

Annual Report 2014



ST.KILDA
Community Housing Ltd

Building Housing Communities in St Kilda



ST.KILDA
Community Housing Ltd

Our goal is to increase housing opportunities for low income and disadvantaged adults in St Kilda by expanding the supply of affordable housing.

**We cannot
achieve this
goal on our
own.**

If you would like to contribute to our work please call us on (03) 9534 1809 or email admin@stkch.org.au

All donations over \$2 are tax deductible.

Photographs used in this Annual Report are courtesy of members of the St Kilda Community Housing Photography Group and Simon Kosmer from River to my People.

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Photograph by Simon Kosmer



Why St Kilda?

"I was born in St Kilda, went to school in St Kilda, worked in St Kilda. Brought my daughters up in St Kilda. St Kilda means beaches, shops and community and is a wonderful multi-cultural place, unique in every way. St Kilda is my home."

Cynthia Levey, local Resident



Chair's Report

As I reflect upon another 12 months of community housing I cannot help but confront the fact that there is a policy vacuum at both the Federal and State levels of government as far as public and community housing is concerned. To be sure, the Federal Government paid out some \$3.6 billion in Commonwealth Rent Assistance in 2012–2013 and the State Government pledged \$65 million over three years to renovate public housing in its last Budget. But neither level of government is addressing the very basic – and crucial – issue of housing affordability.

Why is there such inertia? According to the Federal Minister, Kevin Andrews, he agrees that: "Affordable housing in Australia is in a parlous state". But: "Having said that, this issue is a difficult one for the Commonwealth. We do not have a direct role in the delivery of housing services". His solution? A review of housing and homelessness as part of the reviews of Federation and taxation.

Meanwhile the level of Victorian Government spending on social housing has plummeted by \$264 million from 2011–2012 to 2012–2013. This means that Victoria now spends the least amount per capita on social housing - \$74 - than any of the other States and Territories. This figure is so low that it amounted to only 62% of the sum spent by the next lowest state, Queensland.

This lack of funding is being felt directly by St Kilda Community Housing (SCH). Until May 2014, we were under the belief that Elenara was on track to be upgraded in the 2014–2015 financial year. It came as a shock to us to hear that not only would the building, with 36 rooms with shared bathrooms and kitchens, not be upgraded but that one of the options under review by the department was the sale of the property.

As you will read later on in this Annual Report, SCH has not taken this move lightly and a campaign to save Elenara has been launched.

The loss of Elenara would be significant – and not just because it was only the second property that we managed back in the 1980s. For 36 rooms to disappear across St Kilda would represent a decline of almost 6.5% in community rooming house beds.

More important is the fact that the loss of these rooms would also represent a loss of diversity for the City of Port Phillip as a whole.

In the face of these challenges, I would like to thank all the staff of SCH for their commitment and dedication over the past 12 months. I would also like to thank our Board and to especially thank Sally Cunningham who is retiring after 13 years of service. Her contribution has been outstanding and we shall miss her.

Paul Madden
Chairperson



General Manager's Report

It is with pleasure that I present the General Manager's report on the activities of St Kilda Community Housing (SCH) for the 2013 – 2014 year.

In less than two weeks from the launch of this report the voters of Victoria will go to the polls to elect a new state government. While the major parties have not released their housing policies, SCH surveyed the three candidates most likely to win the seat of Albert Park and asked them to respond to three questions.

Essentially the questions focused on larger issues and their impact on the local community. Questions on the significant increased sale of inner urban public housing stock, the lack of state government investment in social housing and the role social housing plays in the social fabric of a diverse community. Our analysis of responses was being collated at the time this report went to press and will be released in a media statement prior to the 2014 election.

SCH urges our supporters to consider the social housing implications of this election and to support the party that will maintain and expand social housing opportunities for the most vulnerable in our community.

The past year has been eventful with the signing of a new lease with the Department of Human Services (DHS) to secure our operations into the future. Planning of a solar roll out across our properties and some others over the past year has progressed to a point where we are crowd

funding the first installation. This will limit energy cost increases to our residents and create further work opportunities in our social enterprises for residents and others on low incomes.

The Victorian Government has announced details of the Victorian State Government Social Housing Framework and is yet to decide on the detailed process of transferring 12,000 properties to community housing agencies in Victoria. Our planning process over recent years has prepared us to take advantage of any opportunities created by this change in government policy, should housing providers be included in transfers.

SCH has performed well during 2013 – 2014. A major priority for SCH is to secure housing stability for our 337 residents in St Kilda.

Achievements over the past year have included:

- The LINC project, supporting asylum seekers within the City of Port Phillip
- The growth and development of our maintenance service, T2M
- Collaborations and partnerships with other agencies to improve the lives and opportunities for residents
- The photography group, meals and mentor programs
- The Rooming House Survival Guide which was launched earlier this year; and
- SCH, in partnership with the City of Port Phillip, upgraded security at the Gatwick Hotel in Fitzroy Street.

Further information on these achievements can be found elsewhere in this report.

