

BYRON COMMUNITY LAND LIMITED

2019 - 2023 ACTION PLAN

Creating new housing solutions for the Shire

CREATING NEW HOUSING SOLUTIONS

Underpinning most discussions about Byron Shire’s future is the conviction it must become a ‘sustainable community’ with ‘sustainable development’ an essential objective. Consensus on the meaning of these terms is not easily found. Nevertheless, one expected outcome is that different ages, households and livelihoods have trouble-free access to housing appropriate to their incomes and needs. A community exhibiting this ideal should offer opportunities for people to move through their housing and lifestyle careers without leaving familiar social networks. This defines the term affordable housing in its broadest sense.

Sadly, affordable housing is often equated to social and community housing and the negative perceptions both have acquired. Clearly attention must be paid to housing our community’s disadvantaged. But many individuals and families across Byron Shire’s age and income spectrum cannot afford to rent or buy a suitable home close to their work place or essential services. For the community’s key and personal service workers, and many others, housing is no longer affordable.

Byron Shire is recognised as having the highest median house price, and possibly the most holiday rentals as a proportion of the total housing stock, in the country. By way of example:

- Housing is commonly considered to be ‘affordable’ when a household pays less than 30% of its income in mortgage or rental costs. Any more and the household is considered to be in ‘housing stress’. Over a quarter of Byron Shire’s residents are in this unhappy situation.
- An income of around \$180,000 or more would be needed to meet the mortgage repayments on the recently reported \$987,500 Byron Shire median priced house.
- At the same time, an annual household income of \$102,000 would be required to pay Byron Shire’s average \$590 weekly rent.
- In 2018, Byron Shire’s median household income was reported to be about \$63,500 a year. NSW’s median household income was about \$82,000 a year.
- In 2016, nearly 26% of residents reported a household income just under \$34,000 a year. Fewer than 10% of residents enjoyed annual incomes of \$155,000 or more.

These broad figures clearly show that housing costs are beyond the ability of many residents. Adding to their pain is the fact long term renters compete with holiday makers prepared to pay between \$1,600 and \$2,800 per week for the 19% of Byron’s total dwellings listed as active holiday rentals.

We cannot solve these challenges alone. That said, Byron Community Land Limited will be a member driven vehicle for acquiring and developing land in Byron Shire for affordable housing. We aim to:

- Redefine home ownership and rental opportunities through the creation of diverse housing opportunities for residents;
- Establish supporting legal structures acceptable to government and financiers;
- Ensure land and other resources are used in ways that are environmentally and ecologically sound, as well as economically just; and
- Seek to better inform our community of the economic, social and environmental benefits well-designed affordable housing can have.

This Action Plan sets out how Byron Community Land Limited will help address the housing affordability issue in Byron Shire.

INTERNATIONAL MODELS

Byron Community Land Limited is modelled on internationally recognised Community Land Trust models. These are democratically controlled not-for-profit organisations owning real estate to benefit a local community. The principal purpose of a Community Land Trust is to create permanently affordable homes and home ownership and rental opportunities for generations of low to moderate income households adversely impacted by market conditions.

The basic principle is that land values appreciate over time. To ensure future home owners or lessees can afford a dwelling this appreciation is recycled as the Trust owns the underlying land. Dwellings are sold or rented through long-term leases (often 99 years). As a result, the land values can be separated from the selling cost. When purchasers sell the price is generally limited to a proportion of the market value or an agreed incremental rate such as the Consumer Price Index. By retaining the appreciated land value rising land values are not included in the selling price and subsequent Trust members benefit.

Community Land Trusts originated in the US and are becoming popular in the UK. All have important common features, including distinctive approaches to real estate ownership and community based governance. They are managed by a board of residents, community members and public representatives. The Trusts create lasting community assets and shared equity homeownership opportunities for families and communities. Some also develop rural and urban agriculture projects, commercial spaces to serve local communities, affordable rental and cooperative housing projects, and conserve land or urban green spaces.

Byron Community Land Limited will bring into being projects and relationships clearly designed to the meet the affordable housing needs of Byron Shire residents. Housing created will:

- Be an appropriate size for the household it accommodates;
- Offer the choice of rent or purchase for the same housing type and location;
- Be no different to what might be called market rate housing; and
- Be close enough to places of work so that travel costs do not make working uneconomic.

This document outlines how Byron Community Land Limited will meet these challenges.





