



North West Youth
Accommodation Service Inc.

ANNUAL REPORT

2014-2015

Celebrating 30 years!

Est. 1985

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Annual General Meeting
Tuesday 25th November 2014
Minutes

1. Present: Jim Fouras, Judy Timms, Robert Granger, Holly Moulds, Brian Parker, Tanya Turrell, Deon Menerey, Christine Robinson, Sarah Thorne, Heather Rowe, Brenda Squires, Mark Squires, David Webb, Jason Raines, Jon Thorne, Matthew Maloney, Tania Lawrie, Peter Glasby, April Hastwell, Anna Cupo, Andrea, Julie, Martin Turrell, Danielle DePinto, Sandy Landers, Hon. Tim Mander, MP

2. Apologies: The Hon. Jane Prentice- Federal Member for Ryan, Councillor Andrew Wines of the Enoggera Ward, Lee-Anne Hoyer – YAC, Christy McGuire – Zig Zag Young Women’s Resource Centre, Julie Nelson – Red Cross Homestay.

3. Minutes of Previous Annual General Meeting
MOVED: Robert Granger SECONDED: Brian Parker

4. Reports:
 - ✓ President:

 - ✓ Manager:

 - ✓ Financial Report /Audit:
MOVED: Judy Timms SECONDED: Brian Parker

5. Election of Office Bearers:
MOVED: Heather Rowe SECONDED: Martin Turrell

6. Appointment of Auditor: David Starr
MOVED: Robert Granger SECONDED: Holly Moulds

7. Close of Meeting: 6:30pm

This is a true and accurate record of the AGM held on the 25th November 2014

Jim Fouras
PRESIDENT



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I am delighted to deliver my final annual report as President of North West Youth Accommodation Service (NWYAS). It is my intention to continue to serve on the committee.

I begin this report by noting Tanya's resignation which brings to a close her ten year commitment to NWYAS.

It is with pride and optimism for the future that I firmly believe that NWYAS will continue to be acclaimed for its outstanding contribution as a specialist youth homeless service.

Tanya has optimised the skills of her staff which ensures that NWYAS is providing enviable support services, tenancy management and financial accountability.

The incoming Management Committee undoubtedly has the skills and the passion necessary to ensure NWYAS will continue to provide compassionate and practical support to homeless youth.

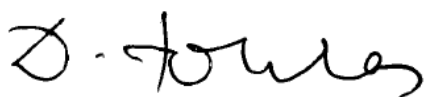
As this is my final report after 25 years on this Committee, please allow me a degree of nostalgia. My interest and passion for dealing with youth homelessness goes back to the early 1980s. During this time, through my involvement with the East Brisbane Community Centre and the Woolloongabba Community Support Service, I became aware that the institutionalisation of young people by the Queensland Government was responsible for increasing numbers of homeless youth.

After my premature retirement as the MP for South Brisbane in 1986, I had the opportunity to meet Brian Burdekin, the Human Rights Commissioner. I was able to convince him to announce a National Inquiry into Youth Homelessness. Consequently I was employed as the Senior Consultant during the conduct of this Inquiry. At the Brisbane hearing evidence from a Queensland Government employee admitted that the majority of homeless were youth who were previously in State care.

The inadequacy of public and social housing as well as the decline of government funding for homeless services is a serious concern. About fifty percent of low income households are experiencing financial difficulties in the private rental market.

I am delighted that Robert has accepted the role of President, and that we continue to provide quality Committee members. This will ensure excellent support to the incoming Manager. I would also like to give thanks to our local member, Tim Mander for his continuing support.

I conclude by congratulating Tanya for her magnificent contribution to NWYAS. Thanks to the legacy that Tanya leaves, NWYAS will attract a field of highly competent applicants. Tanya's team of Deon, Christine, Sarah, Heather and Suzie are all deserving of commendation.



Jim Fouras
PRESIDENT

TREASURER'S REPORT

North West Youth Accommodation Service Inc. continues to maintain its high quality service delivery to clients with sound financial management practices.

The auditor has finalised the 2014-2015 financial statements and declared us to be in a viable and sustainable financial position. We have closed the 2014-2015 financial year with a surplus of \$2313.43. While we have seen an overall increase in expenditure, it is consistent with the rising cost of delivering services. It is our continued support from the Queensland Government in addition to other small grants and donations that has allowed us to maintain our financial position and quality service delivery.

Our consistent approach allows us to continue to provide uncompromised services to our clients and maintain our focus on their needs. Over the last financial year we have seen sustained tenancies which is a testament to our supportive property management processes.

We look forward to our continuing relationship with the Queensland Government and other supporters of our organisation to enable us to continue our quality service delivery to our clients.



