



common
ground

QUEENSLAND

ending homelessness

ANNUAL REPORT
2018 - 2019

Building Trust





Table of contents

Supportive housing principles	2
Chair's report	4
CEO's report	6
Outcomes for 2018 - 2019	8
What our tenants said	9
Garden and green wall reinvigoration	10
Wax on, wax off	12
Opening doors	13
Tenant engagement	14
New hope	15
A personal journey	16
Changing it up	18
A venue with a difference	20
Stage, front and centre	21
BCEC 'Containers for Change'	22
QPAC's spirit of giving	23
Community connections	24
Board of Directors	26
CGQ Team	28
AHI Award - Inspirational Team Member	29
Thank you	30
Supporter program	31

Supportive housing principles

The Common Ground model of supportive housing is a proven and cost effective solution to ending homelessness that is based on a set of validated principles. Supportive housing can be delivered in single site high or low density developments or in scattered housing sites.

DESIGN

A thoughtfully designed and well-maintained positive home environment that includes community spaces and opportunities for the wider community to participate. An asset for the whole community.

PERMANENCY & AFFORDABILITY

Housing is permanent, affordable and self-contained.

TENANCY MIX

There is a mix of tenants with a proportion having experienced homelessness and some who have not. This mix ensures a vibrant and diverse building community.

SAFETY

A Concierge service is provided 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to ensure a welcoming yet controlled access to the building.

SERVICES FOR TENANTS

An on-site support provider offers a holistic, tenancy-focused service to those who require support to remain housed.

SOCIAL INCLUSION

Each element of supportive housing aims to create the greatest possible degree of empowerment and independence for individuals as well as a thriving community for tenants and neighbours.

COMMON GROUND QUEENSLAND

Our **vision** is to end homelessness in the communities in which we operate.

Our **mission** is to create supportive housing solutions through effective public, private and community partnerships.



Chair's report



Once again, I am pleased to provide the Chairman's thoughts and observations on another year of service for Common Ground Queensland (CGQ).

This year at CGQ we have prepared our report around the theme of trust.

Coincidentally on the day I sat down to start writing my report I read in the papers the thoughts of yet another former finance system regulator on why big enterprise has lost trust. It seems our choice of theme is timely. I hope our valuing of trust is because we have it and are working to retain it. I think we do and passionately want CGQ to continue to value the trust of those we serve.

Here's why.

Human beings are most likely to thrive – flourish if you like – in environments of strong, positive networks of social connectedness. We do best when we know we belong in, with and amongst groups of people who know and trust us and who we know and trust in kind. We are nurtured by their positive presence and they are nurtured by the community of whom we are a part. A virtuous circle that you might think of as a flower bed; you need a healthy bed for a 1000 flowers to bloom, the job of the bed is to grow healthy radiant flowers...and to ensure the health of the bed is maintained.

When people become chronically homeless, it's these networks of positive connectedness that are missing in their lives. It's more than not having somewhere to live – that is by all means a vital place to start – it's the absence of anywhere to belong and an absence of people to whom you "belong". There can be no-one who trusts you and no-one to trust. Stay trapped in this place of no belonging and no trust for long enough and it's hard to get out; how do you do that if there's no-one to trust?

There is a saying – "Trust takes years to build, seconds to break and forever to repair". At CGQ we understand that for many people, life's journey so far has not provided them with a solid platform of trust; trust in others, in themselves and in life itself. We know that when we invite people to take up a home with us we are asking for their trust. We are asking them to trust that we won't fail them, that we will do our best even when it's challenging.

It is therefore especially important that we take our responsibility to earn and retain trust seriously; that we actively work within an ethos that promotes safety and inclusion for the people we serve; that helps build the bed from which the thousand flowers bloom. And then as we know from what we have seen this past year and those before, some of those flowers will go on to tend the bed. How good is that!

Thanks to all our partners, staff and tenants for their contributions to CGQ's efforts across the year past. Working as a network of positive social connectedness is how we get things done. Thanks for having us as a connection.

Peter Pearce

**Chairman
Common Ground Queensland Ltd.**



CEO's report



It has been 10 years since the funding for Brisbane Common Ground was announced in August 2009. Common Ground Queensland (CGQ) was formally established the year before by community members who were convinced that supportive housing was a viable solution to the visibly increasing level of homelessness being experienced in Brisbane.

In 2011 CGQ was appointed as the Property and Tenancy Manager for Brisbane Common Ground, Queensland's first supportive housing initiative. While the Common Ground model had been proven internationally and in other Australian States it was a landmark project for Queensland offering a solution to a "wicked problem". CGQ along with our partners at Micah Projects were entrusted with responsibility for successfully delivering that solution.

Since our appointment and the opening of Brisbane Common Ground in July 2012 we have worked diligently and continuously to provide safe, affordable and permanent supportive housing for our tenants at Brisbane Common Ground. The evidence of the difference Brisbane Common Ground makes to the lives of people who live here has been captured through the annual and ongoing feedback provided by tenants, tenancy sustainment outcomes and through an independent evaluation. CGQ has developed strong partnerships and relationships with our neighbours, our local community, our supporters and funders.

We have evolved from a group of community members who want to do something meaningful to reduce homelessness into a specialist provider of supportive housing with a demonstrated capacity to create sustainable homes for the people we seek to serve.

The challenge that remains for CGQ is securing an opportunity to increase the supply of supportive housing for the growing number of individuals and families that are currently at risk of or experiencing homelessness. We will continue to advocate and work towards this goal.

I would like to thank our Directors, Staff, Partners and Funders for their contribution to the success of the Brisbane Common Ground project and especially to our Tenants who create an inclusive building community. CGQ truly values the trust that is placed in our organisation by our tenants and stakeholders. I can assure you we will continue to work hard to retain that trust.

Sonya Keep

CEO
Common Ground Queensland Ltd.

"I truly appreciate how safe and clean it (Brisbane Common Ground) is kept. I appreciate that I have good communication regarding anything that concerns me about the tenancy. I love living here."

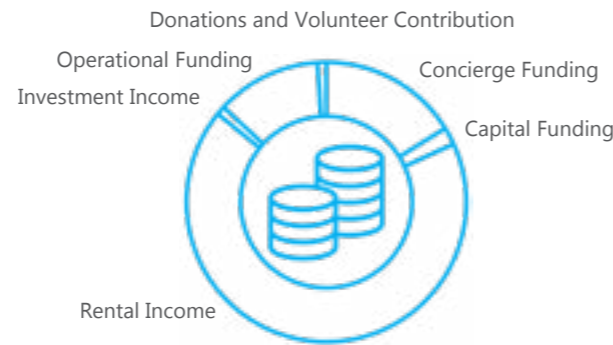
BCG TENANT RESPONSE

(2018 - 2019 TENANT SATISFACTION SURVEY)