In partnership with the Office of the Housing Registrar, SCH and two other agencies also participated in a pilot project to test the National Regulatory Scheme for Community Housing (NRSCH). This was a time consuming but worthwhile project. Unfortunately, the Victorian Government decided against joining the NRSCH at this time. The Registrar is currently aligning the Housing Standards to reflect the NRSCH and these new standards will be implemented in the coming year. SCH's participation in the pilot will be a great help for us in transitioning to the new standards

SCH also faced some challenges, including:

- Managing the Victorian Government's introduction of a new lease arrangement that transfers further costs to tenants of community housing providers. This has provided housing agencies with more autonomy but has resulted in increased rents to residents
- The three and a half years it took to release the Government's Housing Framework created an unstable environment for housing agencies and its eventual release failed to provide any funds for growth in social housing and few opportunities for Victorians suffering housing stress
- A new asset management focus by the government that seems to be more about sales than growth.

General Manager's Report

These and other challenges mean that growth in social housing is unlikely to occur in the foreseeable future.

The SCH web page, <www.sch.org.au> continues to enjoy a growing number of visits and following a redesign we hope to develop this resource further. The website, newsletter and Facebook sites have become useful tools in communicating with residents and promoting our forums on issues of interest to the SCH community, health professionals and support providers.

This year has been the first year of working with our new Auditor, Ryk Eksteen, of Collins & Co. It has proved to be a great partnership and assisted us to refine our finance procedures and merge the Rooming House Issues Group Inc., after 32 years of operation.

Our staff continue to make a positive difference to the lives of our residents, and we are very fortunate to have an extraordinary group of people who remain passionate about their work. SCH staff continue to work in partnership with a range of support agencies to assist residents live quality lives in the properties we manage.

During the year we farewelled one long-term staff member, Mark Geld, and we were joined briefly by Aoife Connolly from Ireland.

Over the past year we have housed 170 new tenants. Almost 98% of these residents came to SCH from homelessness and many left us to take up secure, housing with other social housing providers.

Our social enterprise, T2M, continues to both meet our maintenance needs and provide our residents access to work and training to re-engage with employment opportunities.

We have developed an Asset Maintenance Plan based on Property Condition Reports developed on a triennial cycle to ensure we keep our properties in good condition. We have continued to improve the efficiency of our responsive and planned maintenance services, completing over 2000 responsive maintenance tasks for both SCH and clients within the community.

We performed well across our operational and financial key performance indicators in 2013–14. Arrears were at 1.1%, an excellent result for a rooming house provider. The “vacant untenable” rate was 12 days, considerably down on the 21 days prior to us taking responsibility for vacated maintenance. We are working to develop strategies to bring tenable and untenable vacancies down even further.

Our most recent Annual Report to the Housing Registrar has produced an excellent result. Having met all seven Performance Standards, demonstrating continuous improvement and legislative compliance.

St Kilda Community Housing believes in collaborating with other community housing providers and support services to build a stronger and more dynamic community housing sector. Our collaborative activities this year have included working with many local agencies to deliver better services to residents and actively participating in various industry forums conducted by Community Housing Federation of Victoria. We thank them all for their support and partnership.

Looking to the future, our Strategic Plan 2014–2017 sets out a path for SCH to build on our organisational capacity. Over the next three years we will be operating in a much more uncertain policy environment. Neither the State nor Federal Government has committed to a clear direction for the future of social housing generally, or community housing specifically.

The management team and staff have made the work of SCH and my role in that work more manageable and they have delivered innovative solutions to the many challenges facing SCH and I thank all staff for their contribution.

SCH could not have achieved the results it did in 2013–2014, or established itself as a leading community housing provider, without the support and inspiration of its Board members. I thank them all.

John Enticott
General Manager



From left to right, Catherine Harris, Geoff Barkla, Sally Cunningham, John Tansey, David Gibbs (Treasurer), Mark Gove and Paul Madden (Chair)

The Board of Directors

St Kilda Community Housing has been fortunate in having a very stable Board of Directors. Therefore, it is with sadness that we are farewelling one of our longest serving members, Sally Cunningham. Sally is not being lost to the community sector altogether – she has recently joined the Board of the newly formed Co-Health Community Health Service.

The Board members have overseen another successful year for SCH. Their combination of community, business and financial skills brings a high level of expertise to the complex world of community housing.

Here are Sally's own thoughts on leaving us.

"After 13 years on the boards of St Kilda Rooming House Issues Group and St Kilda Community Housing, it is with mixed feelings that I am retiring at this AGM. It has been an incredible period of change

and growth and I credit the staff and my fellow directors for their determination in continuing our mission in a challenging environment.

To be part of such a dedicated group of directors has been a pleasure and a privilege. My aim has always been to leave the organisation in a better position than when I began. I am proud that this is the case and there have been so many highlights.

Above all I will never forget our new house openings and the smiles on the new residents' faces. So I farewell my role on the Board to become just a St Kilda resident, who is grateful that this organisation's housing and support ensures living in this great place includes people from all walks of life."

Sally Cunningham
Board member 2001–2014



Janet Cribbes



Board member Sally Cunningham is leaving after 13 years.

Why St Kilda?

