

MEDIA RELEASE

BRISBANE PROJECT DEFINING DOWNSIZING FOR SENIORS WINS STATE RECOGNITION FOR EXCELLENCE IN AFFORDABLE HOUSING

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A striking apartment building in Brisbane's south, providing a home for seniors looking to downsize from older public housing residences, has won the award in the affordable development category at the UDIA Queensland 2020 Mitchell Brandtman Awards for Excellence.

Affordable housing provider Brisbane Housing Company developed the \$10.5 million medium-density complex known as Benson Place in Springwood. The development was designed by leading Brisbane firm Ultralinea Architecture, comprising 35 one-bedroom modern apartments, each with a separate multi-purpose room. All apartments have been built in accordance with Australian Gold Standard Livable Housing Design Guidelines.

Benson Place has become a signature building in the Springwood community and is well located to key transport hubs, community facilities and pedestrian linkages for the convenience of its residents.

BHC chief executive officer Rebecca Oelkers said the development was uniquely created for senior public housing residents in the Logan area who were looking to downsize into more suitable accommodation.

"Before living at Benson Place, these residents were living in large, detached public housing properties that were too big for their current household requirements, with poor accessibility, and difficult maintenance requirements," Ms Oelkers said.

"Benson Place was designed to support residents' aspirations to age in place in their local communities and provide them with peace of mind about their long-term housing futures. I am incredibly proud of what we have been able to achieve with the project.

"Given the significant demand on the public housing waiting list, residents vacating their public housing property to relocate to Benson Place, in turn, enabled larger families to be housed, or the sites to be redeveloped by the State Government into more modern public housing that better matches the waiting list need."

When tenanting this property, BHC invited almost 700 eligible public housing households in the Logan area to consider relocation, with over one-quarter enquiring about the property.

"We had over 160 attend information sessions and received more than 70 applications from eligible tenants for the 35 available apartments. This strong demand highlights the ongoing need for more modern, appropriate housing options across our communities," Ms Oelkers said.

The building opened in 2019 with Barry among its first tenants. This life-changing move has transformed Barry's life for the better, allowing him to focus his time on the hobbies he enjoys most.

"I never ever dreamed in my life that I would be in a place like this," Barry said.

"The move itself has been very positive, it's totally changed my lifestyle. You are now living in a community, you can walk out your door, you can walk downstairs to the common room and there is almost someone around to have a cuppa, have a talk."

Funded in partnership with the Queensland Government, the development has been named Benson Place in recognition of the important work of Colleen Benson over the past 27 years in the Springwood community.

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Notes:

- The UDIA Queensland 2020 Mitchell Brandtman Awards for Excellence celebrate and acknowledge excellence across a range of categories including affordable housing, residential subdivision and master-planned excellence. Nominees vied for gongs across 21 categories with the winners announced at Brisbane City Hall on October 30.
- BHC has provided more than 6,000 households with access to high-quality, well-located affordable housing across Brisbane since it was established in 2002.
- To view Barry's video story- <https://bhcl.com.au/our-stories/our-stories-video-project/barry/>
- To view project images- https://www.dropbox.com/sh/47n65mkf9zhp21t/AABDeW0_MZSgJ5gv3FdNT4Qwa?dl=0

CAPTION: Benson Place, Springwood

CAPTION: Barry, BHC Resident

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