BRISBANE
YOUTH
SERVICE

MEDIA RELEASE

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INNOVATIVE PARTNERSHIP PROVIDES KEYS TO FIVE NEW FUTURES

Five vulnerable young people, including a young parent, supported by Brisbane Youth Service (BYS) are moving into brand new homes this month thanks to an innovative partnership between BYS and Community housing provider Brisbane Housing Company (BHC).

The partnership provides an allocation of five homes specifically for young people supported by BYS in BHC's new 32-unit social and affordable housing development in Woolloongabba.

Having safe, affordable accommodation gives young people an important opportunity to build a new future. With support from BYS these five young people will gain independent living skills and importantly a tenancy record which will improve their access to private market options down the track.

"Moving into this property has made me feel like I have hope for my future now, which I haven't had in a long time," one resident said.

"Having a stable place to live is giving me a chance to focus on what I need to do to move forward instead of worrying about where I am going to be staying." she said.

BYS CEO Annemaree Callander says partnerships like this help address the huge gap between the need for and access to social housing for young people, but more must be done to break the cycle of homelessness.

"Youth homelessness is a critical issue, with young people aged 19-24 experiencing the highest rates of homelessness in Australia." she said.

"Despite this huge demand at the frontline, less than three per cent of people living in social housing are young people.

"Couchsurfing and moving from place to place puts vulnerable young people at serious risk of violence and abuse. It impacts their mental and physical health, sense of identity and makes it impossible to stay engaged at school or in employment and transition successfully to independence."

BHC CEO Rebecca Oelkers said BHC was committed to growing the supply of social and affordable housing in Brisbane, particularly for young people, and will continue to advocate to all levels of government to invest in a social and affordable housing construction stimulus program, to lead Australia out of recession and into economic and social recovery.

"Young people in dire housing need have the greatest difficulty accessing affordable, safe accommodation due to their incredibly low incomes. Their chances are further reduced by preconceptions in the private market about their age and ability to manage and sustain a tenancy," she said.

The residents of 126 Cornwall St are fortunate to have secured stable housing as with rental debts mounting and the loss of Coronavirus income supplements on 31 March 2021, more young people are likely to be pushed into poverty and homelessness.

The development at 126 Cornwall Street is the first to be constructed under the Queensland Government's Partnering for Growth initiative.

Units were furnished through generous sponsorship by BYS Corporate partners under the Furnishing Young Futures initiative.

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Notes:

- Each year more than 1400 young people (aged 12-24years) come to BYS in crisis
- 54% are homeless, 82% are in unsafe, unsuitable or unaffordable housing, 22% are young parents
- Most are also experiencing a range of other complex issues and barriers such as:

  - *70% have experienced family violence*
  - *55% have a diagnosed mental health issue*
  - *20% have no source of income*
  - *51% are disengaged from education or unemployed*
  - *32% have current legal issues*

- BHC has provided more than 6,000 households with access to high-quality, well-located affordable housing across Brisbane since it was established in 2002
- This development is the first to be constructed under the Queensland Government's Partnering for Growth initiative, with the first residents moving into their new homes in February 2021
- Five units were allocated to young people supported by Brisbane Youth Service

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