"I love working in St Kilda because there's a mutual respect and collaboration between all the services and a celebration of the complexity and diversity of our clients."

Deb McIntosh, Social Worker.

Why St Kilda? "It's an eclectic place, so diverse and so close to all the services, the city and the art galleries".
SCH Tenant

Our Achievements 2013-2014



Although St Kilda Community Housing has not had any new properties or redevelopments come on line in the past year, it has still been an exceptionally busy period for us.

THRIUE

In October 2013, St Kilda Community Housing applied to be a participant in the THRIVE program run by Social Traders. We

were fortunate enough to be awarded one of the places available for women in positions of leadership in Victorian social enterprises. Our aim in seeking to be part of THRIVE was to gain some guidance as to how to take our social enterprise, T2M, to the next level.

The first workshop was held in December 2013 and here we were introduced to the concept of the business model canvas and how to use it to clarify our social purpose and who our customers would be.

At the second workshop in February we met at the PriceWaterhouseCoopers building in the city. Thirteen potential mentors from PwC attended and we went through a "speed dating" exercise whereby each mentor spoke to each social enterprise for around 5 minutes. This was an exhausting but beneficial procedure as we were lucky enough to be allocated Mark Higgins as our mentor. Mark had previously worked in the housing sector and therefore had a huge amount to contribute. Indeed, it was a result of working with Mark that we came to see the importance of separating out the finances of T2M from SCH more broadly.

We are now coming to the end of this process and feel we have learnt much more about how to operate and grow a social enterprise.

SOCIALTRADERS



Photograph by a member of the photography group.

Our Achievements 2013–2014

Energy For The People

When John Enticott first heard Alex Houlston and Tosh Szatow talking about their social enterprise, Energy for the People, he realised that they offered an exciting opportunity for SCH to reduce the ever-increasing energy costs for tenants, as well as contributing to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. When these two benefits were coupled with the idea of working with another social enterprise it seemed a perfect scenario. The original idea was for the three community housing agencies in the City of Port Phillip to collectively embark on a project. Unfortunately this did not eventuate.

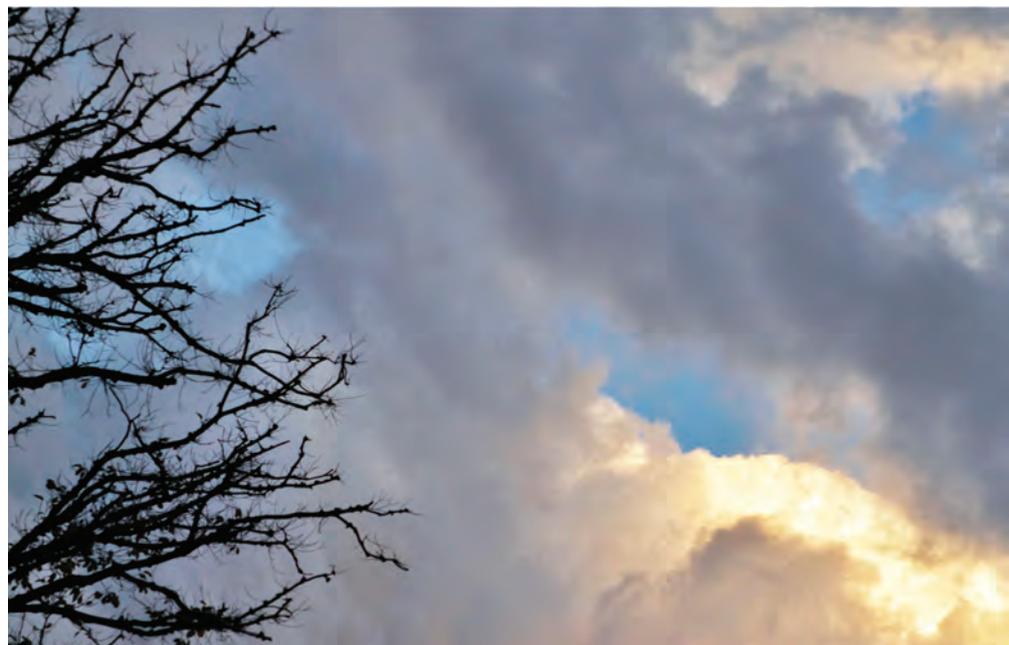
This setback notwithstanding, SCH and Energy for the People continued to work together to develop a proposal to go to the Board and philanthropic trusts.

At a cost of around \$350,000, the proposal includes the following:

- 150kW of solar power via photovoltaic panels on roofs and a range of other energy-saving measures.
- The training of SCH tenants as peer educators in energy use and conservation.
- The establishment of a jointly owned social enterprise which would see Energy for the People responsible for the day-to-day operations and SCH (and any other partners) responsible for access to office space, assistance in the recruitment and training of tenants, and raising additional capital through leveraging off SCH's Deductible Gift Recipient tax status.

The project will commence with two properties – Tooth House and Wandesforde. A crowd funding event is currently underway for the initial stages of this project.

Photograph by a member of the photography group.



