Hunter Community Housing - Partnership Policy

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) Hunter Community Housing recognises that to be successful in providing safe and affordable housing, we must work in partnership with members of the larger community. It is important to us that we create opportunities for our clients. We will strive to strengthen our partnerships with the community housing sector, financial institutions, local councils, our colleagues and partners and those organisations that support our organisations operational goals.

(2) Hunter Community Housing values sharing information and knowledge as this adds value to our service delivery. This ensures our organisation continues to build and maintain relationships internally and externally.

(3) The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for staff and partners that sets out Hunter Community Housing's principles for partnership.

Section 2 - Scope

(4) The principles set out in this policy should be applied by all staff when engaging with prospective partners with the intent of entering into a formal partnership agreement and when undertaking regular review of existing partnership arrangements to confirm the value add.

Section 3 - Policy Statement

(5) Hunter Community Housing is committed to:

a. providing high quality services to the people we assist with a high-level focus on resident wellbeing and providing support as needed on an individual basis to promote successful tenancies.
b. empowering tenants to gain greater independence within their tenancy. This is achieved by promoting safe and affordable housing options alongside opportunities for tenants to actively participate in the local community.
c. working with culturally & linguistically diverse communities to ensure that they have equitable access to housing and to being a culturally competent and safe organisation for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples.

(6) We recognise the value of building strong partnerships based on shared values, goals, and collaboration to assist us to:

a. increase affordable and stable housing options for people in housing stress;
b. support young people, people with disability and vulnerable people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness to have access to safe and appropriate accommodation;
c. actively work to overcome social exclusion of tenants and build strong linkages with the local community to improve outcomes for the people we assist so they can experience life to the fullest;
d. uphold the rights of people living with disability to live independently; and
e. advocate for the eradication of poverty and injustice.

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(7) Hunter Community Housing has adopted a set of Principles for Partnership aimed at enhancing social inclusion, wellbeing, and access to affordable and stable housing for the people we assist.

(8) As a member of the Australian Catholic Anti-Slavery Network the Diocese has made a commitment to work towards the eradication of poverty and injustice and requires all partner agreements to include a clause that parties will comply with the requirements of the Modern Slavery Act 2018 (NSW) to the extent the act is applicable to them.

(9) Partner agreements must include an annual review clause and where practical key performance indicators (KPI's). The annual review should include assessment of the party's performance against agreed KPI's and commitment to the Principles of Partnership.

Section 4 - Principles of Partnership

(10) Shared vision and values – partners work better when parties share common goals and have values that align.

(11) Mutual benefit and respect – partnerships are successful when all parties respect the expertise, culture and diversity each bring to the arrangement and build trust through recognition and acceptance of differing views and opinions.

(12) Access, Inclusion and Participation – effective partnerships support client's access to services and inclusion and participation in programs that meet their needs.

(13) Sound governance and mutual accountability – partners discuss and clearly document the individual and joint responsibilities and accountabilities of each and are transparent in meeting and delivering on these. Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and/or Partnership Agreements contain all the elements of the collaborating and partnering process and decision making are discussed and agreed by partners.

(14) Commitment to place renewal and community development – partners work collaboratively to strengthen the connection of the people we assist with their communities and support them to identify and take collective action on issues which are important to them.

(15) Commitment to a common goal of ending Modern Slavery – Hunter Community Housing expects all partners to comply with the requirements of the Modern Slavery Act 2018 (NSW) to the extent that they are applicable to them. All MoU's and/or Partnership Agreements must include a clause giving effect to this commitment.

Section 5 - Definitions

(16) Partner refers to other Diocesan agencies, support service providers, and local, state, regional or national, government agencies that Hunter Community Housing has an official arrangement with via a signed MoU or Partnership Agreement.

(17) Social inclusion is defined as those activities that assist people to fully participate in social and economic life. These activities may include access to education, training and employment services or better connecting tenants within their local community.

(18) Social exclusion is about assisting people to overcome barriers that restrict them from participating in social inclusion activities.

(19) Place renewal is defined as strengthening the connection between people and places they share. Place renewal activities may range from working with tenants and neighbours to improve local amenities, through to consulting with neighbours and prospective tenants on new developments and facilities.

(20) Community development is a process where community members are supported by agencies to identify and take collective action on issues which are important to them. Community development empowers community members and creates stronger and more connected communities.

Section 6 - Responsibilities

(21) The General Manager Operations – Housing is responsible for the implementation and review of this policy.

(22) Staff are responsible to ensure they have read, understood, and comply with the policy.

(23) The Diocese Governance Department is responsible for managing the review process and publication of this policy.

Section 7 - Document Review

(24) This policy will be reviewed when there is a legislative change, organisational change, delegations change or at least every 3 years to ensure it continues to be current and effective.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	27th May 2024
Review Date	24th February 2028
Approval Authority	Head of Governance
Approval Date	24th June 2022
Expiry Date	To Be Advised
Unit Head	Ray Bowen Director Property and Housing
Enquiries Contact	Hunter Community Housing