Holly-Emma Moulds
TREASURER

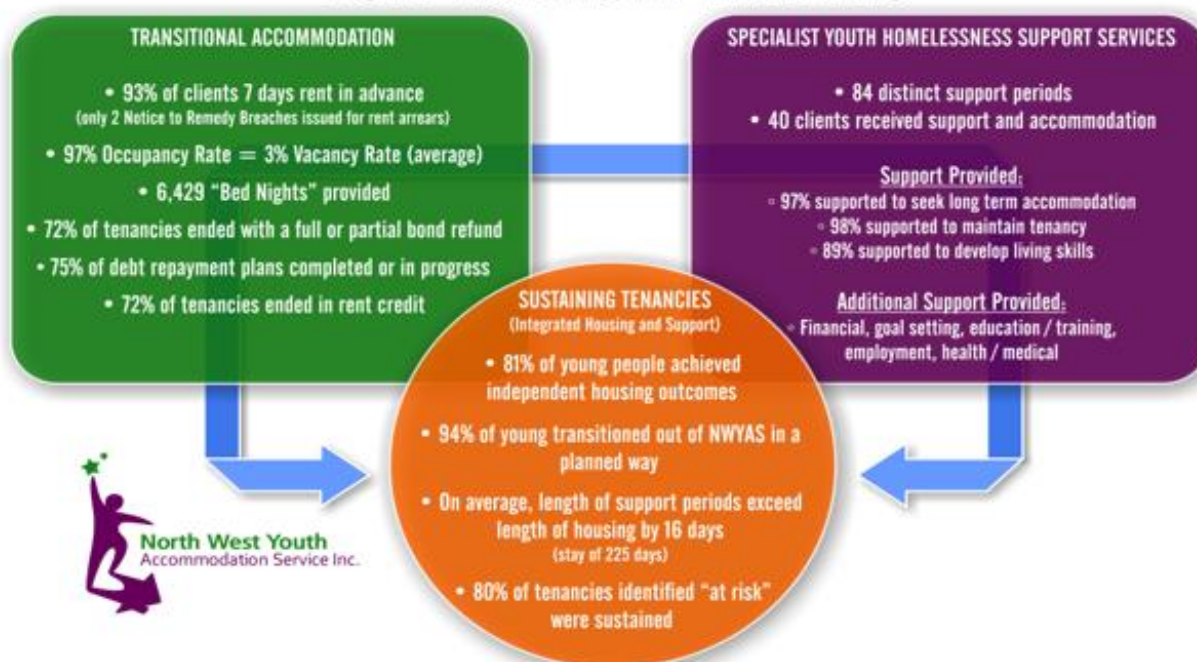
MANAGER'S REPORT

2014/2015 has been a year of opportunities, learning and ongoing collaboration for North West Youth Accommodation Service (NWYAS). Early in the financial year we secured funding from the Minister for Housing, Tim Mander, to deliver an additional mobile support service. This funding provided us with the opportunity to offer brief and practical support to young people who were at risk of homelessness, and was targeted at preventing young people from entering the "homelessness service system" by stabilising their housing. This opportunity to deliver flexible support services broadened our response to young people making contact with the service, meaning that we could resource more than one response type and offer young people a service better matched to their presenting needs. The brief opportunity to deliver mobile support produced excellent results for young people, which is outlined in this report.

Much time and effort has been spent this year on the ongoing development of our financial management systems in preparation for possible registration under the National Regulatory System for Community Housing (NRSCH). We have adopted a standard chart of accounts and new reporting systems which measure performance against benchmarks relevant to registration. This financial systems improvement has provided many opportunities for the task, and I would like to thank Suzie Dennis, Finance Worker, for her persistence during the many changes we have made this year.

Despite new pieces of work, we have continued to deliver on our core business of providing support and accommodation to young people who are homeless. At the foundation of this work, is what I believe to be a solid model for service delivery that ensures that young people are supported to sustain their tenancies, and learn the skills required to maintain independent living.

2014-2015 ACHIEVEMENTS



Through the integration of accommodation and support, young people have been assisted to meet the responsibilities of being a tenant including paying rent, looking after their properties and managing their visitors. The model has also worked well to provide opportunities for young people to develop living skills, where required, and secure long term, independent housing upon exit from NWFYAS accommodation. Each staff member and young person can, I believe, be proud of the results that have been achieved in the past year, and I feel confident that the positive results will continue well into the future.

The Services Collaborating for Young People (SCYP) collaboration has continued this year, however its progress has slowed as a result of a change in the urgency to prepare for the reform agenda which had been identified in the Queensland Strategy for Reducing Homelessness 2020. Whilst there is still a need for services to prepare for a reform agenda, the signing of new service agreements for three year terms – to 2018 - has provided some breathing space to determine direction for the future. NWFYAS, as a member of SCYP, continues its commitment to collaborative work with likeminded agencies, because we believe that together we can produce a high quality response to young people who are homeless.

There is so much more that I could say about all of the work that has been done at NWFYAS this year, but you will find much of that evidenced by the data contained in the report, and the reports provided by the Support Workers and the Tenancy Worker.

I would like to finish this report by expressing my gratitude to the team that is NWFYAS. I finish in my role as Manager this year, and I couldn't be more proud of the organisation that I am leaving. I have been blessed with so many opportunities to learn during my ten years at NWFYAS, and these opportunities have been presented through the individuals I have had the pleasure to work with: the young people, the members of staff, the Management Committee and those that come in and out of the organisation as contractors, government representatives and workers at other organisations.

An organisation like NWFYAS isn't just a place, the building. It has to be the people. As I have reflected over my time here, it has become clearer to me that each of us has a role to play as the custodian, or keeper, of the organisation's story and its purpose. I feel privileged to have had the opportunity to share that role with a committed, dedicated and hard working group of people, and would like to thank, especially, the current staff team and Management Committee for their sharing that journey with me. It has been an absolute pleasure and I will miss working with you all!

Tanya Turrell

MANAGER



SPECIALIST HOMELESSNESS SUPPORT

During the financial year 2014-2015, North West Youth Accommodation Service Inc. (NWyAS) Support Workers have continued to assist young people in supported accommodation to transition into independence. Support Workers assist young people to identify and step towards their goals, with a focus on developing and maintaining living and tenancy skills and support to address any issues and barriers that have prevented the young person from securing and sustaining housing in the past. Through this support work, many young people have achieved significant change and this is reflected in our 2014/2015 statistics. These statistics show that 82% of young people who exited NWyAS gained independent housing outcomes within public housing, community housing and private rentals.

In addition to the supported accommodation program, NWyAS also received additional funding to provide a mobile support program called Homebase. This program saw Support Workers and our Tenancy Worker Christine, engage with young people in short term support to assist with gaining independent housing outcomes. Homebase was a great opportunity to deliver additional support to young people seeking housing options. The program provided an insight that the homelessness sector is not always the most appropriate option for a young person experiencing issues with having unstable accommodation. It was a great opportunity to really explore and draw on young people's strengths, abilities and capacity. For some young people, Homebase was a sounding board where they could access information on the process of applying for private rentals, bond loans and other social housing products. It was also a place for dedicated support, from transport to view properties and signing the lease to assistance with moving in and the emotional support that is essential during a major transition period of moving into your first home. We feel privileged to have been able to assist young people during this pivotal time in their lives.

