we must stay focused on three major strategic goals; raising the profile of CHFV and the Victorian public's understanding and perception of community housing; providing relevant and cost effective member services; and engaging in public policy debates and taking a leadership position in combating the housing affordability crisis.

I look forward to working with all members and the new CHFV Board to deliver on these aims.

Jacqui Watt



“I finally feel settled
and welcome”



Photo by Stacey Merlin and provided courtesy of the Sunraysia Daily.

- ▲ **Rebecca Luk**, pictured with her daughter Elizabeth Pur (14), migrated with her family to Australia in 2003. After living in Melbourne for six years, Rebecca and her three children moved to Mildura, where they secured a community home with Loddon Mallee Housing Services. Rebecca says she finally feels settled and welcome.

Policy & Projects

CHFV has been active throughout the year in advocating on behalf of the sector in a wide range of policy issues, and in providing additional and updated resources to our members through specific funded projects. The following offers a snapshot of our 2009-2010 policy and project activities:

CHFV produced major submissions to Victorian Treasury (2010 State Budget), DHS (Victorian Homelessness 2020 Strategy), Victorian Parliament (Inquiry into the Adequacy and Future Directions of Public Housing in Victoria) and FaHCSIA (Regulation and Growth of the Not-For-Profit Sector), and convened forums/workshops on Growth of Community Housing (key presentation by Donald Owen) and Housing Registrar Key Performance Measures.

CHFV also delivered presentations to Salvation Army material aid workers; the North & West Homelessness Network; Aged & Community Care Victoria; the North West Mental Health Network; and the end-of-year DHS Housing Sector Development staff meeting.

CHFV represented the sector on the Opening Doors Implementation Reference Group; two Ministerial Roundtables on Homelessness; the Call This A Home campaign for safe private rooming houses, and the Government's subsequent Rooming House Taskforce; the VCOSS Peaks and Statewide Networks Forum; the Office of the Community Sector NFP Sector Reference Group; and the City of Darebin Housing Advisory Committee.

In 2009-10 CHFV completed the Online Community Housing Directory project (our "Find Housing" web page); an updated Rooming House Emergency Response Procedures Manual; an updated Asset and Property Maintenance Manual; a new CHFV Internal Sector Directory; and a Scoping for Sustainability Kit project.

During the year CHFV also negotiated funding for major new projects for 2010-11, including the Common Housing Register Project; a Sustainable Community Housing Innovations project (through Sustainability Victoria); and capacity-building projects in the areas of Marketing and Communications, the National Reform Agenda and Demonstrating the Value of Community Housing.

We look forward to delivering improved services and increased advocacy for our members in 2010-11.

Sector Development

Professional development is an essential service that keeps member organisations current and creates new opportunities for staff to progress their careers within the community housing sector. In response to membership demand for more training opportunities, CHFV increased course and forum offerings by 50% for 2009-10. These included:

- CODA training for both basic and advanced level
- Persuasive writing
- Property And Asset Management
- Self Leadership Training
- Handle with Care — Managing Violent and Potentially Violent Situations for Frontline Staff
- Workshop on Managing difficult phone calls
- E-learning training
- Managing difficult phone calls workshop
- Media Training
- Mental Health Training
- Forum on Regulatory Reporting and The Key Performance Measures Used By The Housing Registrar
- Women & Housing Forum
- Social Enterprise Forum
- Mind the Gap — Housing alternatives in aged care — May 2010

Employee Assistance Program

CHFV's Employee Assistance Program was widely utilised by members during 2009-10. The program is a free professional counselling service which is available to employees of member organisations and their immediate family.

The EAP offers short-term professional counseling. It is a completely confidential service. Neither employers nor CHFV are privy to information regarding anyone's access of the service or what is discussed during sessions.

The final report for this project clearly demonstrates that CHFV's promotion of the EAP has been extremely successful. A utilisation rate of more than 4% in the private and government sectors, and more an 6% in the not-for-profit sector, are benchmarks of excellent acceptance of a support program within member organisations. Thus, the use of the EAP program by 10-11% of the member body means members were highly aware of the program and used it when they believed the need existed.

