

*"Rarely a day goes by without me thinking  
how fortunate I am living here."*

Male, 78, (Melville Place)

# Y Community Housing Outcomes Report

June 2024



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## Executive Summary

The Y Queensland Community Housing program offers secure and affordable long-term housing for some of the community's most vulnerable members who are at risk of or experiencing homelessness. The Y provides real housing opportunities to those most in need by supporting them in living independent, fulfilling lives within a community. The Y is not funded as supportive housing however, the program supports tenants through organisational initiatives and commitment to maximizing outcomes. Various supports are provided to help tenants sustain their housing by connecting them to services that address the complex challenges that led to their homelessness. A feature of Y Community Housing is the on-site management, which allows staff the unique opportunity observe, assess, and support tenants when they need help.

The Y Community Housing program has demonstrated several noteworthy successes:

1. On-site support has enabled staff to understand tenants better and provide personalised assistance to tenants, helping them access the support they need.
2. There are low turnover rates, with 35% of tenants residing at the Y since the opening of each housing complex.
3. Tenants receive timely support, minimizing the need for eviction notices or legal action.
4. Units are actively maintained, and replacements and repairs are conducted promptly despite a lack of funding.

The Y's Research and Evaluation team collects evidence and information every two years to evaluate and understand the program's impact. In the 2024 bi-annual evaluation, thirty-one (31) tenants from Edward's Place, Melville Place, and Nowell B Taylor House participated. At the time of data collection in June 2024, the program had 127 units housing 143 tenants across the three housing complexes in South East Queensland. Y tenants include seniors, women above the age of 55, young people aged 19 to 25, and people with a range of disabilities. Tenants range in age from 21 to 91 years old.

The evaluation covered tenants' housing stability, retention, security and safety, satisfaction, mental health, connection with the community, and quality of life. This provided feedback and evidence for the Y Community Housing model, which is used to improve the services and programs run at the different housing complexes.

The average age of the 31 surveyed tenants was 65, ranging from 41 to 83. More than half (51%) had been residents for over two years, and 30% had lived there for more than ten years, indicating a stable and long-term community.

The evaluation focused on tenant experiences at the Y Community Housing complexes and their associated outcomes, using quantitative and qualitative methods. Data were collected using surveys (n=31) and interviews (n=25).

Below is the overview of the key findings:

Outcome	Measures	Findings against measures
Housing outcomes	Stability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 77% of all tenants reported having more stability since living at the Y. 20% felt more stable some of the time, and only one tenant did not report a change in their sense of stability.</li> </ul>
	Housing satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 97% of the tenants reported satisfaction with their units.</li> <li>• 77% of the tenants are satisfied with the living conditions.</li> </ul>
	Tenancy management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 60% reported being able to talk to a Y person should they need to, and 37% said they can speak to a Y person some of the time.</li> <li>• 76% reported satisfaction with maintenance and repairs.</li> <li>• 32% provided suggestions for improvements.</li> </ul>
Safety outcomes	Safety in unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 90% of tenants reported feeling safe in their units.</li> <li>• 62% had never felt unsafe in the past three months.</li> </ul>
	Safety in complex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 87% reported feeling safe at the Housing complex all the time.</li> <li>• 13% reported feeling safe some of the time.</li> </ul>
Community outcomes	Social networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 86% of the tenants reported feeling more connected to other people since living at the Y.</li> </ul>
Health outcomes	Access to services (incl. medical, aged care, disability, mental health etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 77% reported being able to access health-related services and support when they need it.</li> </ul>
Financial outcomes	The ability to manage money increased	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 79% reported that their income is sufficient for their needs.</li> <li>• 22% stressed about money weekly, 52% reported money as their source of stress about once a month, and 26% reported never stressing about money.</li> </ul>
Autonomy	Increased sense of control Increased sense of freedom and independence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 52% reported an increased sense of control over their lives.</li> <li>• 64% reported an increased sense of being free to live how they wish.</li> </ul>
Wellbeing outcomes	Personal Wellbeing Index	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tenants obtained an average life satisfaction score of 6.9 out of 10, 0.3 points lower than the national average of 7.1 (AIWH, 2020).</li> <li>• Participants in qualitative interviews highlighted improved quality of life since living at the Y.</li> </ul>

The evaluation also found that positive tenant outcomes in safety, security, and affordability enhanced the tenant's sense of stability.