Homebase saw Support Workers engaged with 44 young people which assisted 17 young people to gain private rentals, 3 to gain community housing and 2 to gain public housing. Transition can be a very stressful time for anyone and we were able to walk with young people through this process, empowering them to undertake this often daunting task.

Support Workers engage in the wider community through involvement in network meetings to address homelessness at a structural level. During the last year, Support Workers participated in:

- Brisbane North Community Connections, a group consisting of 20+ government and non-government services focusing on housing, mental health, community support, debt, young people, Indigenous peoples and women. This group works collaboratively to find housing and support solutions for the most vulnerable people within the Brisbane North community.
- Accommodation Coordinators Network, where youth services from across Brisbane reflect on practice with young people to better engage and support them and discuss common barriers young people in all services experience and advocate for change. This group continues to work collaboratively to achieve housing outcomes for 500 Lives/ 500 Homes campaign that started in May 2014.
- North Brisbane Youth Interagency Meeting which is another opportunity to stay up to date with new programs and services in the youth space and address common barriers young people experience in engaging with services.
- The agency also participated in the Harcourts Walk a Mile in Their Shoes 2015 walk for The White Ribbon Campaign to raise awareness of domestic violence in the community.

As the experiences of young people are continuously varied and complex, Support Workers have continued to build their skills to better engage with young people through training in the past year. Support Workers attended training in:

- Understanding and Responding to Sexual Violence,
- Working with Refugees,
- Homeless Persons Legal Clinic workshop,
- Staying Connected training that looked at how workers could better support young people in the care of Child Safety and how statutory and non-government services could work better together. This was important for support workers, as many young people that access NWYAS have had Child Safety interaction and the forum offered an opportunity to advocate for structural change that is required to support these young people better.

In the past year, Support Workers were given the opportunity to help raise awareness of youth homelessness through the NWYAS fundraiser dinner in April at local café **Taverner**. Young people put together video clips to share their varied experiences of homeless, what the contributing factors are that resulted in their unstable housing or homelessness, and the issues and barriers they face in relation to accessing accommodation and other social services.

The fundraiser dinner offered a new opportunity for Support Workers to engage with local businesses in organising raffle prizes for the night. As many young people who are homeless move between friends or “couch surf” for long periods, many local business owners were unaware of the extent of young people’s experiences of homelessness in our community. The Support Workers would like to thank **Taverner** for hosting the fundraiser evening and the many local businesses that contributed to raffle prizes. The evening enabled NWYAS to raise \$2136.00 to assist young people with *go* cards, cleaning packs, new parents packs and home starter packs, as well as the opportunity to engage with our local community to raise awareness of youth homelessness.

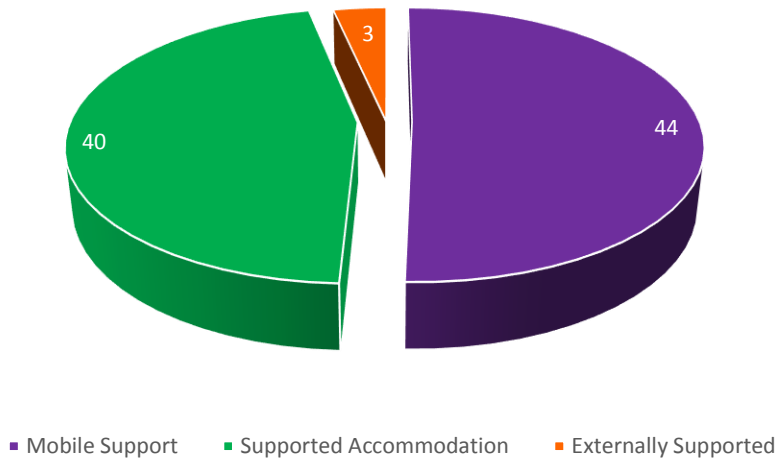
NWYAS secured small grants to provide additional assistance to young people in the last year. Support Workers secured:

- \$3000 **Street Smart - Dine Smart** Grant in April 2015 which enabled NWYAS to support young people to get driving lessons and gain their drivers licence and purchase household items like crockery, cooking utensils etc. for NWYAS properties.
- **The Lord Mayors Charitable Trust Christmas** Appeal provided \$1800 to allow NWYAS to take young people to Riverlife for a kayaking and BBQ lunch trip to celebrate Christmas and end of year in Dec 2014.

Support Workers are looking forward to another busy year ahead of working with young people and walking with them as they achieve their goals. Many young people have experienced extreme trauma and often have not had people to believe in what they can achieve. Workers are privileged to witness the change that stable housing and support has on young people’s lives as they grow in confidence and feel empowered to achieve life goals that they previously thought was not possible.

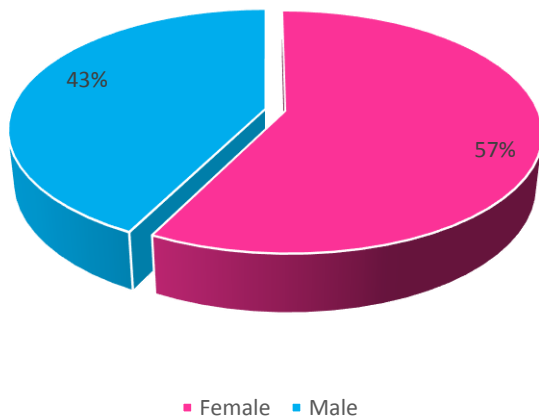
Sarah Thorne, Deon Menerey and Heather Rowe.

Distinct Support Periods 2014-2015

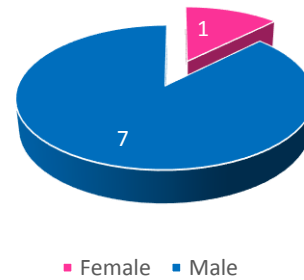


2014-2015 financial year has seen NWYAS deliver Mobile Support to 44 young people alongside our Supported Accommodation program, which provided 40 young people with housing and support. We also continue to offer our exiting young people with External Support (post accommodation support) once they transition out into their own housing, which three young people engaged with.