Local Government & Affordable Housing Conference

10 March 2010

The Local Government and Affordable Housing Conference was a partnership between CHFV and the Housing & Local Government Network to promote affordable housing as a central tenet of local government place-making and local economic sustainability.

The partnership recognised that many different professions within local government touch on affordable housing issues, so the conference was aimed at a broad spectrum of staff including statutory and strategic planners, social planners, economic development officers, housing officers, social policy professionals, property managers, finance and asset managers, place makers, activity centre teams, as well as senior managers and councillors. The conference was also attended by community housing organisations, State and Federal governments, and private property interests.

The conference was generously supported by mecu, Manningham City Council, Planisphere, and Housing in Victoria.

Vital Stats

During 2009-10, the Victorian community housing sector had never been busier and more productive. Federal and State Government funding was fully allocated during this period, and the onus was on the eight Housing Associations and 31 Registered Growth Providers to not only deliver housing but also manage the growth of their organisations. For a number of members, this involved either the addition of new offices or moving staff to larger premises.

As of 30 June 2010, the growth of the community housing sector can be summarised as follows:

Summary of growth in community housing stock

- The Office of Housing's Annual Report 2008-09 stated that as of 30 June 2010 there were 12,052 properties and 1,387 aboriginal housing properties under the management of Housing Associations and Registered Housing Providers, making a total of 13,439 properties
- Included in this total are 1,733 properties that have been delivered under the 2007 Victorian Growth Strategy which will be completed by December 2010
- The Nation Building Stimulus Package will add 2,500 community housing properties in Victoria by December 2011
- Including non-registered providers, it is estimated community housing organisations will now manage around 16,000 properties in Victoria by December 2011.

Demand and Supply

- The National Housing Supply Council 2010 report estimates that the net gap between housing supply and underlying demand grew to 178,400 dwellings by 2009. This represents an estimated gap of 22,700 properties in Victoria alone [NHSC 2010 Report, Table A4.2]
- Over the next four years, the NHSC estimates that on current trends, by 2014 the cumulative shortfall will be about 32,000 dwellings in Victoria [NHSC 2010 Report, Table A4.2].

Community housing sector efficiency

- Government funding of community housing has been an excellent investment. The Victorian Auditor-General's Report entitled Access to Social Housing (published June 2010) showed that the 1733 new properties funded under the 2007 Victorian Growth Strategy cost taxpayers an average \$190,000 per dwelling as compared to public housing properties which cost the taxpayer \$250,000 per dwelling

Jacqui Watt ▶



Membership and Organisational Talent

As of 30 June 2010, membership remained unchanged from the previous year with 73 members.

2009–10 was also a period that saw new talent come into CHFV at the Board and management levels.

Haleh Homaei accepted an invitation to join the CHFV Board in 2009. Haleh is Deputy CEO of Druids Friendly Society, having spent 12 years with the Victorian Office of Housing and six years in the community housing sector. Her previous roles included Operational Manger with the Office of Housing, and roles as Strategic Manager and Housing Manager with Housing Choices Australia. Haleh is also on the Board of the Victorian Branch of the Australasian Housing Institute (AHI) and has been a member since 1998.



◀ Haleh Homaei

In addition, the CHFV Board employed **new CEO Jacqui Watt** who joined the organisation in March 2010. Jacqui was recruited from the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations (SFHA) which she had led for more than four years. She replaced CHFV's Executive Officer Brian Pound who had been in the role for two years.

Ms. Watt led SFHA through a period of transformation in which numerous initiatives were made to enhance the effectiveness of the organisation in representing 95% of Scotland's community housing sector with a membership of 132 housing associations and 59 local housing organisations.

During this time, she also served as a non-executive director of the Boards of the Scottish Urban Regeneration Forum (SURF) and the Scottish Social Enterprise Coalition.

