

Gladstone Regional Council / AnglicareCQ – Housing Crisis Brief

Gladstone Housing Crisis

Gladstone is in a housing crisis. Private rental vacancy rates have remained consistently below 2% since August 2020 and over the last 5 years rental prices have increased steeply by between 51-87%, the highest increases across the state. Housing availability and subsequently affordability, is a significant issue for the region.

The number of Gladstone residents waiting for social housing has more than doubled in just five years and community organisations like AnglicareCQ are seeing an increasing number of pensioners, working people and families having nowhere to go because of the housing crisis. AnglicareCQ's recent Rental Affordability Snapshot identified that across Central Queensland 0% of properties were affordable for singles on an aged care or disability support pension. Housing, coupled with cost-of-living pressures are seeing record high numbers of people seeking assistance from our Emergency Relief Program.

AnglicareCQ currently manage 90 affordable housing homes in Gladstone that are being removed from the market over the next 3 years with the completion of the federally funded National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS). There is no affordable housing product coming in replacement and this gap is especially impacting on our older population.

Service providers like AnglicareCQ, recognise this housing crisis. We are engaged in fast tracking solutions, but we need support from all three levels of government to start our journey to end housing stress and homelessness. AnglicareCQ has met with Council representatives from Livingstone, Rockhampton and Gladstone over the last 6 months to discuss the local situation, needs and possible solutions. Livingstone Shire has committed to gifting land and partnering with AnglicareCQ. We consider Gladstone Council to have a similar housing interest and appetite based on our preliminary conversations. This has motivated us to propose a partnership to deliver an over 55's social housing development in the Gladstone region.

AnglicareCQ Proposal

AnglicareCQ would like to utilise our almost 40 years' experience in community and affordable housing to partner with Gladstone Regional Council to tackle the housing crisis in our region. We manage a portfolio of 330 community, 199 affordable and 27 crisis accommodation options across the Central Queensland region. Of those 90 affordable homes are in Gladstone along with 40 community housing properties. Of these properties none are specifically allocated for tenants over 55 years.

AnglicareCQ are proposing to increase social housing stock specifically for over 55's so that they can remain living in this community as they age. The land we would like to develop is a Council owned parcel located at: 2 Dave Burns Drive, Gladstone, ideally located alongside the Phillip Street Precinct.

AnglicareCQ will target state and federal funding opportunities to deliver this project. AnglicareCQ will design and oversee the development and then provide ongoing tenancy management and property maintenance services to the households. In addition to this, AnglicareCQ will offer financial resilience and mental health programs that can be wrapped around tenants as their life circumstances change.

The Dave Burns Drive Over 55's development will feature:

- Twenty-five, 1-bedroom cottages, specifically designed for the needs of an aging cohort.
- Cottages to feature walk in showers, grab rails, no step access to make them suitable for the end user.

- Small manageable yards for each dwelling, that will allow small companion pets and be easily maintained.
- Walking track that will take in the native vegetation and allow essential exercise.
- Access to the existing road crossing to visit the Phillip St Precinct facilities.
- Energy saving features like solar, energy efficient lighting and hot water.
- Raised and accessible garden beds.



A critical value add is the linkage to the current services and activities offered at the Phillip Street Precinct. This will improve the housing and life experiences of these tenants and create a sense of community that will enhance the latter phase of their life.

The delivery of social and affordable housing is challenging for providers. Social Housing offers properties to tenants at 25% of their rental income. For a single aged pensioner, they receive only \$490 per week, meaning a weekly rent of under \$200 per week. So, the challenges for community housing providers are significant to remain viable with the full maintenance, insurance, rates, and upkeep costs to be budgeted from this moderate return.

Operating from this moderate return, AnglicareCQ provide much more than just property management services. We understand our tenants needs and provide far greater support and contact levels than that of real estates. We have specialised teams in tenancy and asset management, coupled with our embedded links internally and to community for much needed supports.

This is not a commercial or money-making proposal; we do this because we identify a huge discrepancy between rents being charged compared to a person's capacity to pay. Housing is an essential foundation for all people, and we are highly motivated to deliver affordable housing to those who need it most. It is especially important for our aging population to feel a sense of stability and to provide affordable housing options to enable them to remain in their local community.

To make this project happen, we are requesting that Gladstone Shire Council partners with us by way of gifting a parcel of land (2 Dave Burns Drive, Gladstone), on the commitment and condition that AnglicareCQ gains funding to develop the housing. In return, Gladstone will receive much needed social housing, delivered to the region's most vulnerable households. We guarantee the development will be used for this purpose for a minimum of the next 20 years, bringing with it the social benefits associated with providing essential housing to over 55's in the Gladstone region.

Given the accessibility needs of this specific cohort, we have identified the highlighted parcel of land as the most suitable. We would ensure the design allows for easy access to the precinct facilities via the existing road crossing. Given the sloped nature of the other areas around the precinct, considerable effort and cost would be required to make it suitable for aged living. This is why AnglicareCQ suggests this particular parcel of land is utilised.



AnglicareCQ's Ability to Deliver

AnglicareCQ are Central Queensland's largest community housing and specialist homelessness support provider. We have almost 40 years' experience in supporting Central Queenslanders' housing needs.

AnglicareCQ recently moved into development and housing design in response to the current housing crisis. In 2022, we began construction of four 3-bedroom homes for women and children who have experienced domestic and family violence. This is a gated community with playground, security cameras and full array of safety features to assist in recovery and make the steps to free their lives from violence. In 2014, we designed and constructed three purposefully designed residential homes for children in care. Whilst relatively new to the construction industry, we do have runs on the board in terms of delivering projects and partnering sector experts. AnglicareCQ pride ourselves on delivering quality homes that fit the intended purpose.

Request / Recommendation

We are requesting a letter of commitment from Gladstone Shire Council to support our funding applications with the gifting of land, specifically, the site identified above: 2 Dave Burns Drive, Gladstone. An area of approximately 7000m².

The gifting of land would only take place once funding is secured for the development to be delivered by AnglicareCQ.

We have identified 25 cottage type dwellings for the site. However, our designs can be adapted and tailored. AnglicareCQ will work collaboratively with Gladstone Shire Council to ensure this project meets the needs and planning requirements of the region and most importantly the needs of people in our community.