Client Gender Analysis- SHS 2014-2015



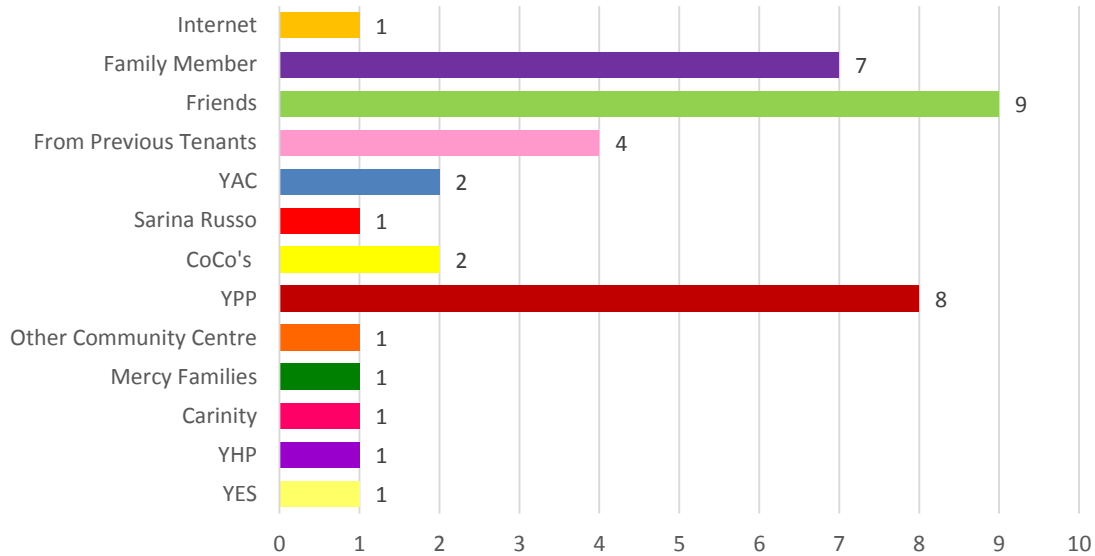
Accompanying Children Gender Analysis 2014-2015



In the last year there was an increase in females accessing supported accommodation compared to last financial year- up by 5%. Reflecting back over previous annual reports, it is evidenced that women are seeking accommodation, regards of whether they have accompanying children or are single more than their male counterparts.

NWYAS has provided 8 accompanying children with supported accommodation. Both this financial year and last year, accompanying children are predominately male.

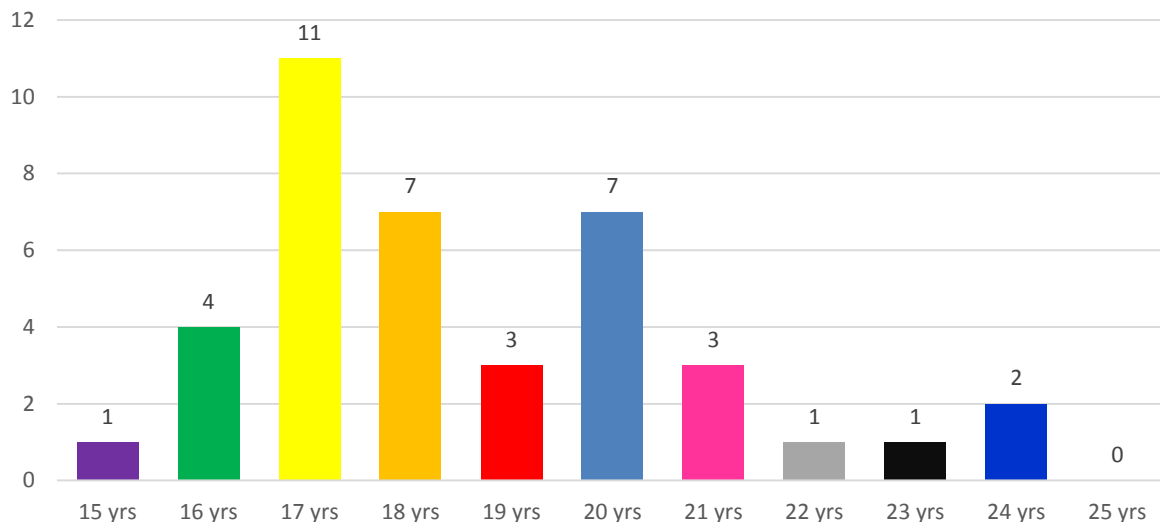
Referral source of young people in SHS 2014-2015



The majority of young people referring to NWWAS are identifying that the main referral source is from friends who have received a service from North West, previous tenants, as well as family members who have had some contact with our agency previously. This could indicate that North West has a solid foundation within our local community and that the relationships we build with young people mean enough to them to refer their friends and family for support.