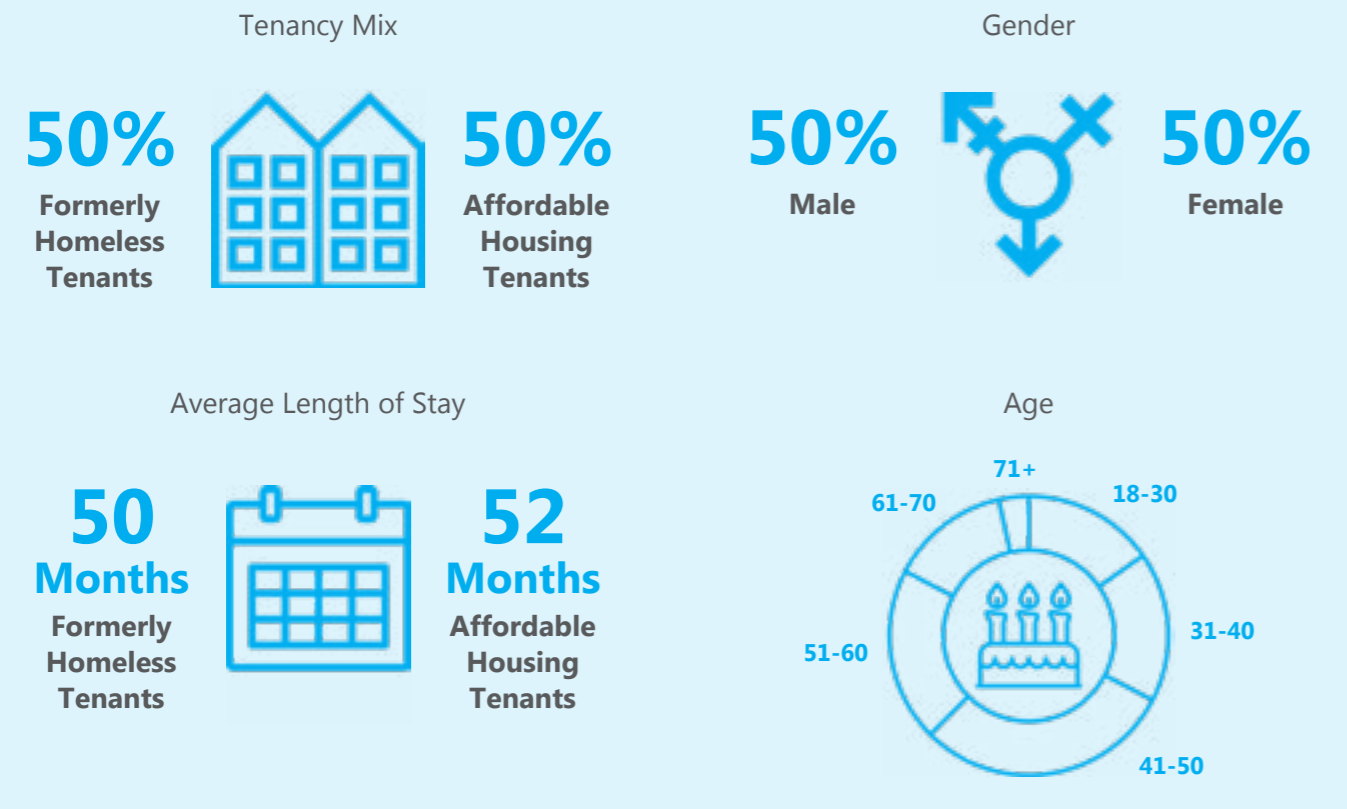
Outcomes for 2018 - 2019

KPI	Target	2018-2019
Bad Debts	<1.5%	0.20%
Rent Foregone	<4%	0.07%
Vacancy Rate	<5%	0.26%
Uncollected Rent	<5%	0.12%
Eviction Rate	<7%	5.13%
Evictions to Homelessness	0	1