Source: Little Byron

OUR PURPOSE



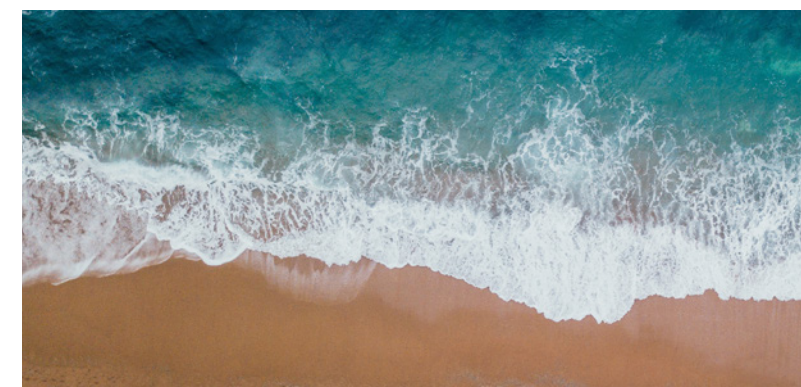
Byron Community Land Limited will:

- Acquire and hold land for affordable housing by purchasing and permanently removing the land from the speculative market;
- Use the land for housing, food production, enterprise development, co-operatives or activities that support community life in an environmentally sensitive and socially responsible manner;
- Develop and implement responsible and ecological development and building practices to protect the land;
- Preserve opportunities for individual ownership while protecting the public interest by preventing monopolization, absentee control and speculative gain;
- Serve as a model land caretaker and community developer by providing information, resources and expertise to the wider community; and
- Undertake other activities to further its purpose and benefit Byron Shire.

OUR VISION

Byron Shire is a friendly, engaged and inclusive community living in one of Australia's most beautiful natural environments. The success of Byron Community Land Limited will be defined by:

- A growing stock of land that safeguards access to affordable housing for future low to moderate income residents;
- Homes and housing developments that:
 - contribute to the long term wellbeing of owners, tenants, the community and the environment,
 - respect and reinforce the distinctive character, values and landforms of the towns, villages and rural areas in which they are built,
 - offer rental security for local youth and low to moderate income households;
- A reputation as providers who have created long term, worthy and innovative alternative solutions to the Shire's housing crisis;
- Attracting fairly priced funding for non-traditional ownership and rental models; and
- The care and attention paid to meeting the needs of the Shire's vulnerable communities.



OUR VALUES AND AIMS

The values driving our work will be the creation and implementation of:

- Equitable, sustainable and diverse communities;
- Inclusive and resident driven processes sensitive to wider community needs and attitudes;
- Open and accountable operations and governance; and
- Visionary thinking.

Our overarching aim is for 10% of the Shire's housing stock to be provided through the Byron Community Land Limited (BCLL) model.

Our Priority Areas, Strategies & Success Indicators

PRIOTIRY 1: EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT

Goal:

- Create and preserve owner occupied and rental housing for low to moderate income households, and other households requiring support, in Byron Shire.

Strategies:

- Actively work to cultivate positive community attitudes and support for BCLL's affordable housing initiatives.
- Increase the potential affordability of projects by seeking partnership arrangements with land owners, philanthropic or land donations and innovative funding arrangements.
- Undertake a pilot affordable housing project.

Success Indicators:

- Conspicuous community, Council and media support for BCLL affordable housing projects.
- The number of long term affordable rental and owner occupied houses in Byron Shire.
- The number of households permanently accommodated at below market rates.

PRIORITY 2: SUSTAINABLE BUILDINGS AND COMMUNITIES

Goal:

- Practise responsible ownership of BCLL and owner assets by monitoring and managing the use, users and affordability of projects.
- Provide a broad range of housing types and price levels to help bring people of diverse ages and income levels into daily interaction in order to strengthen the personal and civic bonds essential to an authentic community.
- Practice responsible management of the Shire's natural and heritage resources throughout every project's development process.

Strategies:

- Utilise ground leases, partnership agreements, first right of refusal, and other appropriate land and building management mechanisms.
- Create buildings that will individually and collectively meet different needs over time.
- Where possible, aim to provide a well-integrated mix of decent housing types and tenures to support a range of household sizes, ages and incomes.
- Incorporate contemporary sustainable building practices in all projects and, where possible, exceed legislated and commonly acceptable measures.
- Preserve and incorporate heritage buildings and natural features into projects.