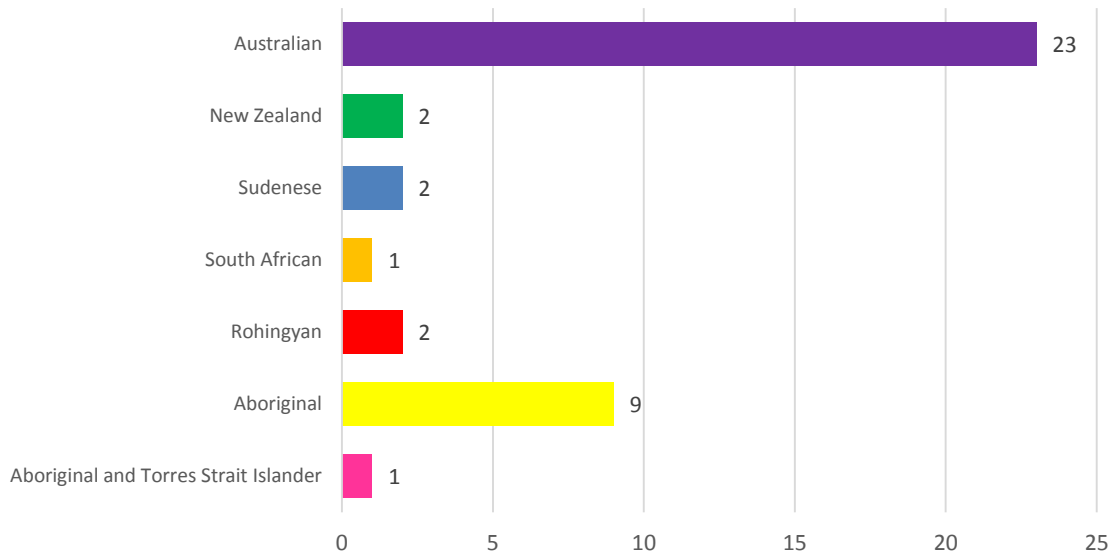
While we receive lots of referrals from government and non-government agencies, we have housed a large proportion of young people who are engaged with the Young Parents Program.

Age of Young People when first housed in SHS 2014-2015

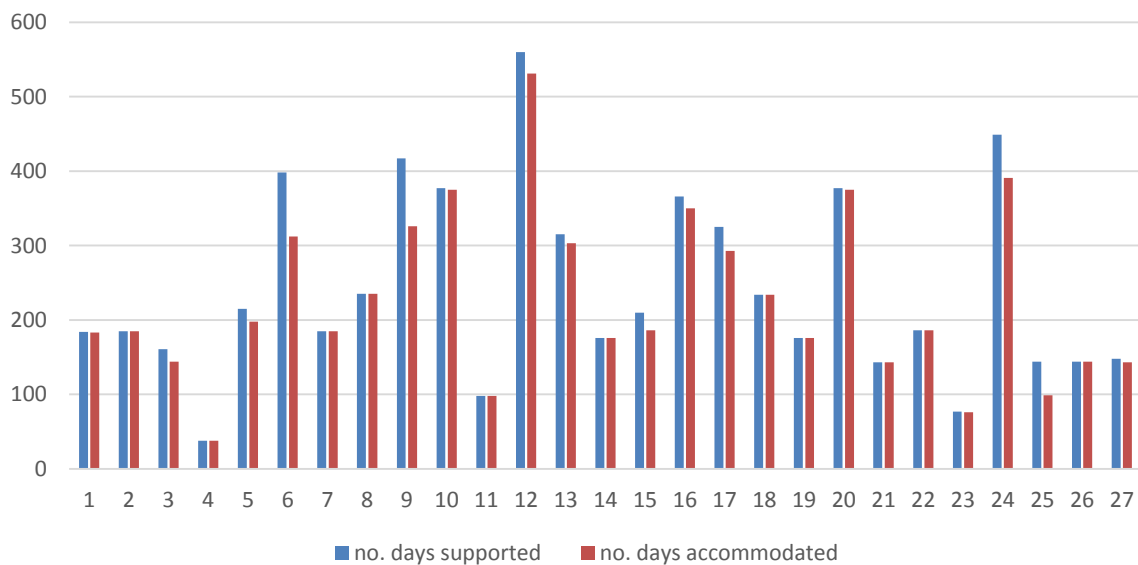


As the graph above shows, 2014-2015 financial year saw that the majority of young people housed were 17 years and older. We attribute the decrease in numbers of young people accessing post accommodation support due to the age of the young person when they transition out of SHS. Our statistics show that the younger clients are the young people engaged with post accommodation support.

Cultural background of Young People in SHS 2014-2015

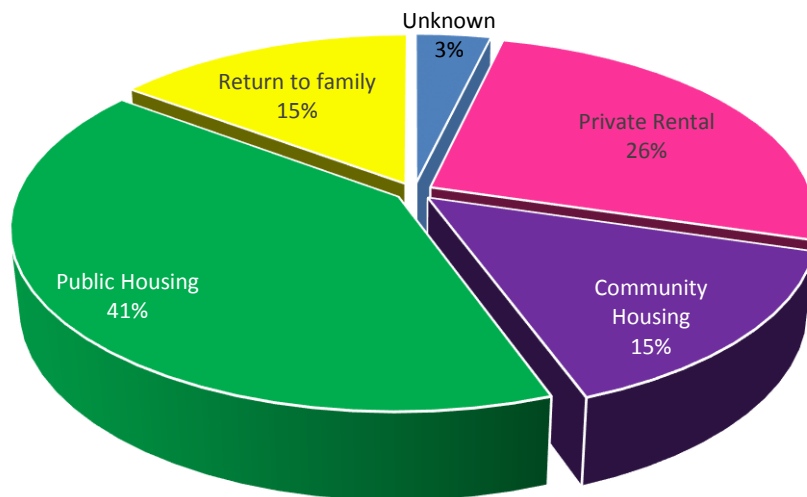


Length of Accommodation and Support Provided to Young People Who Exited NWWYAS Inc. 2014/15



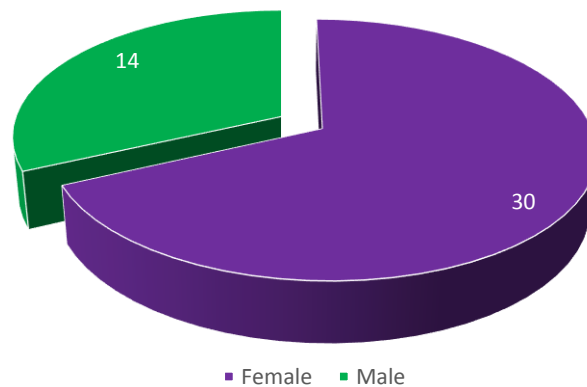
The graph above shows that the majority of young people secured independent housing before their tenancy end dates. On average young people were housed with NWWYAS for 225 days and were supported for additional 16 days after this time. The length of time young people have been supported past their accommodation exit date has reduced from past years as many young people were 18 years old or above by the end of their tenancy and needed less support to maintain their independent housing.

