

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **\$10.5m housing project for downsizing seniors now a reality**

The doors have now opened on an innovative \$10.5 million affordable housing project in Springwood that has been designed specifically for seniors downsizing from public housing properties in the Logan area.

Minister for Housing and Public Works and Member for Springwood Mick de Brenni officially opened Benson Place on Saturday, a 35-unit complex located on Thornhill Street.

"Our Springwood seniors uphold our traditions and history," Mr de Brenni said. "Enabling our loved ones to remain close by as they downsize or their needs change is vital.

"The Palaszczuk Government's continued investment in social housing construction provides people of all ages with a safe, secure place to live as well as an income for thousands of Queensland workers.

Mr de Brenni said the new complex would take on a significant name after local community champion Colleen Benson.

"Colleen Benson worked tirelessly for more than 27 years to benefit the local community and this is a fitting tribute to her," he said.

"She joined the Logan East Community Neighbourhood Centre in 1991 and grew the small organisation into the thriving neighbourhood centre it is today, with more than 40 volunteers and about 32 programs.

"Mrs Benson retired from her community role in March 2018."

BHC Creating Liveable Communities developed and helped fund the construction of Benson Place following recommendations from the 2016 Building Housing Options Research Report, which was jointly undertaken with Queensland Department of Housing and Public Works and Churches of Christ in Queensland with the University of Queensland.

BHC Chief Executive Officer Stuart Lummis said Benson Place residents were seniors who had spent decades raising families in larger public housing properties, but now needed a home that was much easier to maintain.

"Benson Place will support residents' aspirations to age in place in their local communities and provide them with peace of mind about their housing futures," Mr Lummis said.

"The development features enhanced security, a resident common room, community gardens, space for visiting family members and a high level of accessibility.

"Much like our award-winning development Caggara House, Benson Place will contribute to BHC's growing range of contemporary housing options for seniors in South East Queensland.

“BHC is proud to support the Better Neighbourhoods Logan initiative and the renewal of social and affordable housing in Logan through this development.”

Donald and Sandra Murray moved to Benson Place after significant health issues nearly claimed Mr Murray’s life.

Mr Murray, 78, said ensuring his wife had a safe, secure and sustainable home should the worst happen was a major factor in their decision to leave the public housing property they had lived in for nearly 20 years.

“We needed a secure property that was easier to maintain as we get older,” Mr Murray said.

“We could have moved in with my daughter, but we didn’t want to be a burden on the family, and we’re still far too independent to go to a nursing home.

“We’re more than happy with our new home. The only regret is that we should have done it sooner.”

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