

MEDIA RELEASE

8 May 2017

END OF AN ERA AS AFFORDABLE HOUSING LEADER ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT

One of the leading lights of Brisbane's affordable housing industry will step down in August having delivered more than 1600 new affordable homes to low-income households over 15 years.

Inaugural BHC CEO David Cant will leave a legacy of vision and collaboration that saw him move away from reliance on government funding and develop innovative investment channels, such as partnerships with other charities and the combination of affordable housing and private sales in one development.

This allowed BHC to be a genuinely independent provider that was both a commercially minded organisation and driven by the need for delivering affordable housing to people priced out of an increasingly unaffordable Brisbane rental market.

At the outset and as a start-up organisation, BHC had no housing and at its 15th anniversary has sold 300 homes into the market, has built and manages 1300 apartments for affordable rental and manages 250 properties under the NRAS investment scheme.

Along the way, the not-for-profit won multiple national and international awards for its services, architectural design and commitment to putting a roof over the head of Brisbane's most vulnerable citizens.

Mr Cant said whilst he was still passionate about what BHC does, after 15 years he felt the it was time for a new CEO to lead the company into its next phase.

"The need for affordable housing in Australia and Queensland is huge and, particularly with the upcoming State Government's housing strategy, I hope we are entering a new era," Mr Cant said.

"I strongly feel that now is the time for BHC to inject a fresh, long-term leader who will take on those challenges, help drive the public conversation and steer our approach for BHC's second 15 years of growth.

"BHC is exceptionally well placed with a talented board of directors, a strong leadership team and skilled, dedicated staff. So it is an exciting time for a new leader to build on what myself and my colleagues have achieved and deliver more sustainable affordable housing for the city of Brisbane."

Mr Cant arrived in Brisbane after a distinguished career in the United Kingdom's affordable housing industry, with the Queensland Government recruiting his vast experience to build BHC from the ground up.

He quickly built a reputation as an industry leader, advocating across all levels of government for infrastructure for social and affordable housing. He was also member of the Prime Minister's Council on Homelessness, which advised the Rudd Government on measures to tackle one of the nation's most pressing issues.

Mr Cant said BHC's Caggara House development in Mt Gravatt East was among his crowning achievements.

The purpose-built complex provides high-quality units for seniors that previously lived in underoccupied public housing and was recognised with awards from both the Urban Development Institute of Australia and the Australian Institute of Architects.

"Caggara house not only provided a new life for seniors struggling to maintain large public housing, but also freed up these houses for growing Queensland families desperate for larger properties," Mr Cant said.

"It was one of the first Queensland developments built to tackle this issue of public housing underoccupancy and provided a template for how not-for-profit housing providers could work closely with the State Government and deliver projects with huge social benefits."

BHC Independent Chair Eloise Atkinson praised Mr Cant's legacy.

"Throughout David's career at BHC he has provided exceptional leadership driven by an overwhelming desire to ensure the people of Brisbane have access to safe, secure housing," Ms Atkinson said.

"Whilst driving the organisation to create new affordable dwellings, David has never lost sight of the importance of providing vulnerable Queenslanders with a safe place to live. A home that allows individuals to reach their potential."

BHC is currently undergoing a rigorous CEO recruitment process and will announce Mr Cant's successor at a later date.

ENDS

For more information, please contact:

Corrine Donaldson

BHC

Marketing and Communications Officer

d: 07 3307 3033

corrine.donaldson@bhcl.com.au

www.bhcl.com.au