Housing Outcomes for SHS tenants 2014-2015



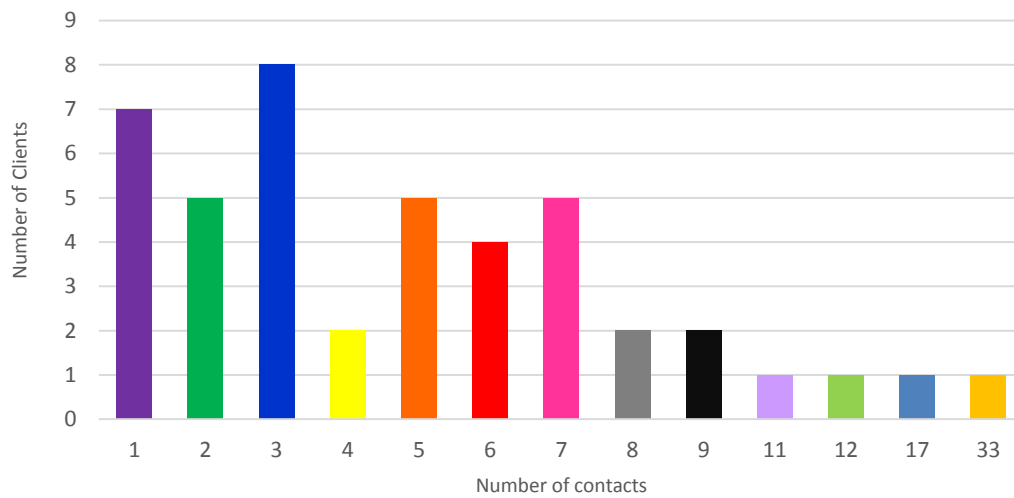
The 2014-2015 financial year has seen a significant increase in young people securing private rentals by the end of their tenancy, with 26% of young people transitioning into private rental. This is an 18% increase on 2013/14 figures. The number of young people exiting into Public Housing has also seen an increase by 30%, with a total of 41% of our young people transitioning into public housing.

Gender Analysis 2014-2015 Homebase Program



We found that again, the majority of people accessing the mobile support of our Homebase Program were young women.

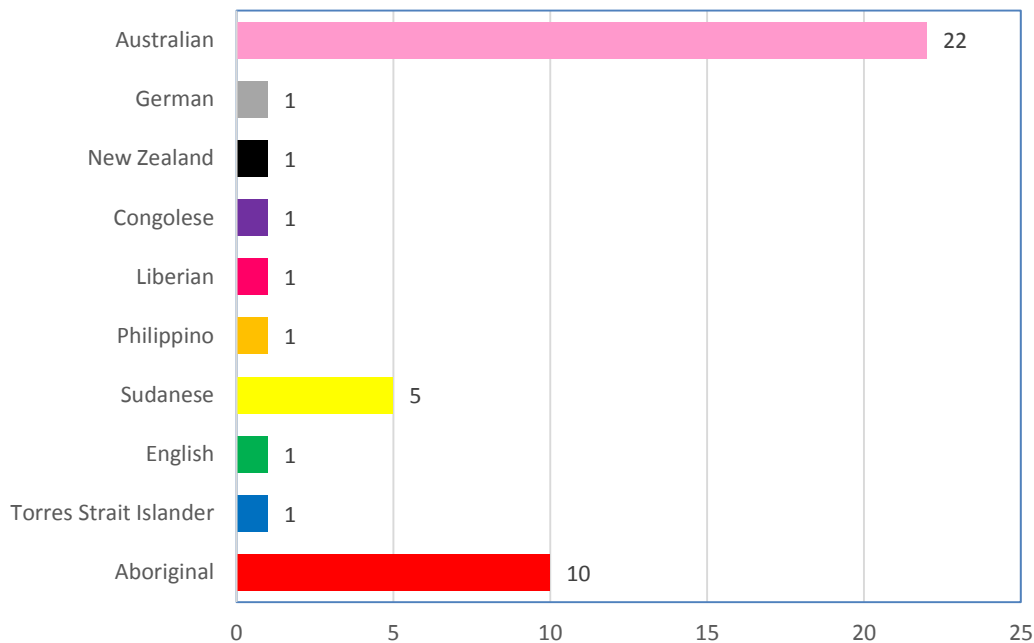
Number of contacts for Mobile Support Program 2014-2015



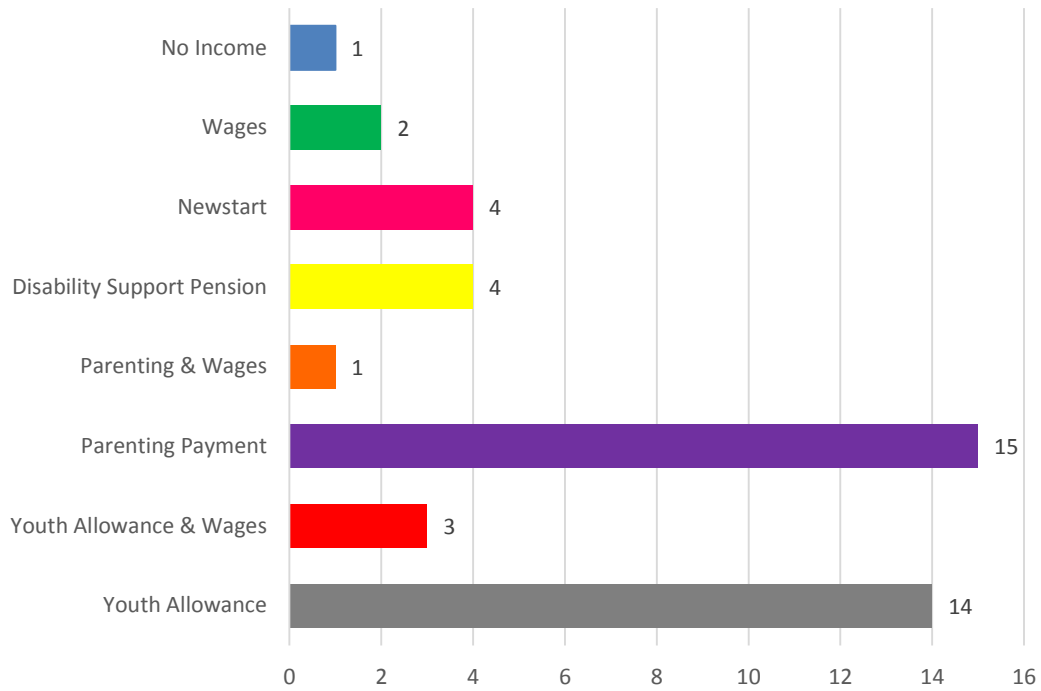
Interestingly, it was found that for some young people they just needed a few appointments with a worker to secure and stabilise their housing situation. For other young people, we provided more intensive support to assist them, which often meant that the young people identified other areas of support they required during the working relationship. Although we provided ongoing support to all young people, there were 16 young people who we lost contact with.