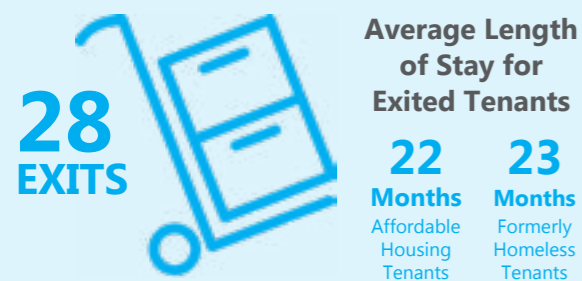
INCOME



OUR TENANTS AT 30 JUNE 2019



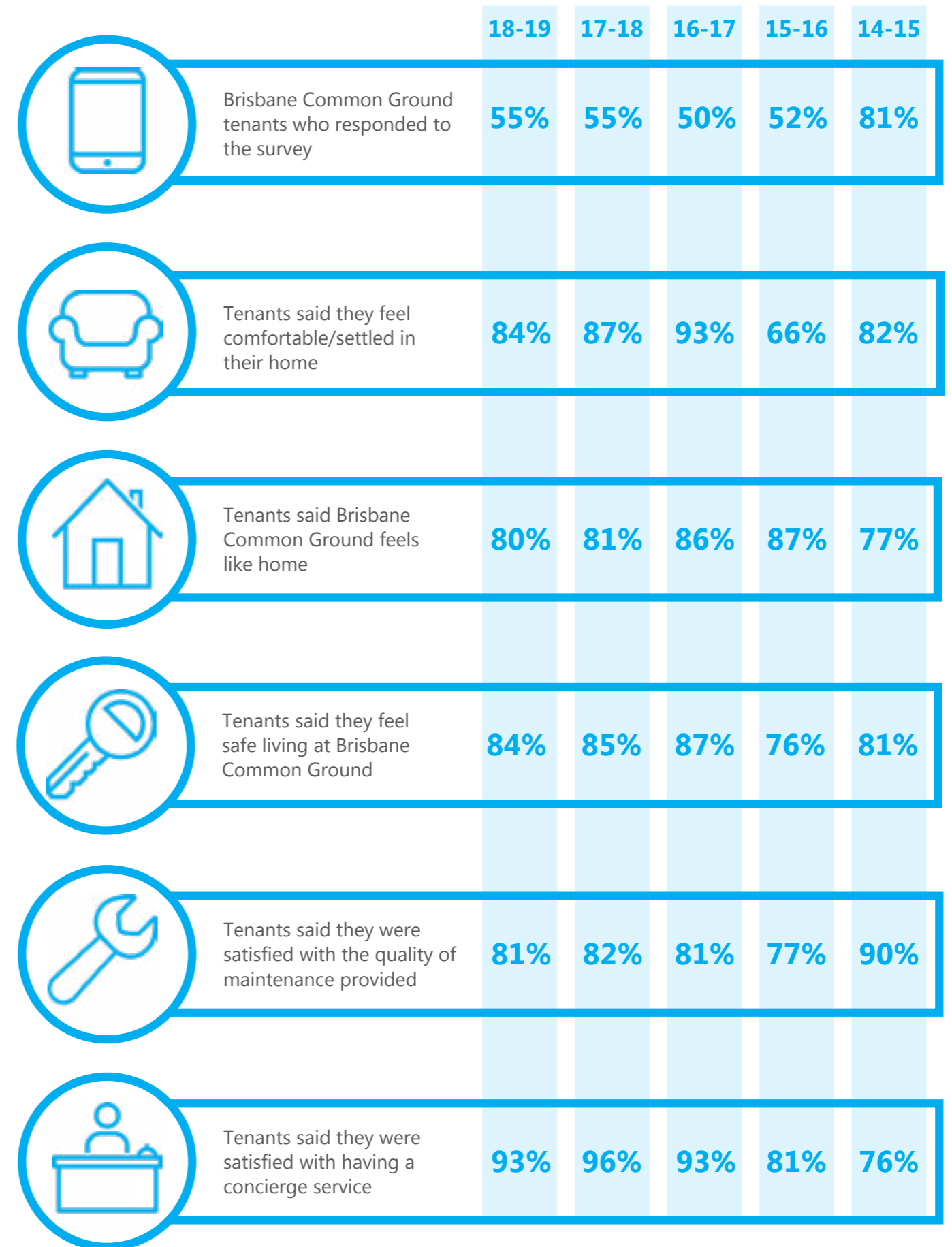
TENANT EXITS IN 2018 - 2019



TENANCIES AT RISK



What our tenants said



Garden and green wall reinvigoration



The gardens in and around our building are one of the key features at Brisbane Common Ground and this year, another has blossomed.

Located next to the Rise Gym at the back of building, the new garden is a relaxing, quiet, green space for tenants, visitors and staff to enjoy.

The garden even has its own mural artwork installed, which was created by tenants and staff.

Equipped with undercover seating and a lawn funded through the Gambling Community Benefit Fund in 2014, the space allows for a variety of purposes.

A special thanks must go to our tenant Ann, who has assisted with the backyard project over the years and has been diligently watering the lawn and plants.

Ann began her gardening journey at Brisbane Common Ground when she volunteered to help the gardener maintain the rooftop garden on level 13. When we approached her about the backyard she jumped at the chance to help out downstairs.

Over summer, Ann kept the new garden alive and says that watering helps her to chill out and watch things grow slowly.

She says she gets a sense of achievement from doing it and it's something that relaxes her.

Outside of the new garden, there are still plenty of green spaces that need special care and attention.



Keeping all of the gardens alive and thriving is certainly no mean feat and it takes a team of people to help make it happen.

We're proud to say a number of our tenants assist with our gardens and we even have some employed in a part time capacity to help out.

One such tenant is Tony, who late last year decided to apply for a job because he absolutely loved doing gardening in the rooftop herb garden.

"I got a job the next day after I applied, so my responsibility is to look after the plants on each floor level. I generally prune, tidy up any rubbish, do some watering and pest control," says Tony.

Tony says that the gardening has been very good for his mind and his self-esteem.

"It keeps me busy, it makes me feel useful. I haven't worked for many years, so I feel like I'm doing something very worthwhile and lots of tenants and staff here have said how well I'm doing with the gardens and how happy they are that everything is thriving now that I'm working here. So it's all positive and a win-win all round, it's fantastic," he smiles.

Well done to Tony, Ann and all of the volunteer green thumbs who help to keep Brisbane Common Ground's gardens looking fantastic all year round!





Wax on, wax off

Bruce's 30 year career in the tow truck industry came to a rapid end after he suffered a major stroke on the job in 2015. "I was in the right turn lane in my 5 tonne truck and something didn't feel right," he explains. "I turned the corner, pulled over and turned the truck off. When I went to pull out again, I couldn't move my leg." Bruce says he rang a mate and told him where he was, but he was already shutting down so the message was pretty garbled. "All he heard was my location and at first he thought it was a prank. But he came bolting up. The next thing I remember was him pushing me to the passenger side of the truck and saying 'What's wrong, what's wrong?' I said, hospital, quick and then I passed out again." Bruce says he flat-lined three times before he reached the hospital, but the paramedics got him back each time. "I can thank my lucky stars, someone upstairs was watching me," he shakes his head.

Bruce is adamant that living at Brisbane Common Ground has provided him with the stability to find his peace again. "Moving in here saved my life," he insists. "Definitely there's been a lot happening in the last few years. This is like my tranquility, my stable ground." Bruce discloses he became quite isolated after his stroke, but he has a good friend overseas who contacts him every day to see how he is. "Mostly I keep to myself," he says. "But I know I also have support from the staff in the building; like Lisa, Derek and Paul. These guys are like family. Lisa went above and beyond to help me when I needed it."

Bruce reveals that his ongoing health issues have taken their toll. "I've had to reprogram my brain to move my arm and leg again. I've been doing physio for the last five years and have been getting acupuncture from the clinic next door. That's helping, but it's still a long haul." As part of his physio, Bruce started to make fragrant soy wax melts to regain fine motor control of his right hand and fingers. "I burnt myself a bit before I got the hang of it," Bruce admits. "But I kept at it. My motto is Never give up and never be afraid to ask 'Hey r u ok.'"

As time rolled on Bruce perfected his hobby. He found the wax melts were not only great for his recovery, they also helped him to become more self-sufficient. "It didn't take long to go through my super and the wax melts helped pay for my medicines and other things," says Bruce candidly. "I've got 74 fragrances now, but if there's a certain fragrance you want and I don't have it, I can get it in for you," he offers. "If you're interested, you can see the full selection online @ waxon_waxmelts."



Opening doors

Deborah says she was very young when she came to live at Brisbane Common Ground.

"I'd just turned 18. I was looking for my own place where I could live independently. I was trying to balance work and university at the same time which was fairly difficult but I found the experience of living here very helpful. If you had any issues or any worries you were able to ask for support."

Deborah recalls that before she moved in she had to stay back late at night to use the computers at university. "But when I moved in, I was able to use the computers here and was able to study at home. The internet was free to access, which was really helpful."

Deborah says she found her way to Brisbane Common Ground with the help of her support worker. "I was so happy, because I moved from a share house to a completely independent unit. It was great," she beams. "Coming here was starting fresh. It was my pride, because that was the first time I had my independence. Shopping for myself, cooking for myself."

Deborah dissolves into laughter. "Oh my goodness," she giggles. "I remember one day I was so happy moving out that I said to my friends 'Let's have a housewarming party'. So I invited my friends and I watched all the YouTube videos and the food didn't exactly turn out. Everyone was like, mmm...! We relied on pizzas that night."

Deborah says she loves the diversity of people at Brisbane Common Ground. "You get to know people from all walks of life. It's been a great experience trying to understand life from different perspectives than your own. So I think it's been a blessing."

Nearly three years on, Deborah is excited about stepping out into her next opportunity. "I have a scholarship with the Duchesne College at the University of Queensland and will be living on campus. It was not anything that I was expecting. It came out of nowhere. I'm a young Ambassador with The Smith Family and it came out of that," she shares proudly. Deborah says the scholarship will give her the space to focus solely on her studies. "I'll also have access to private tutoring, extra support and extracurricular activities like the college choir which I love," she proclaims.