On starting her role, Jacqui met with and heard the opinions of numerous members, began a working relationship with the State and Federal governments, and has begun drafting new business and communications strategies.

2009–10 was a period that saw new talent come into CHFV at the Board and management levels.



▲ **Federal Minister for Housing**, the Hon Tanya Plibersek, MP, with Co-Op members Christine and Janette in one of the new two bedroom units in Ballarat built under the government's Nation Building Stimulus Package. Christine moved into her beautiful home in May 2010 as part of Victoria's newest housing co-operative, Southern Cross CERC.

“It is the stated intention of the Federation to increase the services it provides to members”



Photo by Eleanor Venables and provided courtesy of the Gippsland Times.

▲ **After a seven year wait**, June 2010 was a memorable month for local Leah Pernu when she moved into her one-bedroom community home in Sale with Community Housing Limited.



Treasurer's Report

The final accounts for the year ending 30 June 2010 have been audited, signed off by the Board and made available to members in the Annual Report.

It was an unusual year in so far as due to a substantial cash surplus in excess of \$345,000 at the end of the 2009 year, the Office of Housing (OoH) withheld grant funding for projects for the year and effectively reduced funding to the Federation.

After a prolonged period of negotiation with the OoH, the Board agreed to fund an existing project worker position for 12 months from the accumulated surplus and also to accept the same core funding as the previous year. This meant that CHFV would need to meet the cost of increased activities and any shortfalls in operating costs from its existing surplus.

The annual budget adopted by the Board predicted an operating deficit of \$153,096 for the year and a final balance of \$192,750.

The end-of-year accounts show an operating deficit of \$168,621 for the financial year and a final balance of \$177,226. The variations in the budget were due to a shortfall of \$9,000 in income mainly due to lower returns on investment funds held by the Federation.

The annual expenditure was approximately \$7,000 over budget mainly because of increased salary costs and overheads.

The Federation remains in a healthy financial position and I am pleased to report that the OoH has continued core funding. It has also provided funding for two new projects; a Project Worker position to co-ordinate the development of a Common Housing Registry in Victoria; and funding to assist with the communication and promotion of community housing and the sector.

It is the stated intention of the Federation to increase the services it provides to members and to move incrementally each year to a position where it is less dependent on annual government grants and more self sustaining through membership contributions and events and services that generate income.

John McInerney

Income and Expenditure

As at 30 June	2010 \$	2009 \$
INCOME		
Funding	266,213	493,922
Project Funding	45,889	55,281
Seminars and Training	58,943	16,600
Members Fees	24,363	25,257
Interest	13,262	18,900
Sundry Income	4,994	981
Total income	413,664	610,941
EXPENDITURE		
Seminars & Training	24,129	17,129
Marketing & Promotion	5,612	14,608
Newsletter	26,694	27,784
Communications	6,393	5,093
Travel & Accommodation	3,232	3,407
Staff Development	13,710	1,210
Donations	3,010	2,000
Office expenses	2,117	3,639
Employment expenses	358,586	283,772
Consultancy	10,050	4,274
Rent	37,293	33,238
Other general expenses	902	1,297
Depreciation	2,364	1,620
Projects expenses	88,193	85,216
Total expenditure	582,285	484,287
Profit/(Loss) before income tax	(168,621)	126,654
Income tax expense	-	-
Profit/(Loss) after income tax	(168,621)	126,654

Assets and Liabilities

As at 30 June	2010 \$	2009 \$
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	341,101	367,296
Prepayments	10,623	-
Total current assets	351,724	367,296
NON-CURRENT ASSETS		
Plant and equipment	9,782	9,617
Total current assets	9,782	9,617
Total assets	361,506	376,913
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Trade and other payables	539	-
GST payables	19,731	14,613
Grants received in advance	112,300	-
Accruals	22,472	7,308
Provisions	29,238	9,145
Total current liabilities	184,280	31,066
Total liabilities	184,280	31,066
Net assets	177,226	345,847
MEMBERS' FUNDS		
Retained Earnings	345,847	219,193
Current year surplus/(deficit)	(168,621)	126,654
Total members' funds	177,226	345,847

Independent Audit Report

Report on the Financial Report

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report, of Community Housing Federation of Victoria Inc, which comprises the assets and liabilities statement as at 30 June 2010 for the year then ended, the income and expenditure statement, a summary of significant accounting policies, other explanatory notes and the statement by members of the committee.