The qualitative data highlighted that the most common changes tenants value from living at the Y is an increased sense of stability and peace of mind in knowing their tenancy is secured.

In addition to the findings, several considerations and recommendations are outlined in the evaluation.

Recommendations include:

- Foster collaboration between other Y services, such as community centres and Y schools, to identify participants in these programs who are at risk of or experiencing homelessness early on.
- Secure Seniors funding to facilitate health promotion and social activities.
- Continue to assist tenants with accessibility issues by relocating them to units that best meet their health needs.
- Continue to work with the local police to address any untoward behaviour that may affect tenants' sense of security.
- Explore ways to increase support for accessing health services for tenants with limited mobility.

## Background

The Y Queensland runs an Affordable Housing program with 127 long-term community housing units across three properties in Nerang on the Gold Coast (Nowell B Taylor House and Melville Place) and Slacks Creek (Edward's Place) in Brisbane. The program supports people who are at risk of or have experienced long-term, recurring homelessness and face a range of complex challenges.

The Y Affordable Housing model follows a **housing-first** approach, prioritising safe and permanent housing. If requested and/or required, the Y then works with tenants to address issues that have contributed to their homelessness through referrals to services like drug and alcohol counselling or mental health support. Fundamental to the Housing First approach is the belief that people have a right to a home and engagement with support services is not required to maintain accommodation (Mason & Grimbeek, 2013). Each individual is assisted in sustaining their housing as they work towards recovery and reintegration with the community at their own pace (AHURI, 2018; Dodd et al., 2020).

The model comprises several other principles, including harm reduction, recovery-oriented practice, the separation of housing and support, and the importance of choice and self-determination (see Dodd et al., 2020 for the complete list).

Y Community Housing also follows a **trauma-aware** practice that recognises and responds to trauma and supports a person's work towards empowerment by promoting safety, trustworthiness, choice, accommodating vulnerabilities, and appreciation for diversity (QShelter & the NSW Federation of Housing Associations, n.d.).

The Y also uses a **person-centred** practice appropriate for working with older adults and people with disabilities; both groups traditionally lacked individual decision-making power in care planning (Edvardsson et al., 2010; National et al., 2016).

Person-centred practice has improved beneficiaries' outcomes and increased care satisfaction (Gluyas, 2015; Ebrahimi, 2021). In essence, person-centred practice is about doing things with people rather than 'to' them (Health Innovation Network South London, n.d.). Person-centred practice embodies all four Y values: caring and respect when workers act without judgement and value the viewpoints of beneficiaries, as well as honesty and responsibility when working constructively in partnership with beneficiaries to inspire intent and purpose.

Lastly, individual community workers who work with Y tenants are encouraged to use these principles in their professional practice model. The practice model also requires that all tenants have a vulnerability assessment conducted at the start of their tenancy to understand their unique needs. Regular feedback and consultations with tenants should also be provided to inform tenants of any concerns or changes as part of the model.

The Y Housing team offers on-site management to promote person-centered practice. Through this support, the team builds relationships with the tenants and gains a deep understanding of their needs. Staff members hold weekly meetings to identify, discuss, and provide the necessary support for the tenants. On-site management also helps tenants maintain their tenancy plans.

The model is summarised below;

### Community House Practice Framework



Figure 2: The Queensland Community Housing Practice Framework

As part of our commitment to maximising outcomes for our beneficiaries, Y Queensland has an established Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Framework for Housing. The framework guides the systematic, bi-annual collection of evidence and information that evaluates the program's effectiveness and documents its impact.

The theory of change for the program is outlined in Figure 2 below. Some assumptions have been made about the change process for tenants;

1. Many of the outcomes are interrelated, which the theory of change attempts to represent
2. The health domain does not include an 'improved health' outcome due to the complexity of the social determinants of health and how these impact individuals in different ways. We assume stable housing leads to better access to health

services, which may increase positive health outcomes. However, this may not be the case for older tenants and/or people with chronic ill-health (including mental ill-health).

3. Short-term housing and associated safety outcomes are fundamental to achieving other non-housing outcomes, such as improved subjective wellbeing and increased feelings of belonging.
4. A fundamental assumption is that tenants desire to participate in activities and would like support to help them move along the chain of outcomes to higher-level outcomes. However, as is their right, many tenants desire 'quiet enjoyment' of their home and do not wish to engage in case management or social activities.