Currently enrolled in a double degree in Public Relations and Business Communication at Griffith University, Deborah has two more years to go. "I just can't wait to walk out on that stage and grab my graduation certificate. It's very meaningful to us," affirms Deborah. "In us, I'm referring to people from foster care because you've built up the name for yourself and your hard work's paid off. Having that certificate represents all the sacrifices, all the patience, all the worries and everything that you've gone through to earn that and with that you are able to better your future. So I think it's definitely worth it if you put your mind to it. I appreciate it."



Tenant engagement

Tenant Handbook Review

Earlier this year, we initiated a comprehensive review of the Common Ground Queensland Tenant Handbook.

A critical communication tool, the Tenant Handbook provides new and existing tenants with key information to help them throughout their tenancy at Brisbane Common Ground.

Obtaining tenant feedback and suggestions for improvement has been a critical phase of the review. Following an invitation to all tenants, 15 tenants chose to consult on the project. 11 opted to review the document and provide written feedback and four chose to participate in a targeted Focus Group.

We are now in the process of collating the responses before we finalise the new version.

In the main, tenant feedback indicated the content in the Handbook was useful and easy to read. A common theme for improvement focused on providing a section on 'carparking'. Opportunities to streamline the document were also identified.

Thank you to everyone who has made a contribution towards the update of the Tenant Handbook. We look forward to making the new version available in the very near future.

Tech updates

We are excited to announce the BCG App went live in March.

Tenants can now access a range of online functions, send us feedback and stay up to date with building news at the touch of a button.

Key features include:

- Online tenancy forms – which means less paperwork.
- Tenant information.
- Important contact details and useful links.
- Newsletters, Tenant Noticeboard and building notices.

So what are you waiting for? Download the BCG App to your mobile phone or tablet today.

We are also several months into operation with our new maintenance software. Central to its functionality is the ability for tenants to log maintenance requests online either through the new BCG App or via a web browser.

New hope

Stan was sleeping rough before he found his way to Brisbane Common Ground. "I was at Roma House for three months, then I was homeless. It was hard," he reveals. "Then they called me to come in for an interview. I've been here about one year now. I like it because I used to come and visit my friend here so I knew the place."

The youngest of six siblings, Stan says his family are spread across the world; Africa, USA, UK, Cairo. "My brother, his wife and their children live in Brisbane and I speak to them on the phone a lot," he shares. "One sister lives in Sudan, but I haven't seen her for the last 18 or 19 years. I hope to return for a visit this December. Another sister lives in the USA but I haven't seen her for nearly 25 years. But I talk to them on Facebook all the time... everyday."

Stan explains that despite being separated from most of his family, he's found connection through his church and tries to go every weekend. "They do different activities there, like music," he grins. "I've been playing guitar since I was 17 and I enjoy playing music. I used to play with a group in Brisbane. We stopped because everyone got busy with studies and other things but we've been talking about starting something new," he adds hopefully. Stan says he also likes fishing with his friends and having a BBQ from time to time. "It's a great way for us all to get together."

Stan started working in the Common Ground Queensland Maintenance team six months ago and says he appreciates the convenience of working and living in the building and being part of a team. "I can work for a couple of hours and then go back to my unit," he says. "Mostly I enjoy working with the other people and getting experience from them. I like to get to know people," he smiles warmly.





A personal journey

Despite his perfect rental record, Oleg explains he found it increasingly difficult to find affordable rental properties as an unemployed person. "It was one factor that led to my homelessness, plus bad decisions. You've got to remember that we make decisions, lots and lots of decisions through life that have cascading results and I'm not a person to have a cartoon in my head that it's simply someone else's fault. There's a certain amount of reflection needed in order to help yourself," he states matter-of-factly.

Oleg recalls that his romantic ideal of being free and unencumbered wore off after a couple of months. "I used to watch this 70's TV show called Kung Fu. The main character played by David Carradine was homeless and the show pitched a really romantic view of being free of everything; of just walking free without wanting too many material possessions and just being yourself," he smiles wryly. "But I found it not to be the romantic thing that it was supposed to be, as people look down on you all the time, constantly. There was no superstar, hero to come out of that...it was just simply me being homeless. I thought, gee...I mustn't get too caught up in romantic ideals, as I really did need a home and I did need a place to live."

After experiencing homelessness for about two years on and off Oleg found out about Brisbane Common Ground. "I had some pretty good social workers that put me in the queue," he says. "But like a lot of people, I was in a pretty discombobulated state of being because you really don't have anything when you're homeless; any centre. It's just very undignified and a very horrible experience that you don't want to go through."

For Oleg housing was just the first step. "I was not in the best mental state and it took me a long time to recover from that; not a short time," he reflects. "It really was quite a while to have my own sense of stability, not even equilibrium, just some stability and then I had to build from there. It really does matter just being able to stand and hold your head up with everybody else. It's incredibly important for us to feel dignity, respect and community and social connections. All these things that you cannot do without really."

"My experiences here [Brisbane Common Ground] have been completely positive and I've really enjoyed the contact I've had with the music group program. I remember how raw and emotional I was when I started. I used to play the guitar, but I got a nerve injury and had to give it up and learn another instrument. I kept fronting up to the music group every week. I did singing and percussion until I found my way to piano. It was a lot to do with that really

nurturing environment that I got; it's really cool. To be in an environment that's completely supportive of music and non-judgmental is rare. Having someone from the Conservatorium of Music; a musician of that calibre support the group was one of the highlights of my life; a treat."

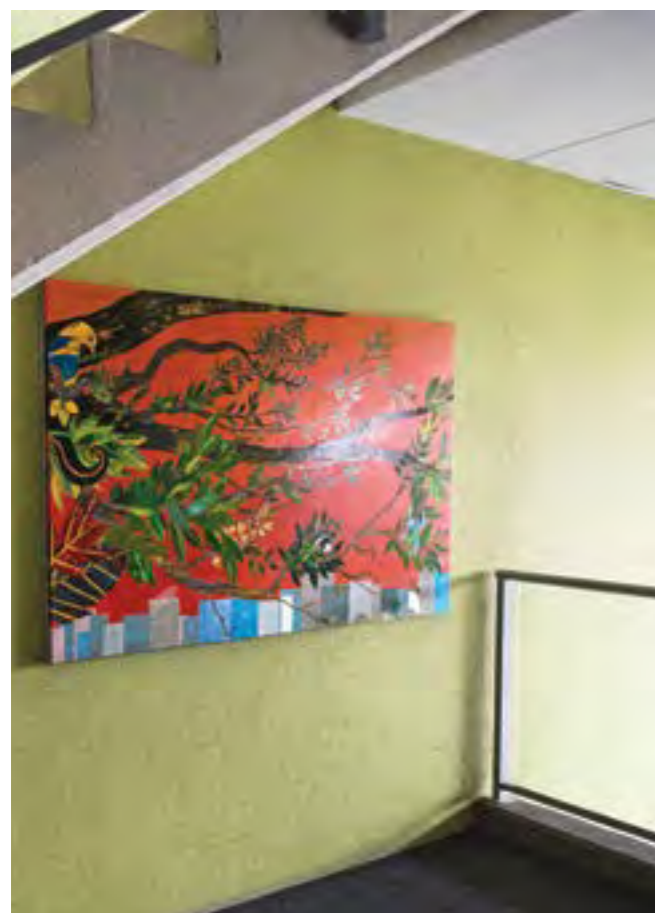
An accomplished dancer, Oleg is no stranger to the arts. "I love the arts and I love all the art forms," he affirms. "I was with The Australian Ballet from 1987 to 1990. I started training as a dancer when I was 14 at the Victorian College of the Arts in 1981. I trained there and got lost in that for three years and then did another six years full-time training. I was one of the lucky people. I really had to fight like everyone else in the class for the very, very few places in The Australian Ballet. I did four years in the company, then went overseas for two years to a company in Munich. When I hurt my back I couldn't partner anymore and my career was over," he shares. "That was a really good six years."