Our Achievements 2013-2014

The General Lease

On 24 June 2014, SCH transitioned from the former Housing Provider Framework Lease with the Director of Housing to the General Lease. This move involves a number of significant changes in our relationship with the Department of Human Services.

The key changes are:

- The asset management fund fee that was previously payable to DHS for capital improvements and major works on the property is now retained by SCH
- The Community Capacity Building projects and reports have been removed from the new lease arrangement

- Community housing agencies are now responsible for the payment of the rates on all properties they manage on behalf of the Department
- Both the Establishment and Re-establishment Grants have been abolished. The Establishment Grant was for purchasing furniture if work had been carried out on the premises and the Re-establishment Grant was for the purpose of replacing furniture due to normal wear and tear.

In exchange for these changes, community housing agencies can now retain the full rent collected from the tenants.

While the General Lease gives agencies greater freedom and control over their resources, it comes at a potentially high cost, for example, should a roof collapse or the central heating system need replacing, agencies could face large repair bills.



Photograph by Markus Lovcraft

Why St Kilda?

"I really like the diversity of the people who live in St Kilda. And, because I like local history, I find the grand old mansions and former hotels fascinating."

David Brown, T2M Employee.



Our Achievements 2013–2014

Debt-Free

When St Kilda Community Housing entered into an arrangement with DHS for the \$1.9 million redevelopment of Koombahla in Grey Street, in October 2012, we obtained a \$600,000 loan from Bank MECU with repayments scheduled over 10 years. However, the finances of the organisation have proved to be so healthy that we paid down the loan in July of this year.

This situation is due to the hard work of the members of the Finance Committee: Board members Paul Madden, David Gibbs and Catherine Harris and SCH Finance Manager, Linda O'Meara.



Why St Kilda?

“I’ve lived in St Kilda for 10 years. It’s central to everything – to trams, shops pubs...Plus my son lives nearby.”

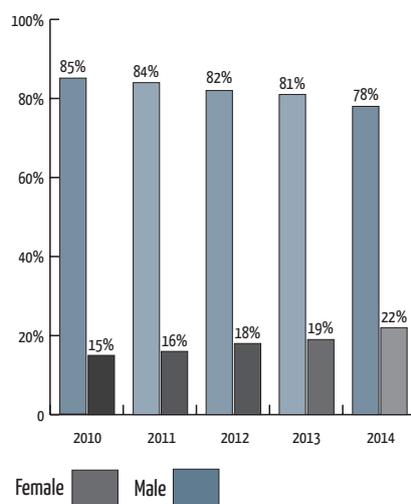
SCH Tenant.

Our Vital Statistics

2013–2014 has been a year of consolidation for St Kilda Community Housing after five years of redevelopment. During this time, we have focused on improving housing opportunities for women, in particular.

Gender

This focus is beginning to pay off. A survey of the gender composition of our tenants over the past five years shows a steady increase in the proportion of women tenants.



This is a great result which is largely due to the work of our housing managers as well as the appeal to women of our increased number of self-contained units.

Impact of Renovations

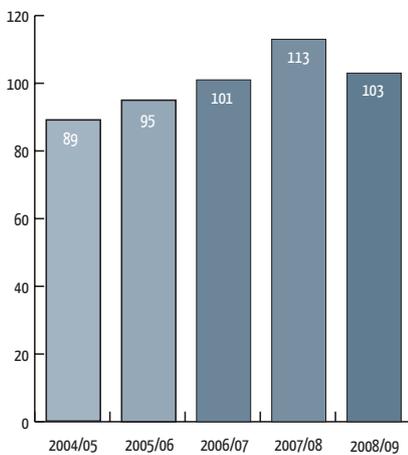
The importance of self-contained units can be measured in other ways too. For example, our research has shown that houses that have been converted from rooms with shared facilities to those with self-contained units show far lower rates of turnover. To put it another way, self-contained units lead to a higher rate of housing stability for a group of tenants who have traditionally experienced housing stress and instability.

One example of this impact of renovation can be seen by looking at what has happened in what was one of our biggest rooming houses. Prior to renovation, Seaside comprised two buildings on a large block overlooking the sea. The front house had originally been a hotel but, following a fire, it had been purchased by DHS and renovated. The back block had been added much later. In both houses the rooms – all 57 of them – tended to be very small with shared facilities. After the renovations – which occurred between 2010 and 2012 – there were 36 self-contained units across the two buildings. The following charts graphically illustrate the impact of that renovation.

