

Supplementary Questions

Are you able to provide any evidence or research on social return on investment and if there are examples of defining an economic benefit in relation to the provision of services to those in social/public or affordable housing or who are homeless?

Our Housing Plus products and services provide indirect economic benefits; since 2005 we have distributed over \$520,000 to 617 students in primary, secondary and tertiary education through our Educational Bursary scheme. The grant allows our tenants to continue with their education and helps them to pursue their career aspirations; one bursary recipient was able to study baking at TAFE as a result of the grant, and she has since started her own successful catering company.

We also provide our tenants with access to low cost computers and internet access through our DigiConnect service, and over 50 tenants have signed up to the scheme since it started in 2011. One tenant, who was paralysed on one side of his body and experienced isolation and lack of self-confidence as a result, took part in the scheme as he wanted to connect with more people. He has since completed a number of training courses in computer training, first aid and community services, and is now applying for roles in the community sector.

As part of our social procurement policy we work with our contractors to run Entry Steps to Employment, a scheme which provides our tenants with training and employment opportunities.

Since the scheme started in 2012, 30 tenants have enquired about the program, 10 of whom have gained full-time employment as a result.


A similar program, Green Wings, is run at Bonnyrigg by Newleaf Communities; since it started in 2008:

- 29 residents have found either full or part-time employment
- 26 residents have started internships or school-based traineeships
- 31 residents have started studying for their Certificate 2 in Horticulture and Construction Pathways.

What impact will the Federal Budget cut in funding for NRAS have on your organisation? Can you describe what impact there will be for your services or the provision on new housing?

It will have a significant impact. For example in NRAS Round 5 we had requested for our Belmont Street development in Sutherland be considered for NRAS. This is a 46 unit building for affordable housing. The NRAS would have provided revenue of over \$400,000 per annum for 10 years. Therefore the scrapping of the NRAS Round 5 tender will reduce our revenues by over \$4 million over the 10 year period.

As a Class 1 Registered Community Housing Provider, we have a commitment to increase the supply of affordable housing in Australia and our work in this area will therefore continue.



However, the abolition of NRAS makes this much harder for us as the loss of incentives means that each Affordable Housing project will cost us more – money that we could have invested in increasing affordable housing supply elsewhere.

The abolition of NRAS also means that there is less incentive for private developers and other investors to provide affordable housing. A reduction in supply of affordable housing will push more people into social housing or homelessness, which will have a knock-on effect for both our business, in terms of the increased demand for our services, and our country's economic and social outcomes.