With renewed stability and direction, Oleg believes his time at Brisbane Common Ground has given him the base to build the next part of his life. "I'm very grateful to be here and very happy with all the care and the resources. It's been perfect," he concludes with gentle humility.





Changing it up



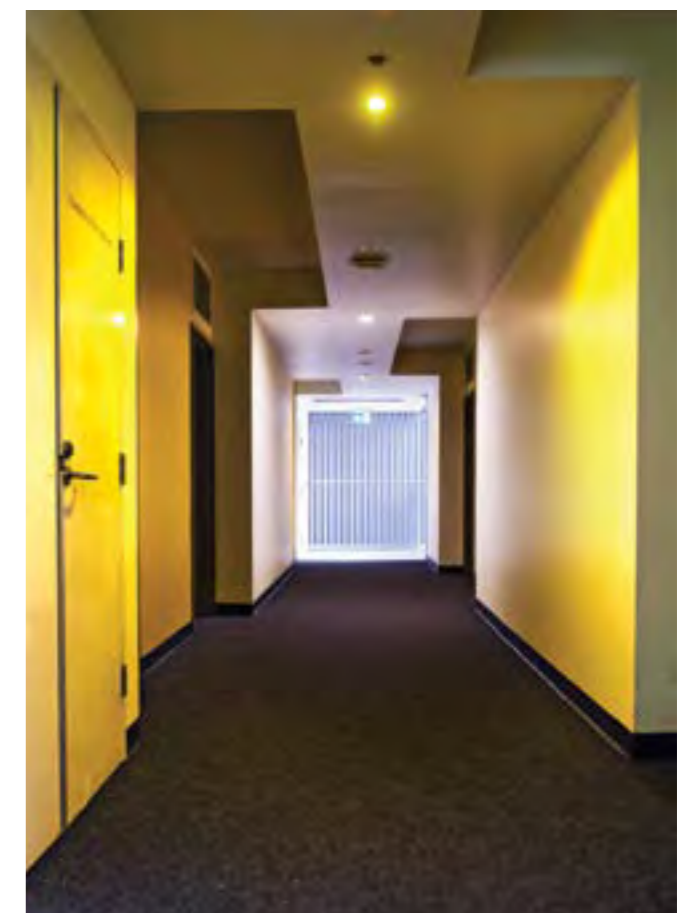
The building looks a little different to the one that opened in July 2012. In the last year we have seen some notable physical changes which we hope has improved the amenity for the tenants.

With corridor surfaces of bare grey concrete, some marked by desire paths of commonly trod routes, others resembling the starting grid of a Moto GP race, the challenge was to improve the appearance without compromising the grip or significantly impacting the ongoing maintenance costs. Enter the marine carpet, designed to withstand use on the high seas, therefore perfect for an external common area in a geographical area noted for its storm season. Easy to clean, waterproof and easy to walk on, a clear improvement on what we started with.

An obvious issue from the first summer of the building was the impact of the sun upon tenants facing the Hope Street side. With the prospect of air-cons being entirely unrealistic as a social housing project in Queensland, alternative mitigation products have been suggested by tenants and advocated for by CGQ. This year we got the funding to install the balcony blinds on the 66 units which bear the fullest brunt of the Queensland summer, and over the summer of 18- 19 they were installed. Thank you to the Department of Housing and Public Works for approving the upgrades that were suggested by our tenants.

A different kind of change involved us catching up with the technological times. The BCG App can be downloaded onto anyone's device and can be used in lieu of submitting hard copies of the various forms used at BCG. If tenants do not own a device they can ask Concierge or support staff to submit a formal communication on their behalf. This forms part of CGQ's commitment to offering different methods to service users for interacting with us and to minimise the needs for printing too many pieces of paper. Tenants are also able to access this new service through our recently upgraded computers in the IT lounge.

As the building gets older, as technology changes, as conventions change, CGQ is committed to continually assessing potential ways of improving systems and the quality of the building whenever it is in our power to do so.





A venue with a difference

You can support our efforts to end homelessness in Brisbane by hiring one of our modern function venues for your next meeting, training event, private or corporate function.

Brisbane Common Ground was designed to be utilised by the community, fostering partnership and opportunity.

When you make a booking in our Kurilpa Room or Gambaro Room you will have access to everything you need to host a successful event while supporting the provision of homes for people who have suffered from chronic homelessness. You will also provide employment opportunities for our tenants.

Currently we have five tenants employed to help out with our function space and when functions are booked there's additional cleaning required which means more work for our tenants.

Tenant Employment 2018 - 2019

\$65,000 paid in wages to tenants who work with CGQ in the maintenance and function teams

Here's what you need to know about both rooms:

KURILPA ROOM (LEVEL 1)

This light filled spacious room located on the 1st floor can be configured to cater for board meetings, seminars and workshops. The Kurilpa Room also offers a spacious breakout balcony.

Room hire includes set up, a data projector, whiteboard, water glasses and table water, access to the breakout area and wi-fi.

GAMBARO ROOM (LEVEL 13)

The magnificent Gambaro Room located on the 13th floor lends itself perfectly to sophisticated dining or exclusive functions and conferences. The impressive rooftop balcony provides spectacular views of the Brisbane River and CBD skyline. Room hire includes set up, a data projector, whiteboard, water glasses and table water, access to the breakout area and wi-fi.

We can look after all of your catering needs and are a short stroll from the City and Southbank, so why not book a venue with a difference for your next function!

Room hire rates and hours vary on the day and timing of your event, so feel free to get in touch with our friendly team who will be able to help you with your booking.

Stage, front and centre

Amanda says she first heard about Brisbane Common Ground through a friend. "Years and years ago another actor who I knew lived here and she told me about it," she recalls. At the time, Amanda explains she was housesitting a lot, so she just filed it to the back of her mind. "But then I had a year where I was struggling to string the 'sits' together and I was spending a lot of time either having to pay exorbitant prices to stay somewhere in between or stay with friends and it didn't seem to be going so well. I remembered about Brisbane Common Ground so I looked into it more and filled in an application form."

Amanda describes how having her own place again was a huge relief. It also provided her with a secure base to focus on supporting her ageing parents through a time of need. "I was moving every two weeks sometimes and it does get quite tiring. The year before I came here I was constantly packing my stuff up and moving and worrying about where I was going to go next. There were a lot of unknowns, even though at the last minute something would turn up, there was still a lot of uncertainty," stresses Amanda.

