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MEDIA RELEASE

Community sector to manage 1 in 3 social housing homes in NSW

The state's peak not-for-profit housing body today congratulated the nine community housing providers who have successfully tendered to manage 14,000 public housing properties in the Hunter, North Coast, Shoalhaven, New England, South Coast and Northern Sydney.

NSW Federation of Housing Associations CEO, Wendy Hayhurst, said under the new leases 32% of all social housing in NSW would be managed by the community housing sector - recognition by the NSW Government of the benefit of community housing for tenants and local communities and a commitment to the growth of the not-for-profit housing sector in NSW.

"Our NSW community housing providers already own and manage properties in over 280 local council areas, providing affordable rents, care and support for people in housing stress," Ms Hayhurst said.

"These transfers will allow community housing providers to do what they do best - deliver high quality tenancy management and maintenance services to more tenants, manage complex tenancies well through partnerships with support agencies, and offer opportunities to tenants through training and employment initiatives."

Ms Hayhurst said the community housing sector is looking forward to working closely with both the tenants who are transferring and local agencies that provide services for tenants.

Community housing providers are also looking forward to offering communities in the transfer areas the full range of private Rental Assistance available to help them to be safely housed.

"Community housing providers are part of their local community and work with tenants to help them get back on their feet - providing support and training as well as safe, secure, affordable homes.

"Importantly, people like living in community housing and working in our sector.

"Findings from the latest House Keys industry benchmarking report found that 85 per cent of tenants in NSW are satisfied with their community housing provider, with satisfaction rates even higher in regional areas.

"The report also found that 92 per cent of urgent repairs and 89 per cent of non-urgent repairs are completed on time in NSW. We also work really hard to make it a great sector to work in and to be part of the local community."

Ms Hayhurst said the Federation would work with the government to make sure the transition to the sector was as smooth as possible.

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About community housing in NSW

1. Community Housing Providers are not-for-profit organisations that invest any profits back into new housing, **more services** or **improving** properties– not into dividends for shareholders or executive bonuses.
2. The community-housing sector in NSW already manages or owns **more than 35,000** properties - and it's growing every year.
3. Surveys **consistently show** community-housing tenants are happier with their homes than public housing tenants.
4. Unlike public housing, community housing can leverage its asset base **and cash flows as security** to attract private finance and build more affordable homes.
5. The sector's charitable status makes it exempt from GST, land tax and stamp duty and helps it attract philanthropic donations – meaning it can make housing more affordable for tenants.
6. Community housing providers run services for tenants such as work programs, training and counselling. They also support community programs such as community gardens, social groups, and community days. This is something the private sector **model is not geared up do**.
7. Community housing providers need to be good business managers because **they cannot look to government to bail them out if they get into trouble**. Unlike public housing they are innovative and entrepreneurial and unlike private developers they're heavily regulated **against performance standards** to protect tenants **and make sure they remain financially viable**.
8. Developers build and flip. Community housing providers manage their housing for the long term, so design matters, and so does quality **and running costs for tenants**.
9. Community housing is hugely **successful** in other parts of the world. One in 10 Londoners live in some model of community housing.