The graph below shows that NWYAS provided services to young people from a variety of different cultural backgrounds seeking assistance with gaining independent accommodation.

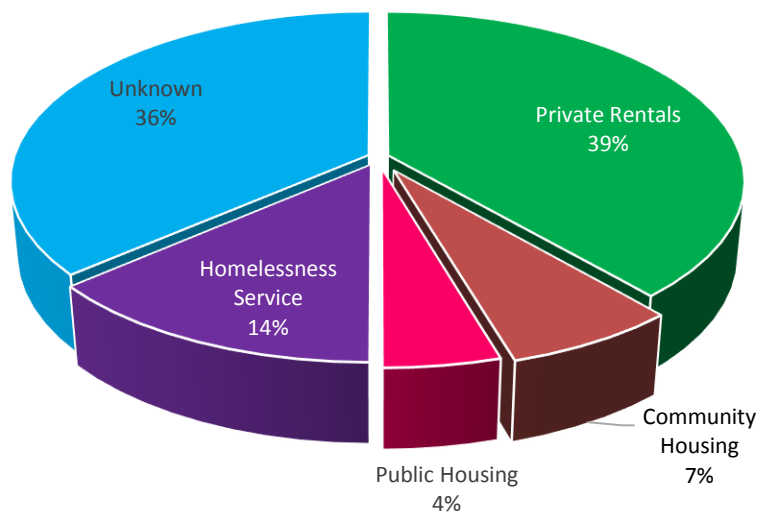
Ethnicity of Mobile Support Clients 2014-2015



Income type of Mobile Support clients 2014-2015



Housing Outcomes for Mobile Support Clients 2014-2015

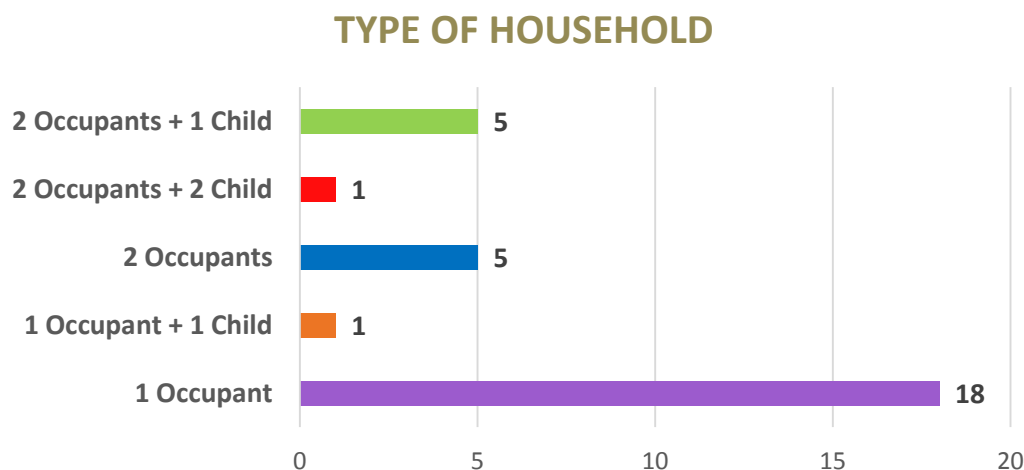


A total of 64% of young people accessing Homebase Support were assisted to gain appropriate housing outcomes, with the majority of young people (39%) finding housing within the private rental market. We are proud to have been able to walk alongside young people who just needed some assistance and guidance to secure their first tenancies.

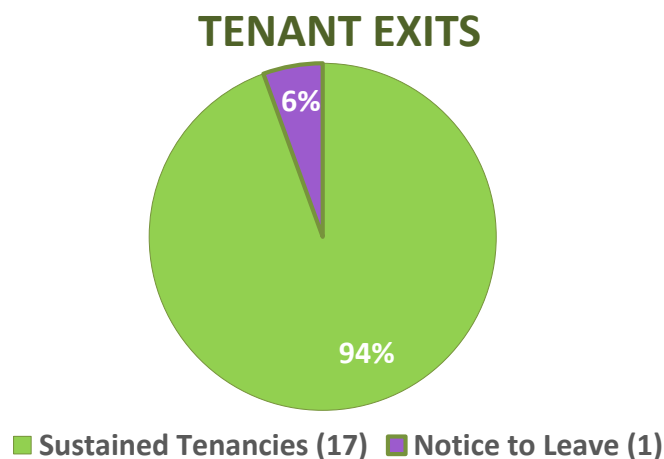
TRANSITIONAL ACCOMMODATION

As the Tenancy Worker at NWYAS I enjoy bringing this report and data together each year, it's a great reflection tool I have used over the years to review the results we have achieved for the year. Looking through the year that has been and what young people and the organisation have achieved, it has given us every opportunity to build a solid foundation for service delivery that we continue to build on. Our main goal and focus is to support young people to transition to independent and sustainable housing.