"So being able to move in here, it was just great to be able to stop and unpack a bit of stuff and just have my own place. That part of it has just been awesome and it's close to work." Amanda's eyes light up as she talks about her job at QPAC. "I've been there more than eight years," she shares. "I'm a

tour guide as well as an usher. It's a great place to work and we do get wonderful opportunities working there."

Amanda says it fits in well with her other work as an actor for two different independent theatre companies and talks animatedly about her recent performances and current projects. "For one of them I'm doing a reimagining of a Henrik Ibsen play. The other company, The Curators has been going for a couple of years and I've already done two plays with them; a rendition of Anton Chekov's Uncle Vanya and The Quighting Time which was performed in an apartment in Toowong as part of the annual Anywhere Theatre Festival. Independent theatre in Brisbane is difficult but we're getting a bit of a name," affirms Amanda. "The big problem is finding venues that people can afford and then hoping that you fill the house."

But according to Amanda, the passion to perform outweighs the hurdles. "Next year we'll be really ramping up and we're hoping big things for Ghosts, which is going up this weekend," she says excitedly. Evidently the homegrown local art scene is vibrant and flourishing – well worth checking out!



BCEC 'Containers for Change'

You may have seen the 'Containers for Change' initiative popping up at different locations all across Queensland.

This year, Common Ground Queensland (CGQ) have been fortunate enough to get involved with the program, thanks to the generous team at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre (BCEC).

The initiative means that CGQ will receive a boost in funding to help with our work in ending homelessness in the community.

BCEC has donated \$8,000 to CGQ with the money raised through the Centre's participation in the recycling scheme.

Container Exchange, the State Government appointed authority to oversee the scheme, believes BCEC is one of the first of Brisbane's large scale commercial operations to leverage the scheme to benefit local community groups.

"To date the Centre, which hosts an average 1,100 events and welcomes more than 600,000 visitors through the doors each year, has recycled 128,741 items from various events including the recent Brisbane Truck Show attended by 36,000 patrons," said BCEC General Manager, Bob O'Keeffe.

Mr O'Keeffe said the original idea to take advantage of the recycling scheme to help the community came from staff.

"Our staff are at the very heart of the Centre's community activities donating more than 145,000 meals to hunger relief agency Foodbank and hosting the Centre's Annual Salvation Army Christmas Lunch for 500 children and families, most in need- just two of the current programs."

"Environmental, cultural and social integrity has become fundamental to the daily operations of the Centre," he said.

The Centre's Executive Pastry Chef, Matthew Arnold, who was one of the main drivers behind the initiative, which involved staff from Food & Beverage Operations and housekeeping, proudly presented the donation to CGQ on behalf of BCEC.

CGQ CEO Sonya Keep said the staff at BCEC are inspirational. "They have changed the way they work to create a positive change in our community. We are extremely grateful for their continued support," said Ms Keep.

"The Brisbane Common Ground building in South Brisbane offers permanent safe and affordable housing with on-site support services to people who have experienced homelessness. Our supportive housing model offers a solution that ends the cycle of homelessness. We see increasing numbers of individuals and families who cannot find a place to call home."

BCEC says that its large footprint in the community comes with an obligation to adopt a whole of community partnership approach for a shared goal to end homelessness.

We sincerely thank BCEC for their adoption of the Containers for Change scheme and the generous donation made to CGQ.

QPAC's spirit of giving

In 2018-19, Common Ground Queensland's (CGQ) association with the Queensland Performing Arts Centre (QPAC) continued to grow, with a number of fundraising efforts throughout the year.

During August 2018, QPAC kindly donated tickets to the Brisbane theatre debut of Mother, by acclaimed playwright Daniel Keene, starring one of Australia's favourite and most respected actors Noni Hazelhurst. Mother tells the story of Christie, a homeless woman who lives a detached existence from the world around her. After a sell-out season in Sydney, this moving and powerful play was a huge success in Brisbane.

QPAC produced an eight page souvenir show program for the play and encouraged attendees to gift a gold coin donation, which was donated directly to CGQ. During the show's two week season, program donations raised for CGQ totalled \$1,200.

For the second year in a row, CGQ also had volunteers collecting donations for QPAC's Spirit of Christmas concerts.

Our volunteers were decked out with tinsel and reindeer headpieces and did a fantastic job, with the generous donations of concert goers totalling an amazing \$8,415.

We'd like to say a big thank you to everyone who donated and generously shared some Christmas spirit for furthering our cause. Also, a heart-felt thanks to QPAC who have

invited us back to collect donations again for their Spirit of Christmas 2019 concerts.

We are always looking for volunteers to help us out with donation drives like this, so if you'd like to join in the festive spirit and help us collect, please contact Erin Smith via email at admin@commongroundqld.org.au.

A further act of generosity came our way in June 2019 when QPAC offered CGQ 10 tickets for Brisbane Common Grounds tenants to see the dress rehearsal of The Bolshoi Ballet's production of Spartacus.

The tickets were snapped up quickly and reports back were that it was a fabulous night. Here's just a few things that our tenants had to say about the experience:

"It was a wonderful night. Thank you very much for the tickets. We're very lucky."

"Just wanted to say a huge thank you for the ballet tickets last night. It was incredible."

These opportunities mean the world to our tenants and gives them a cultural experience and memory that they will never forget.

Thanks again to QPAC for their support of CGQ and we very much look forward to working with them again next year.

Community connections

Rise Gym

It's been another great year for the Rise Gym. Situated at the back of Brisbane Common Ground, the small but well equipped fitness studio offers eight free group movement sessions each week free of charge to our tenants.

Our resident Senior Exercise Physiologist, Tim Douge of Resilience Healthcare has been volunteering his time and expertise since the studio opened in late 2015.

"The Rise Gym provides a way for the tenants here to come down and stay physically active and healthy and take the opportunity to look after themselves and have power in that area," says Tim.

"We provide guidance around what they should be doing to understand their bodies and health a little better. For me it was a real opportunity to access the people that I believe will get the most benefit from exercise."

Over the years Tim and his team have been able to assist regular gym-goers make great progress with their fitness.

"Kellie's first exercise was just being able to touch her fingertips together...and now we've been able to progress to the point where we are doing weight and cardio exercises and that's a powerful thing," shares Tim.

"Our tenants really benefit from Tim's continued dedication and generosity," says Common Ground Queensland CEO Sonya Keep. "We are very fortunate to have him on board."



Brisbane Open House

2018 marked our fifth year of participation in the Brisbane Open House – Unlock your City Program. Despite the rain, close to 50 people turned up for a guided tour of Brisbane Common Ground.

Brisbane Open House is part of the Open House Worldwide global network and includes international cities such as New York, Tel Aviv, Stockholm, Chicago, Barcelona, Dublin as well as other major Australian cities. The annual event is designed to showcase good design in cities across the world.

We extend a big thankyou to staff and tenant volunteers (Ann, Kellie, Cameron and Nilima) who generously gave up their precious Saturday to escort people through the building and to raise awareness of the Common Ground supportive housing model.