Committee's Responsibility for the Financial Report

The committee of the association is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report and has determined that the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements, which form part of the financial report, are consistent with the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act 1981 (Vic) and are appropriate to meet the needs of the members. The committee's responsibilities also include designing, implementing and maintaining internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies; and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. No opinion is expressed as to whether the accounting policies used, as described in Note 1, are appropriate to meet the needs of the members. We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. These Auditing Standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the committee, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.



◀ **The largest development completed in 2009-10** was by Housing Choices Australia at Mary Street, Preston comprising 52 units over four levels, with eight units being fully modified for tenants with disabilities. The cost of the project was \$12.2 million and was constructed by Buildcorp. Site construction began in August 2008 and was completed and tenanted in February 2010. This project was funded as part of the Nation Building Stimulus program and was one of the first projects delivered in Victoria under this arrangement.

The financial report has been prepared for distribution to members for the purpose of fulfilling the committee's financial reporting obligations under the Associations Incorporation Act 1981 (Vic). We disclaim any assumption of responsibility for any reliance on this report or on the financial report to which it relates to any person other than the members, or for any purpose other than that for which it was prepared.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Independence

In conducting our audit, we have complied with the independence requirements of Australian professional ethical pronouncements.

Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation.

Auditor's Opinion

In our opinion, the financial report of Community Housing Federation of Victoria Inc presents fairly, in all material respects the financial position of Community Housing Federation of Victoria Inc as at 30 June 2010 and of its financial performance for the year then ended in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements and the Associations Incorporation Act 1981 (Vic).

C.W. Stirling 9/10

C W Stirling & Co

Chartered Accountants


Level 6, 90 William Street, Melbourne, Vic-3000.

John A Phillips

John Phillips

Partner

Dated this 15th day of November 2010



“I’m genuinely experiencing peace of mind in my life now, and that’s a wonderful feeling.”

Tenant Story

Gavin Pearce ▶

In 2009, his last year in a private rental property, Gavin was paying \$200/week which as he describes it “was pretty tricky when you’re living on a pension.” Gavin, a former music teacher, was put in touch with Womens Housing Ltd who offered him a brand new one bedroom property in Altona Meadows which he moved into in 2010.

“There’s no comparison in the quality of living,” he says. “The place was freshly built with a quiet little backyard and my own parking space, none of which I had before. All the residents in this development are over 70 so there’s no noise or fuss and everyone keeps to themselves, so I find it a beautiful environment.”

“The financial change means I no longer experience stress about bills coming in. I have enough money now where I can afford to subscribe to the Symphony and Opera seasons. I can also have a meal out occasionally if I want to, but don’t often do,” he says.

Gavin still plays piano most days and is involved in the community choir as the pianist and as the conductor. There are 20 people in the choir, and they often perform at nursing homes and retirement villages.

“I would sum up my experience with community housing as saying that I’m genuinely experiencing peace of mind in my life now, and that’s a wonderful feeling.”

An elderly man with short, light-colored hair is seated at a piano. He is wearing a bright yellow polo shirt over a dark t-shirt. He is looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression. The piano is dark wood with white and black keys. To the left of the piano, there is a music stand with a white sheet of paper. Behind the music stand is a lamp with a white shade and a wooden base. The background is a plain, light-colored wall with a framed picture hanging on it. The lighting is warm and soft, creating a cozy atmosphere.

**MY
HOME**

gives me peace of mind



Community Housing Federation of Victoria Inc.

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