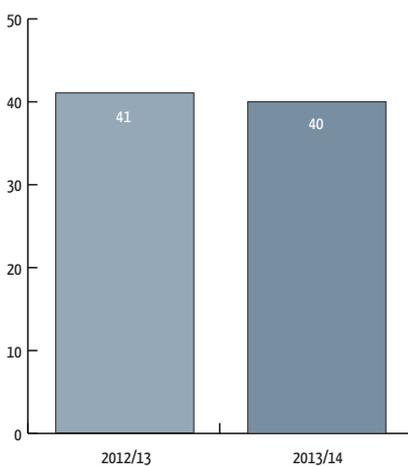


Photograph by Markus Lovecraft

Seaside turnover rates before the renovation



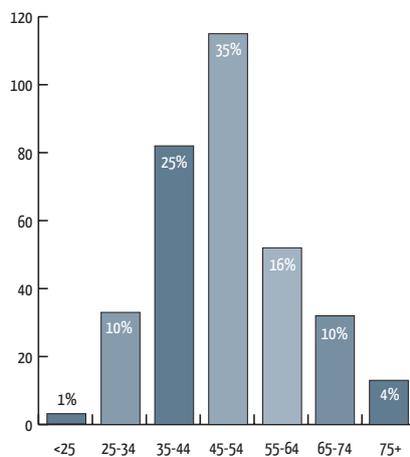
Seaside after the renovation



As the two charts demonstrate, turnover rates are less than a quarter of what they were pre-renovation. What these figures do not show is the impact upon individual tenants themselves, especially the improved security and amenity.

Age of Tenants

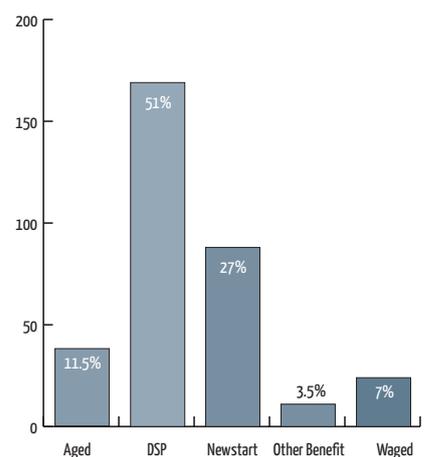
The analysis of our tenants' ages shows that we are continuing to house older tenants. This trend has been evident for more than a decade now. There has been growth, especially in the 45-54 age group, and, as the following chart shows, they now comprise almost 35% of our tenants.



Eleven years ago this group only made up a quarter of all tenants. We are unsure exactly why our tenant group is becoming more middle-aged and this will be the focus of our next research project.

Source of Income of Tenants

An observable trend over the last decade or more has been an increase in the number of Newstart recipients living in our houses. 2013-2014 has continued this trend over the previous year. The number of tenants on Newstart has risen from 24% to 27% whilst the numbers on Disability Support Pension has declined from 54% to 51%. These figures again highlight that those living on the lowest statutory incomes face far fewer housing choices than other citizens and they are becoming concentrated in the rooming house sector.



T2M Maintenance

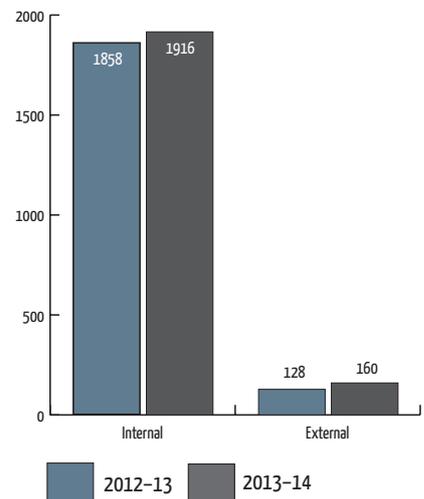


St Kilda Community Housing's maintenance social enterprise – T2M – continues to demonstrate sustainability and commercial growth. The business currently employs 18 people, on a mainly part-time basis, who have a variety of different skills, including cleaning, gardening, painting and carpentry. For skilled electrical and plumbing work we use licensed tradespeople who have been through either a tender or formal assessment process. As a social enterprise T2M is committed to employing as many of our tenants as we can to enable them to re-engage with the workforce. Our progress in this area has been slow but steady – which is only to be expected given many of our tenants are extremely disadvantaged.

The success of T2M is such that it was able to not only meet but surpass the monthly key performance indicators set for the business by the St Kilda Community Housing Board. In addition, the T2M team is proud to report that it worked so successfully within all the occupational health and safety guidelines that there were no work place injuries reported for the whole year.

The following chart gives an indication of the steady growth of the enterprise over the past two years. As the chart shows, internal work has grown by 3% between the two financial years but our external work has grown by 25%.

T2M Workload 2012–13 to 2013–14



During the past 12 months, T2M has also incrementally added to the range of services and skills that it can deliver. These services including the purchase of carpet steam cleaning equipment and an ionised water window cleaning machine with a six metre reach.

Why St Kilda?

“St Kilda is a great place to live and work – for people of any age. It’s diverse and colourful – yet underneath there is a cohesive and interactive community. Great parks, gardens, beaches and eating places make it very liveable.”
Sally, St Kilda resident of 25 years.

A major focus for T2M has been on the security of our properties. SCH has introduced a more systemic approach to our complex system of keys, Vingcards and Salto fobs. Staff also gained valuable experience in the installation and maintenance of security camera systems through participation in the Gatwick Hotel security enhancement project that was

funded by the City of Port Phillip, managed by SCH, supported by the owners of the Gatwick and delivered under the auspices of T2M.