Community of Practice

The Common Ground Community of Practice is made up of a group of housing and support professionals who work for the various Common Grounds in Australasia. The group excludes CEOs and Senior Management and is designed for those at either the Team Leader or operational level to have a forum to discuss the day to day issues affecting them at our different supportive housing projects. This is facilitated through monthly teleconferences, but also through an annual get-together at one of the seven member cities.

In May this year it was Canberra's turn to host its first Community of Practice conference, convened at the support service Northside's office in Dickson. Thank you to our friends Kate and Sam for their hospitality and organisation for this year's event. Notable sessions covered topics familiar to the staff at Brisbane Common Ground such as: Meaningful Use of Time; Wellbeing/Welfare Checks; Trauma Informed Practice and Models of Support.

Although the central premise of long-term supportive housing runs through all our projects, the variety contained within each is notable. Perhaps none are more different

from Brisbane than the Canberra site, which was a bit of a drive to get out to the Gungahlin location from the city. In comparison to our own urban setting, the wilderness which the 40 unit complex backs onto is a stark contrast.

There is lots of positivity when looking to the future; with the relevance of supportive housing still glaringly obvious. Northside reported feeling encouraged by the prospect of the ACT government providing another supportive housing project in the near-term, the scale of which could theoretically eradicate primary homelessness in Canberra according to the most recent measurement of rough sleeping in that city. Community of Practice members were hoping to be heading across the ditch next year, but with the new Auckland site's revised delivery scheduled for late 2020, it is likely we will have to wait until 2021 to check New Zealand Common Ground out.

We also know there's interest in establishing Common Ground coming from organisations active in the cities of Newcastle and Perth. It's great to know that the good word is being spread.

Christmas Dinner

Christmas means a lot of different things to a lot of different people. At Brisbane Common Ground, it means coming together to share a meal and companionship, an opportunity to celebrate our community and have a bit of fun ☺

This year we deviated from our usual BBQ theme to share in a traditional Christmas dinner, complete with bon bons and other festive treats. A big thankyou to Phyllis and Erin for making Christmas extra special.

"Christmas isn't a season. It's a feeling."

– EDNA FERBER





Left to right: Justin Hogg (Company Secretary), Christine Grose, Candice Sgroi, Peter Pearce, Michael Ryall, Joanna Spanaard, Mark Lightfoot

Board of Directors

PETER PEARCE - CHAIR

Peter Pearce currently works as an executive in the aero-medical retrieval industry.

Peter has over 30 years' experience in not-for-profit governance with organisations working in employment, homelessness, housing, child and family support, acute health care and child care. He has worked in senior roles in aged care, health, politics, public service, business development and general management.

Peter is a fellow of the Governance Institute of Australia and the Australian Institute of Company Directors and has completed the advanced company director's initial and advanced programmes. He holds Masters degrees in Ethics & Legal Studies and Public Sector Management, and other qualifications in social science and business.

MARK FENTON - DEPUTY CHAIR

Mark joined the Board in 2015 and is the chair of the Audit and Risk Committee. He has more than 17 years' experience as a company director and has served on the Boards of Queensland Ballet Company and John Paul College Limited.

He is the Chairman of Queensland Alliance for Mental Health Ltd and is a Director of Community Mental Health Australia Inc. and the UQ International House Foundation Ltd. He chaired the Arts Investment Advisory Board that provided strategic and funding advice to the Queensland government.

Mark is a finance executive with over 24 years' experience, is a fellow of both the Australian Institute of Company Directors and CPA Australia. He has worked for businesses in

the disability services, professional services, manufacturing, retirement living, retail and membership services sectors.

JOANNA SPANJAARD - DIRECTOR

Joanna is a Partner in the Risk Advisory Practice at Deloitte. She has over 20 years' experience in risk management developing, implementing and providing assurance over all aspects of risk management including risk frameworks, risk appetite, risk maturity diagnostics, risk governance, culture and operating models. Joanna also has deep experience in many industry sectors including not-for-profits, health, public safety, energy, mining and water and regularly facilitates emerging, strategic and operational risk workshops with Boards and senior executives. She is a mechanical engineer and is also a Board Member of the Industry Advisory Board, Electrical Engineering, University of Queensland.

MARK LIGHTFOOT – DIRECTOR

Mark is a Partner in the Banking and Financial Services Group of HWL Ebsworth. His clients include major Australian Banks and financial institutions.

Mark's experience includes documenting and advising on the structuring of a range of debt finance transactions including property development and investment finance, construction and project financing, and equipment finance. He also has significant experience in securities enforcement and work-outs, and advising financial institutions regarding pre-enforcement strategies.

Mark regularly undertakes significant pre-lending reviews and security due diligence on behalf of his financier clients. In addition to acting for financial institutions, Mark also

regularly acts for several corporate clients with respect to their project finance requirements.

MICHAEL RYALL - DIRECTOR

Michael is a Chartered Accountant with over 20 years' experience in hospitality and property organisations in Australia, UK and the Middle East. Over this time, he has developed an expertise in financial management and reporting, governance, business management, strategic planning and project management. His financial and commercial experience provides a detailed understanding of the property industry, real estate practices and financial reporting within the industry.

Michael is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and a member of the Financial Executive. He holds qualifications in Strata Management and Hotel Management, has a Master of Professional Accounting and post graduate qualifications in Applied Finance.

CHRISTINE GROSE - DIRECTOR

Christine Grose has over three decades of direct service delivery and management experience in the community sector- in particular in the areas of homelessness and youth at risk.

Christine has served on the 4 Walls (later Compass Queensland) Board as well as numerous other community Management Committees throughout her career. Her focus for her voluntary and paid work is on implementing structural change and supporting community capacity-building, in the service of social justice. Christine currently works as a Client

Services Manager with a medium-sized Community Services organisation in South East Queensland (SEQ).