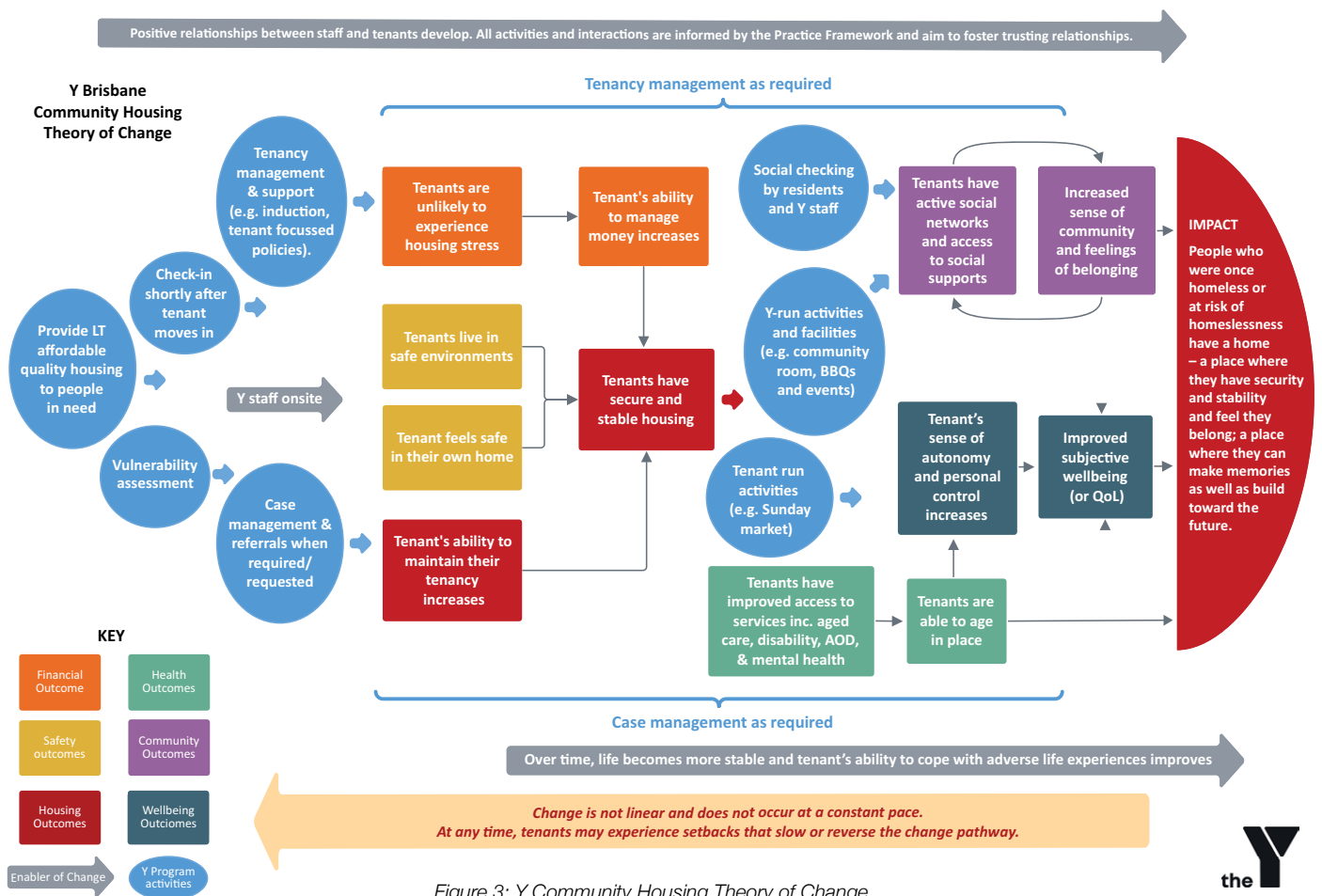


Figure 3: Y Community Housing Theory of Change

Noteworthy successes of the Y Community Housing program;

- On-site support that allows staff to know tenants well and to support them effectively. Examples of this include internal transfers of tenants to units that best meet their health or social needs, such as physical abilities (no longer able to climb stairs) to proximity to family and opportunities to engage in gardening activities.
- Low turnover rates, keeping the community stable over many years. 35% of the Y Community Housing tenants have been at their Y since each housing complex opened in 2009, 2012 and 2021. In the past year, only one notice to leave was issued, and only one case was referred to the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT)
- Between July 2023 and June 2024, the Y housed 15 new tenants. Two of these 15 were returning tenants who had left the Y to live with family but later realised how much they missed independent living at the Y and returned.