Success Indicators:

- Meeting and maintaining project objectives.
- Exceeding energy consumption and carbon footprint targets.
- Achieving, through design and supporting programs, communities with the levels of social interaction, social networks, emotional support and attachment to place people desire,



Source: Little Byron



PRIORITY 3: GOVERNANCE

Goal:

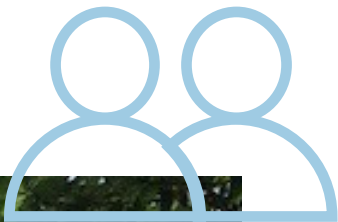
- Develop a governance, membership and external supporting structure to ensure BCLL's long term organisational and financial sustainability.
- Provide meaningful opportunities for residents to participate in BCLL decision-making.
- Practise good internal communications by regularly updating members, stakeholders and the public on land trust decisions and activities.

Strategies:

- Create an organisation with the capacity to carry out the BCLL's purpose and inspire the trust of donors, investors and sponsors.
- Seek
- Ensure the BCLL retains a broadly inclusive and democratic governance model.
- At appropriate stages in project development engage potential residents in design charrettes, workshops and other engagement activities.
- Provide opportunities for resident leadership development
- Create sustainable revenue sources for BCLL.

Success Indicators:

- Number of people participating in events providing input to BCLL decision-making.
- Number of people reporting increased feelings of involvement in BCLL.
- Number of BCLL general and resident members.
- Number of external organisational and corporate supporters.
- Number of new people in BCLL leadership roles.



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PRIORITY 4: PROMOTION AND EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

Goal:

- Practise good external communications by regularly updating stakeholders, Byron Shire residents and businesses, government, and wider community on BCLL projects, decisions and activities.

Strategies:

- Inform and educate members, stakeholders and the public on the BCLL model.
- Create a comprehensive and pro-active media relations campaign to keep BCLL top of mind among Byron Shire and national media.
- Create a comprehensive and pro-active online and social media engagement program.
- Formalise support from BCLL's emerging network of established organisations and local businesses.
- Implement an engagement program with potential donors and sponsors.

Success Indicators:

- Website, social media and newsletter impressions .
- Number of people reporting an increased understanding of the BCLL model.
- Website, social media and newsletter impressions.
- Earned media (number and tone).
- Value of donations and grants.



Sources: Little Byron



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Our Five Year Action Plan



There is little doubt accessing land is our biggest challenge. Byron Community Land Limited (BCLL) cannot compete with the private market for prime real estate. As a result, it will need to take on difficult projects, partner with Byron Shire Council and public land owners, engage with private land owners, and overcome opponents. Considered risks will need to be taken.

Consequently, Byron Community Land Limited will focus on four key actions:

- Land acquisition.
- Pilot project.
- Member and resource development.
- Marketing and communications.

Land Acquisition

- Engage with Byron Shire Council to identify and acquire surplus land for affordable housing.
- Engage with the State and Commonwealth governments to identify and acquire surplus properties for affordable housing.
- Engage with other organisations to identify under-used real estate opportunities appropriate for affordable housing consistent with BCLL's Purpose and Vision.

Pilot Project

- Identify a site and development or equity partner.
- Obtain seed capital.
- Undertake quantitative and, importantly, qualitative market research.
- Prepare a business and financing plan, a community engagement plan and a design brief.
- Establish the project design team and establish desired housing mix and uses.
- Prepare statutory environmental assessments and authority approval documents.
- Obtain pre-construction approvals.
- Complete property transfer and project finance obligations.
- Begin construction and selling operations.

Member and Resource Development

- Develop donor collateral material to demonstrate the benefits of donating to BCLL.
- Develop a program of organisational sponsorship.
- Develop the capacity to raise funds from community crowdfunding and non-traditional sources that may be applied to development projects.
- Transition to a membership-elected Board of Directors.
- Create and promote a list of organisational supporters who have provided in-kind or financial support to BCLL and the value they have helped create.

Marketing and Communications

- Hold regular community events and meetings as an opportunity to promote BCLL, its projects and affordable housing generally.
- Create stories, develop press releases, and make media pitches.
- Recruit and provide training to support a volunteer ambassador program.
- Develop and maintain accessible educational materials.
- Develop a website and related media kit.



CONTACT

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