



Landmark villas

St Faith's launches Vinnies' 500-dwelling social housing plan

SOCIAL HOUSING

BY KIM BARTLEY

A BID to “break the cycle of disadvantage” for social housing clients over the age of 55 has driven the development of St Faith’s in north Dubbo’s Macleay Street.

St Faith’s 21 villas are the first of 500 social and affordable dwellings to be developed, owned and operated by St Vincent de Paul Housing in metropolitan and regional NSW.

It was one of five organisations to secure a Social and Affordable Housing Fund (SAHF) contract from the state government in 2017. Contract details have not been released.

The five organisations are set to deliver a total of 2200 extra social and affordable homes in NSW with tenants getting “coordinated access to support tailored to their individual needs”.

“A requisite of the program is for the tenants to be provided with support services coordination,” a spokesman for St Vincent de Paul Housing told the Daily Liberal.

“At St Faith’s the kind of services we anticipate coordinating include access to health, home care and community participation.”

The villas have been built at an undisclosed cost by David Payne Constructions

on the site of the former St Faith’s hostel for girls.

“In February 2017, St Vincent de Paul Housing executed a services agreement with the state government’s Department of Family and Community Services to deliver 500 new dwellings and associated services to be used as social and affordable housing for eligible clients,” the St Vincent de Paul Housing spokesman said. “This is part of that agreement and the financial aspects are commercial in confidence.”

Nineteen of the 21 villas at St Faith’s are currently occupied with tenants referred to it from the NSW Housing Register.

“Feedback from tenants has been very positive as the new development is better suited to their needs with rental costs in compliance with social housing policy,” the St Vincent de Paul Housing spokesman said.

“Prior to St Faith’s becoming available, the tenants occupied a variety of private rental and social housing. “These were inappropriate for many of these tenants due to issues such as accessibility and access to support, as well as the financial stress caused by costly private rentals.”

St Faith’s is being managed by St Vincent de Paul Housing in conjunction with Parkes Forbes Community

Housing.

“As well as managing the physical buildings and site, they provide case management services to the tenants,” the St Vincent de Paul Housing spokesman said.

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ST FAITH'S: St Vincent de Paul Housing owns and operates new seniors' housing in north Dubbo for eligible social housing clients over the age of 55 years. Photo: Contributed

Volunteers helping tenants

FROM front page.

St Faith's consists of two one-bedroom villas, 15 two-bedroom villas and four three-bedroom villas.

"All are designed to the silver level for accessibility with eight designed to further cater to tenants with disabilities," the St Vincent de Paul Housing spokesman said.

A former church on the site has been converted into a community space for the benefit of tenants and volunteers.

The St Vincent de Paul Housing spokesman said its "major point of difference"

from other community housing providers was the work of its "local Vinnies volunteers". "At St Faith's, support work-

ers and local volunteers will offer help for tenants to access support services, assistance in attaining furniture, transport to essential needs such as healthcare, outings and visits, and most importantly friendship," he said.

St Vincent de Paul Housing chief executive officer Brian Murnane attended the opening of St Faith's. "We are delighted to reopen the St Faith's site as seniors' housing and to continue its

proud history of being of service to the people of Dubbo," he said.

NSW Minister for Social Housing Pru Goward said the SAHF showed what could be achieved when the government worked close-

ly with agencies to deliver "great outcomes for vulnerable people".

"By embracing a collaborative approach, the government and St Vincent de Paul Housing are helping people to break the cycle of disadvantage and move towards greater independence," the minister said.



Author: Kim Bartley • Section: General News • Article Type: News Item
Audience : 1,424 • Page: 1 • Printed size: 1031.00cm² • Region: NSW • Market: Australia
ASR: AUD 5,480 • words: 688 • Item ID: 1040130959

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SENIORS' HOUSING: St Faith's in Macleay Street includes a former church that has been converted into community space. **Photo: Contributed**