T2M’s partners have grown steadily and now include Prahran Mission, The Haven Foundation, Inner East Social Housing Group, HomeGround Services, Sacred Heart Mission and the Uniting Church in St Kilda. We thank them all for their ongoing support of the social enterprise and their heartfelt commitment to our employment of residents.



Why St Kilda?

“It’s all in the mix; a combo of people from all walks of life, of grunge and glam, of city and sea, penguins and pier, of cheap and expensive – this is St Kilda 3182 in all its vitality.”

Phillip Siggins, local resident and writer.

Working with our tenants and our partners

The Photography Group

The past year was a triumph for the photography group – not only did we exhibit at the Town Hall Gallery in Carlisle Street but we also held a joint art exhibition (including photographs) with South Port Community Housing Group at Gasworks.

Once again we were extremely fortunate to secure the services of Carmel Louise as convener and teacher. This year the group attracted several new members whose work is depicted throughout this Annual Report.

One key as to why the group has been so successful lies in the combination of interesting excursions and in-house tutorials on the use of digital SLR cameras and editing software such as Photoshop. This year the group visited a number of different places including, the Botanical gardens at Cranbourne, that specialises in Australian native plants, the RAAF Museum at Point Cook and the art gallery at Heide.

Expanding Social Meals

The social meals program is going from strength to strength. This year – in conjunction with our partners at the Port Phillip Community Group (PPCG) – we have taken the decision to expand the program into another four of our houses. It’s early days yet but the response so far has been extremely encouraging and it is clearly proving to be popular with the tenants.

Last year we said we would like to extend the program if we could obtain additional

funding. This year, with our finances in such a healthy state, the decision was made to expand the program anyway using our own resources. We know from the feedback we receive that something as simple as preparing and eating a meal together helps to break down the barriers of social isolation that so many of our tenants experience. The expanded program will be evaluated by our colleagues at the Port Phillip Community Group after three months. This partnership with PPCG is part of a relationship that stretches back over more than 30 years and is indicative of the high level of collaboration occurring between agencies in the City of Port Phillip.

Rooming House Survival Guide

In 2013 St Kilda Community Housing received a community grant from the City of Port Phillip to develop the Rooming House Survival Guide.

The purpose of the guide was to produce in one convenient place a comprehensive guide to all the services and supports that rooming house tenants might need when they come to live in the City of Port Phillip.

Whilst there have been many attempts at producing such a guide in the past, it had been several years since the last one. In addition, with the rapid development, and affordability, of technology, SCH wanted to go beyond a print-only version and develop a guide that could be put on memory sticks and was also interactive between text, maps and websites.



Councillor Serge Thomann, group convener Carmel Louise and St Kilda Community Housing Chair, Paul Madden at the opening night of the 2014 photographic exhibition.



The project was overseen by an advisory group consisting of residents from SCH, Port Phillip Housing Association (PPHA) and South Port Community Housing Group, as well as staff from all three agencies. The consumer representatives were: David Springle from South Port, Richard James from Port Phillip Housing Association and Miranda Elliot-Michielsen and Dean Briggs from St Kilda Community Housing. Staff were represented by Matt Kent from South Port, Liban Yusuf from Port Phillip Housing Association and Mandy Leveratt from SCH.

St Kilda Community Housing was also very fortunate to have the help of Ktra Shumbayaonda and Hayley Pitman – both Social Work students from RMIT. They helped collate the data as part of their placement activities with SCH.

The guide was formally launched in August 2014 by Cr Amanda Stevens, Mayor of the City of Port Phillip.

Special thanks go to Simon Kosmer at the graphic design company River to my People for his incredible work on both the hard copy and the interactive form of the guide.

St Kilda Community Housing has committed to updating the guide on an annual basis so that it retains its currency. Anyone interested in looking at the guide can do so through the SCH website:

<www.stkch.org.au> or the PPHA website: <www.ppha.org.au/news>.



Photograph by Dean Briggs

Working with our tenants and our partners (continued)



Driving Lessons

In 2013, St Kilda Community Housing was awarded a grant from the RACV Community Foundation. The purpose of the grant was to enable our tenants to gain access to driving lessons so as to improve their capacity to find work. The idea for the grant came about because we had been experiencing some difficulties recruiting personnel into our social enterprise T2M. A number of tenants had expressed interest in working for us but were hampered by the fact that they lacked a driver's licence.

The grant has enabled us to work with a number of tenants to get them to the point where they feel confident enough to get their learner's permit. The original intention was for up to 12 tenants to have obtained their licences by June 2014. However, progress has been much slower than anticipated as it has taken significantly longer for our tenants to build up the confidence they need to take their test. We are very grateful that the RACV Community Foundation understands the issues faced by our tenants and has agreed to us running the project over the next 12 months.

LINC

2013 saw the launch of the LINC program – a collaborative effort between St Kilda Community Housing, Sacred Heart Mission, St Kilda Parish Mission, HomeGround Services, Port Phillip Housing Association and Port Phillip Community Group. Since then the Facebook site: <www.facebook.com/lincportphillip> has received a steady stream of visitors and likes. The Facebook site contains a mix of regular news stories on immigration and asylum seekers from local, national and international sources, as well as regular appeals for goods to be donated to support asylum seekers who are living in the community.