CANDICE SGROI - DIRECTOR

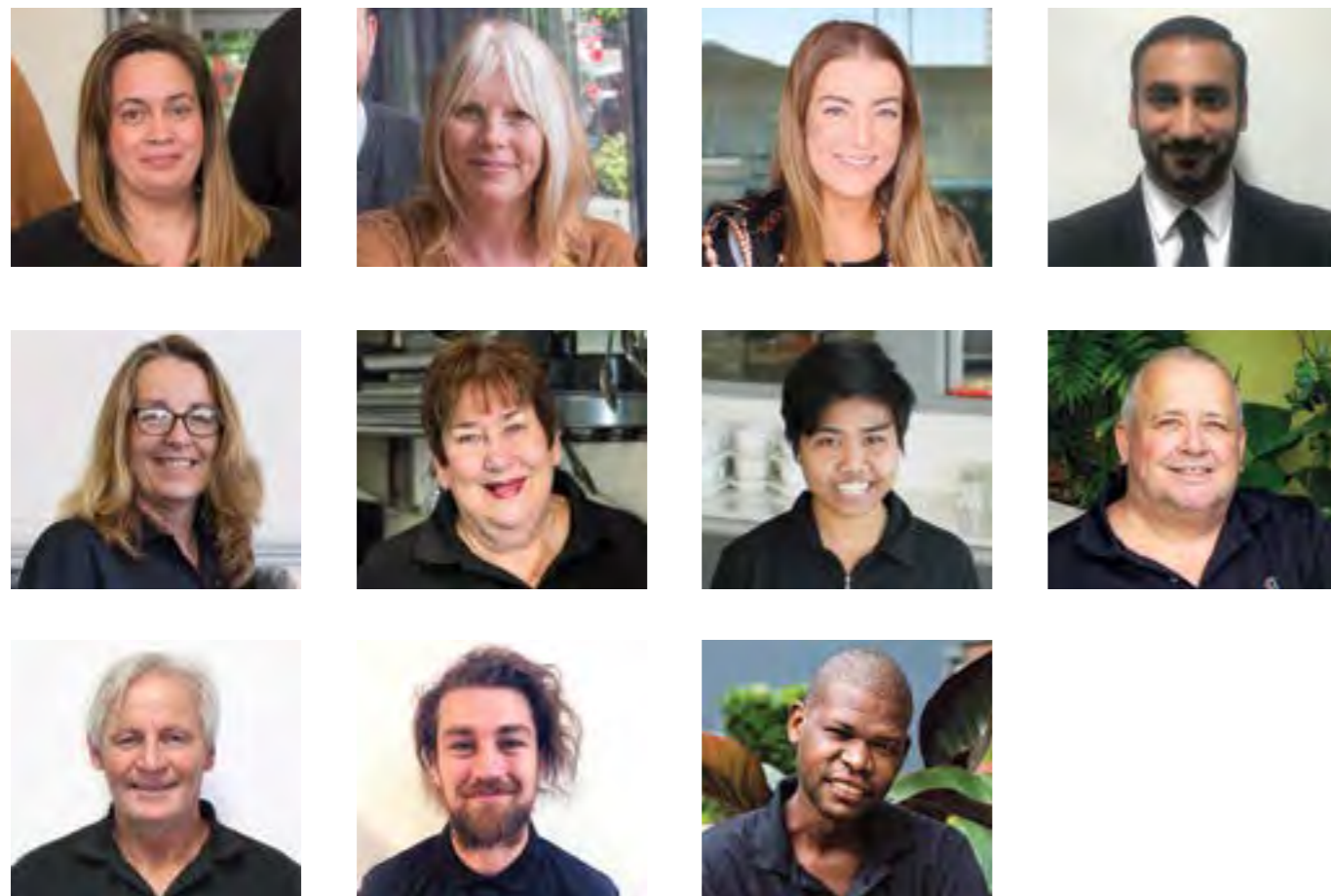
Candice joined the Board in June 2019 and is a member of the Supporter Engagement and Advocacy Committee. She has more than 20 years' experience as a journalist and corporate communications professional obtained in Australia, the United Kingdom and Middle East.

Candice holds a Bachelor of Arts (Journalism) from the University of Queensland, a Graduate Diploma in Applied Corporate Governance from the Governance Institute of Australia and is currently an Executive MBA Candidate at QUT. She has experience as a member of an Executive Committee on an ASX listed company, a member of an industry committee and as the Chair of a Community Partnership Fund.



Mark Fenton
Deputy Chairman

CGQ Team



Our commitment to professional development

During the year we continued to invest in professional development for our staff to ensure continuous improvement in areas that better equip us to respond to the needs of our tenants.

The focus areas for this year included: Trauma Informed Care and Practice, Communications, Resilience and Self Care, Incident Management and quarterly Concierge training days.



AHI Award - Inspirational Team Member

We're proud to say our very own Kathleen Burgen took out the Inspirational Team Member Award for the 2019 AHI Professional Excellence in Housing Awards in Queensland. The Awards formally recognise and reward excellence in professional practice in social housing across Australia and New Zealand.

We couldn't agree more with the outcome. A core part of our team since 2012, Kath is genuinely engaged in what Common Ground Queensland is trying to achieve and is highly respected for her work ethic and dedication to quality. Kath is admired by tenants and colleagues alike for her ability to 'always make time' for others despite her busy work schedule and has no hesitation in responding to a request for help or support, even if this means cutting a lunch break short or leaving work a bit later. It's truly the little things that count!

In her role as Cleaning Team Supervisor, Kath genuinely believes that people deserve a nice place to live and makes sure she does what she can to bring this about. She takes pride in creating an environment in which tenants feel valued and are treated with dignity.

"Kath is a fantastic leader. She leads through respect and a calm approach that gives you confidence."

– CGQ TEAM MEMBER

"Kath made me feel comfortable when I moved in. She helped me to move furniture even in her lunch break. She's got a great attitude."

– BCG TENANT



Supporter program

When you support Common Ground Queensland, you add your voice to our call to end homelessness.

Visit commongroundqld.org.au/supporters and become an official supporter of Common Ground Queensland.

We will keep you up to date with the work we are doing to end homelessness and invite you to contribute, participate and share in that journey.



Thank you

Common Ground Queensland would like to thank and recognise the following individuals and organisations who have invested in our initiatives and outcomes throughout the year.

INVESTMENT THROUGH VOLUNTEERING

- Alex Nott
- Andy Currey
- Ann O'Sullivan
- Anthony Hernandez
- Bella Nott
- Brad Dorge
- Cameron Doo
- Cathy Stephens
- Cheryl Desmaris
- Chris Tabrett
- Deanna Nott
- Emily Hassall
- Giselle Hodgson
- Greg Dorge
- Harry Pearce
- Harry Ryan
- James Gotley
- Joanna Spanjaard
- Joey Paasi
- Kellie Williams
- Lara De Martini
- Leala MacMillan
- Leo Tellam
- Lily Walker
- Lisa Armitage
- Lisa Williams
- Marilla Currey
- Michael Murphy
- Nilima Harjal
- Peter Ayscough
- Peter Pearce
- Rikki Pieters
- Riley Dorge
- Saskia Tabrett
- Sharon Laycock
- Sonya Keep
- Stacey Currey
- Susan Gilmartin
- Sylvia Currey
- Tim Douge
- Tom Vergotis

INVESTMENT THROUGH IN-KIND & FINANCIAL SUPPORT

- Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre
- Cathy Stephens
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- Deloitte
- Department of Housing and Public Works
- Erica Evans
- HWL Ebsworth Lawyers
- John Glenn
- Kaye Cooper
- Mark Lightfoot
- Milaan Latten
- Nitinkumar Jethwa
- Nudgee College
- QPAC
- Resilience Health Care
- Tony Beresford-Smith, Practical Business Support
- Tym Guitars

PARTNERS AND AFFILIATES

- 3rd Space
- Australasian Housing Institute
- Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre
- Business South Bank
- Clemente
- Community Housing Providers Queensland (CHPs for QLD)
- Department of Housing and Public Works
- Griffith University
- Grocon
- HWL Ebsworth
- Micah Projects
- Q Shelter
- QCOSS
- QPAC
- Queensland Police Service
- Resilience Health Care
- Songlines Community Choir
- UpBeat Arts



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ANNUAL REPORT
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