We had a total of 30 tenancies throughout the 2014-2015 financial year, each tenancy was made up of the following households:



In 2014-2015 we had 18 tenancies transition out of NWYAS accommodation, 17 of these tenancies were sustained and transitioned out in a planned way, 1 tenancy was issued a Notice to Leave.

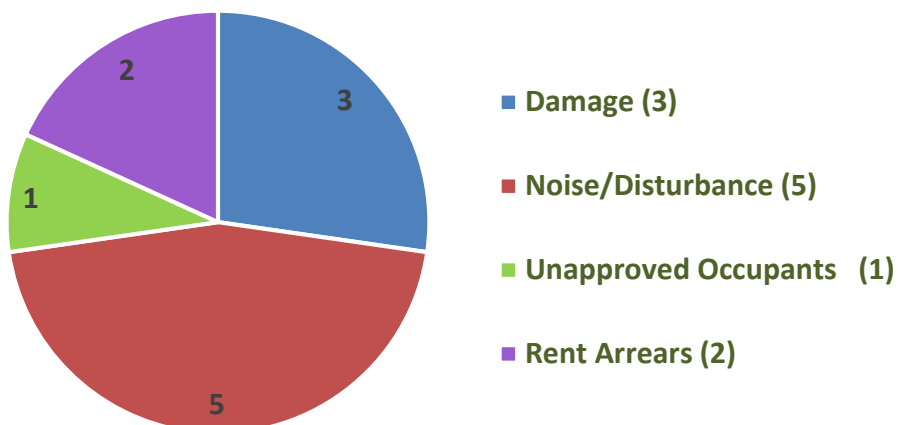


Our Tenancy at Risk process played an important role in the success of the number of tenancies that were sustained this year. There were a total of 5 tenancies identified “at risk” this year, meaning the tenant was struggling to meet their obligations of their lease agreement and risking eviction.

Our Tenancy at Risk process gives the tenants an opportunity to meet with the Manager and Tenancy Worker of NWYAS with a Support Worker to discuss problem areas of their tenancy. The meeting involves the young person creating an action plan that clearly identifies what areas of their tenancy they can improve on to avoid eviction. Out of the 5 tenancies that went through this process, 4 tenancies were able to be sustained.

Below is a breakdown of the breaches issued to tenants this financial year, in total there were 11 breaches issued:

TENANCY BREACHES ISSUED



Compared to the previous two years, we have had a decrease in the total of breaches issued, here is a breakdown of the previous three years:

| Breach Area | 2012-2013 | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 |
|------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Damage | 5 | 1 | 3 |
| Noise/Disturbance | 9 | 6 | 5 |
| Rent Arrears | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Pets | 3 | 1 | 0 |
| Unapproved Occupants | 2 | 5 | 1 |
| Unclean Premises | 1 | 3 | 0 |
| Violence/Threats of Violence | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Wilful or negligent conduct | 1 | 0 | 0 |

Key Achievements for the 2014-2015 year:

- We achieved a 97% occupancy rate for the year.
- 94% of young people transitioned out of NXYAS in a planned way.
- 72% of tenants ended their tenancy with rent credit.
- 72% of tenancies achieved a full or partial bond refund.
- 75% of tenant debts were paid in full or are in progress.
- Out of 5 tenancies that were identified “at risk”, 4 tenancies were able to sustain their housing after going through our Tenancy at Risk process.
- Out of 30 tenancies, only 2 breaches for Rent Arrears were issued to tenants this year.

Here is a summary of our achievements over the previous three years:

| Achievement Area | 2012-2013 | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 |
|--|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Occupancy Rate | 98% | 94% | 97% |
| Planned Exits | 85% | 85% | 94% |
| Rent Credit at End of Tenancy | 55% | 59% | 72% |
| Full or Partial Bond Refunds | 70% | 73% | 72% |
| Tenant Debts Paid or in Progress | 83% | 70% | 75% |
| Tenancies "at risk" were sustained | 43% | 56% | 80% |
| Clients 7 days in advance with rent at all times | 100% | 100% | 93% |

In relation to the properties themselves, aside from the general everyday repairs and maintenance, we were able to do some handy upgrades at the properties this financial year:

- Seven units had their ovens and stoves upgraded to new!
- A new washing line was installed at one of the unit blocks
- Flooding issues caused by rain were remedied by the installation of awnings at a unit block
- A Fire Panel System required some upgrades due to new regulations introduced in 2015.

We do our best to keep all the properties in good repair and, as always, I like to thank the contractors who help keep our properties that way:

- Mark from Ideal Locksmiths
- Rein, Diane and Rich from Hire a Hubby Everton Park
- Julie and the team at Galaxy Plumbing
- Lea, Allan and the team at Superior Glass
- Darran and Debbie from Bears Landscape
- Darryn Beresford Electrical

That completes my fifth year at NWYAS, thank you to all the team and our Management Committee for all your support throughout the year, looking forward to the year ahead.

Christine Robinson
Tenancy Worker

OUR SUPPORTERS

Funded by



In addition to our core funding from the Queensland Government, NWYAS Inc., as a not for profit, community based organisation, relies on small grants and the in kind donation of services from a range of businesses. The donation of funds from individuals and organisations also allows us to provide additional practical assistance and opportunities to young people who are clients of our service. We would like to express our most sincere appreciation to the following organisations for their support & assistance in 2014-2015:



Lady Bowen Trust



The Salvation Army



Winbasic



Grill'd Newmarket



Lord Mayors
Community Trust



Marketing
theProduct



Street Smart
Australia



GIVIT



Brisbane Basket Brigade

We would also like to mention the following businesses who helped with our fundraising dinner this year, NWYAS was truly blown away by the communities' response, thank you!

Supporting Businesses:



Keperra



Mitchelton



Stafford



Hamilton



Keperra Country Golf Club



Michelle Walter-Consultant