The response to our appeals for goods has been outstanding. There are so many people in the community who want to contribute to the effort. We would like to thank all of those who have donated goods over the past 12 months.

Saving Tenancies

Last year we reported that with the increase in self-contained units we discovered that a number of our residents were struggling to maintain their rooms in good condition. To assist these residents we initiated an internal cleaning service whereby other residents would assist them in cleaning through mentoring.

This year we have received a community grant from the City of Port Phillip which will enable us to undertake a rigorous evaluation of whether this intervention is making a difference to the independent living skills of our residents. The project is due to be completed by the end of June 2015 and the results will be reported in next year's annual report.



Photograph by Alexandra Sagin

Why St Kilda?

"I love living in a colourful community which embraces & accommodates everyone regardless of income, disability or difference.... plus the beach, Blessington Street gardens and good coffee!"

Mia, St Kilda Resident of 5 years.



Why St Kilda?

“Despite gentrification, St Kilda still has a big heart. I love the way (most) locals support people living in rooming houses or community housing and services like the Sacred Heart Mission.”

Carmel Shute, public relations consultant, has lived in St Kilda for nearly 30 years.

Saving Elenara

Throughout 2013–2014 St Kilda Community Housing was working closely with DHS on designs and ideas for the upgrading of Elenara – an Edwardian rooming house with 36 tenants. The plan was for the 36 rooms with shared kitchens and bathrooms to be converted into possibly as many as 30 self-contained units. We had anticipated that this project would commence at some point during the 2014–2015 financial year.

Unfortunately, just when we thought everything was on track we were notified in May 2014 that, pending a business case being developed by the Department, not only was the redevelopment no longer going to proceed, but one option was to sell the property.

Staff and the Board of Directors of SCH were understandably shocked by this news, as were the residents themselves.

Many people are of the belief that rooming houses represent at best temporary

accommodation for people while they look for something more appropriate. This has not proved to be the case with Elenara. Over the past two years four long-term tenants of Elenara have left. Three moved into aged accommodation and one tenant sadly died. These tenants had each been with SCH for more than 20 years. Of the tenants left in the house, two have been resident since 1992 (22 years), a third joined the house in 1998 and a fourth is celebrating 11 years in the property. This last tenant, however, also lived in the property when it was being managed as a private hotel in the late 1970s.

It is not just because Elenara represents a long-term home for many residents that we took the decision to mount a campaign to save the building as a community managed rooming house, it is also because we believe that inner urban suburbs, such as St Kilda, are greatly enriched by the social and cultural diversity that our tenants provide. Sometimes their behaviour can be challenging as a number of our tenants experience serious mental and physical illness. But it is important that we learn to tolerate each other as this leads to a more cohesive society.

We will not know the fate of Elenara until after the State election in November. However we are determined to fight for the rights of all our residents to live in the houses they have come to call home.

For further information please contact the Facebook page: www.facebook.com/saveelenara



Photograph by Simon Kosmer

Finance Report

St Kilda Community Housing Ltd.
Abridged Financial Statements
For the Year ended 30th June 2014

INCOME STATEMENT

	2014	2013
	\$	\$
Rental Income	2,864,996	2,664,929
Other Revenue	90,705	61,721
Winding Up Distribution for St Kilda RHIG	2,502,241	-
	<u>5,457,942</u>	<u>2,726,650</u>
Depreciation and Amortisation	111,621	51,744
Employee Expenses	1,002,499	930,204
Finance Costs	45,593	142,250
Property Management	926,768	768,220
Rental Expenses	418,857	355,773
Tenancy Management & Operations	349,395	333,676
	<u>2,854,733</u>	<u>2,581,867</u>
Surplus for the year - no tax applicable	<u>2,603,207</u>	<u>144,784</u>

BALANCE SHEET

	2014	2013
	\$	\$
Accumulated Members' Funds	3,229,726	626,519
Community Capacity Building Reserve	13,731	13,731
Beach House Reserve	1,600,000	1,600,000
TOTAL EQUITY	<u>4,843,457</u>	<u>2,240,250</u>
Represented By:		
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash	319,710	299,038
Receivables and Prepayments	133,015	86,484
	<u>452,725</u>	<u>385,522</u>
NON-CURRENT ASSETS		
Property, Plant & Equipment	4,803,417	4,850,633
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>5,256,143</u>	<u>5,236,155</u>
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Creditors & Borrowings	260,530	527,356
Provisions	133,629	77,062
	<u>394,159</u>	<u>604,418</u>
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Borrowings	-	2,345,118
Provisions	18,527	46,369
	<u>18,527</u>	<u>2,391,487</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES	<u>412,686</u>	<u>2,995,905</u>
NET ASSETS	<u>4,843,457</u>	<u>2,240,250</u>

"St Kilda Community Housing Ltd (SCH) continues to manage accommodation for 337 residents in St Kilda. The team manages rent collections and other services, including maintenance, within the very supportive environment of the St Kilda business and residential community.

The financial result is a surplus of \$100,966 in this financial year compared with \$144,784 the year before. No income tax is payable and surpluses are accumulated to direct towards our goal of providing more or improved accommodation over time.

