



Media Release

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Purpose-built housing secures bright future for people with disabilities

Efforts to ensure more people with disabilities have access to appropriate housing on the Darling Downs have been fast-tracked, thanks to a generous donation from a Masonic charity to YellowBridge QLD.

The \$450,000 donation from Hand Heart Pocket the Charity of Freemasons Queensland will enable the construction of a purpose-built three-bedroom unit in Toowoomba, which will accommodate two people with disabilities and a carer.

The unit is one of four fully customised units being built by Enabled Living, which will meet individual needs, include assistive technology, and help empower residents to lead more independent lives.

YellowBridge QLD Chief Executive Officer Penny Hamilton said the donation couldn't have come at a better time.

"We are in the midst of a disability housing crisis on the Darling Downs, where people with disabilities, especially those whose ageing parents can no longer look after them, have no-where to go," Penny said.

"We know of 40 people in this position. While many have the means to buy or rent their own place, there is simply no suitable housing for them in the region," she said.

"A few will never have the means to pay for a place to live."

"Having access to appropriate housing is an important part of the equation for improving the overall quality of life of people with disabilities, so we are very grateful for this support."

Hand Heart Pocket Chief Executive Officer, Gary Mark, said the local Freemasons were vocal supporters of YellowBridge QLD, due to its proven record of supporting more than 4,000 people to lead more meaningful and connected lives each year.

"Our purpose is to provide sustainable support that delivers positive outcomes; to provide a hand up to communities, charities and individuals that have limited access to other funding sources," Mr Mark said.

"Alleviating the stress on ageing parents who care for their disabled children - through the provision of innovative purpose-built housing - aligns with our values of equipping people to lead better lives," he said.

"We are delighted to partner with YellowBridge QLD on this important initiative and know it will be a catalyst for changing the landscape of disability housing in the region."

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About Hand Heart Pocket

As an independent charity founded by the Freemasons of Queensland, Hand Heart Pocket helps in areas of state-wide and local need that have limited access to other funding. We work with other charities to identify and fund initiatives that have real, life-changing potential. We also collaborate with Masonic Lodges across Queensland and help individuals in times of extreme need to get them back on their feet. We use our funds wisely to give a hand up - to build potential, not encourage permanent dependence.

For more information about Hand Heart Pocket, visit www.handheartpocket.org.au

About YellowBridge QLD

YellowBridge QLD is a local, independent and not-for-profit organisation based in Toowoomba, Queensland. Each year it helps more than 4,000 people access housing, disability support, youth and home services so they can lead independent and rewarding lives. It has a forward-thinking partnership model which sees it proactively pursue opportunities for important community change by working with government, private and community partners.

For more information about YellowBridge QLD, visit www.yellowbridgeqld.com.au

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