This financial year shows the financial effect of the windup of the Rooming Housing Issues Group Inc. The financial surplus of this successful enterprise has been transferred into SCH and is included in the total surplus for the year.

During the year, SCH discharged most of its Bank debt taken out to create 19 rooms in Jackson Street in 2012 known as "Kooimbahla".

SCH is a charitable entity and can grant a Tax Deduction to donors for monies so received".

David Gibbs
Hon.Treasurer

Note: These abridged financial statements are extracts from the audited financial statements of the company as approved by the Board of Directors of the company on 16th September 2014. A copy of the audited Financial Statements is available on request from the registered office of the company.

Student on Placement



In 2014, Elana Kopke joined us as a Social Work student on placement from RMIT University. Elana is in the final stages of her Masters of Social Work degree. St Kilda Community Housing is highly appreciative of the partnership we have developed with RMIT University in general, and the social work department in particular. We have been fortunate to have had Linette Hawkins as our liaison within the social work department over the last couple of years.

The project Elana is working on will produce great benefits for our residents and, although she will have finished her placement with us before the project is finished, her work will have been critical to its success.

Here is what Elana has to say about her placement:

“My placement at St Kilda Community Housing has given me an understanding of the importance of community housing as an alternative in providing affordable housing for those who are most marginalised. It has allowed me to engage with community housing in the St Kilda area specifically as well as more broadly with the housing sector. I have had the opportunity of learning from St Kilda Community Housing about localised responses to social issues.

As part of my placement I am working on a project that aims to support residents who for various reasons may not have developed the necessary survival skills to live independently. This project will first and foremost enable residents to sustain their tenancies for longer and to improve their overall health and wellbeing. It feels like there is a genuine value and it provides me with an opportunity to work directly with rooming house residents which is invaluable for my career as a social worker. I am also receiving support and guidance from everyone at St Kilda Community Housing who are each such a wealth of knowledge and from other professionals in the vibrant network of Port Phillip community services.

I have also been involved in some of the social meals organised by St Kilda Community Housing in collaboration with Port Phillip Community Group. This is an opportunity to engage with residents in an informal space and see first-hand the benefit and value of organisations investing in community development activities that contribute to community strengthening and help to address issues of social exclusion.

Thank you to everyone at St Kilda Community Housing for providing me with such a great insight into the community housing sector.”



Photograph by Jenny Minogue

Our Partners...



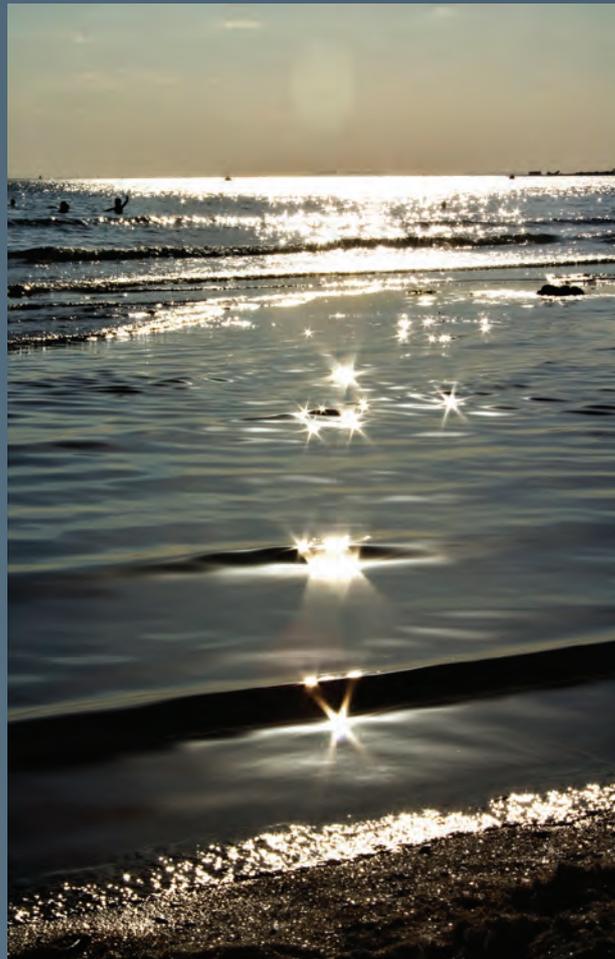
Why St Kilda?

“Mooted proposals to sell DHS-owned housing stock in St Kilda represent a significant threat to diversity, inclusiveness and community in this part of Melbourne. Like any other locals, whether wealthy, illustrious or otherwise, the daily routines, social and community supports enjoyed by residents of properties such as Elenara are deeply embedded in St Kilda – this is home, and for many the prospect of relocation and consequent dislocation is, understandably, a frightening one. In rejecting proposals for any further sale of social housing stock in St Kilda, I add my voice to those demanding increased public investment in affordable, accessible housing in inner Melbourne.”

Alcohol and Other Drugs Worker for 4 years in St Kilda.



ST.KILDA
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Photograph by Alexandra Sagin