- These 15 units became available due to a range of reasons, including more than half due to moving to care facilities or health related issues.
- Active general, routine maintenance of units despite the lack of operational funding. Since the last evaluation, the Y has replaced 32 hot water units, painted 19 units, and replaced 19 cooktops, 16 smoke alarms, seven ovens, four air conditioners, three range hoods, two fire doors and a water meter.
- The Y also actively replaces items damaged by tenants, and over the same period, this has included replacing a kitchen island bench, curtains/blinds, cooktops, etc., which contributes to tenants' satisfaction with their standard of living

This report documents the 2024 program outcomes and feedback.



## Findings

The findings reported below are linked to the Theory of Change in the Housing MEL Framework. The report covers housing, safety, community, health, financial, autonomy, and wellbeing outcomes.

### Housing Outcomes

Almost all (94%) of the tenants who participated in the evaluation considered their Y Housing unit their home, and almost all (97%) were satisfied with their units.

Most tenants said their Y units were everything to them, and many highlighted the safety and stability elements. Others described it as “somewhere for me that is safe,” “a roof over my head, feeling safe and having friends,” and “being able to lock my door. Being able to be myself. It’s ‘my special place’,” “security and happiness, stability and much more,” and “everything to me.”

Other tenants highlighted that the Y is their home because it houses everything they own. Below are a few quotations with the tenants’ gender and age,<sup>1</sup> and complex name:

“...the first thing I’ll never forget, when I got into my place, I was just so grateful to have a toilet, you know, because when you live in your car, you have not got that toilet, and I was like six, I’ve been here three years, so I’m 65 now, I was 62, and at 62, you’ve got to have a toilet, you know, it’s really hard in the middle of the night, when you’re in your car, to go to the toilet, so when I came here, I actually, I think, I think it was Iona that gave me the place across there, you ask, I cried when I, when I started off, thank you, I cried, because finally, you know, it’s a huge weight lifted off a person’s shoulders, when they, when they know that they’ve got a roof over their head, and a toilet, which is really important, you know, just running, running water, and yeah, so I’m really, I’m grateful, look at it, I feel like I’m queen living here now, this place is queendom”

(Female, 65, Melville Place)

“At first, I struggled with it; I wanted more for myself. I didn’t like that I found myself here. I wanted more for myself. For the first time in 3 years, I look forward to coming home”

(Female, 64, Nowell B Taylor House)

“Everything. I have nothing without this place. I’m very grateful to the YMCA. I would be out on the streets without this place.”

(Female, 68, Nowell B Taylor House)

### Stability

77% of all tenants reported having more stability since living at the Y. 20% felt more stable some of the time, and only one tenant did not report a change in their sense of stability.

“...Well, my stepmother, who had a lot of money, used to say things to me, like, where do you want to live now? ...and, um, I used to say, well, somewhere stable. I’m in...I’m in somewhere stable. So, I have everything I need. I have everything here from, you know, latest appliances to, um, everything cookware, um, you know, so I, I, I don’t want for a thing, really.”

(Female, 73, Nowell B Taylor House)

### Unit satisfaction

97% of the tenants reported satisfaction with their units, and 77% of the tenants were satisfied with the living conditions. In the qualitative interviews, most tenants mentioned how conveniently located each of the complexes is to public transport and local services like supermarkets. Those without cars particularly appreciated this. Other comments from tenants about what their Y complexes included:

“Beautiful new apartment, nice gardens. Affordable. Staff are excellent and friendly.”

(Male, 48, Edward’s Place)

“Rarely a day goes by without me thinking how fortunate I am living here at the YMCA”

(Male, 78, Melville Place)

“Thank you for the opportunity to live here.”

(Male, 66, Nowell Taylor B House)

<sup>1</sup>Tenant’s ages are changed in direct quotations to keep their identity anonymous



## Tenancy Management

60% reported being able to talk to a Y person should they need to, and 37% said they can speak to a Y person sometimes. 76% reported satisfaction with maintenance and repairs.

**“I am sure everyone would agree that this complex is extremely well managed and maintained.”**

(Male, 65, Nowell B Taylor House)

Of the tenants who participated in the survey, 32% (n=9) provided suggestions for improvements. Suggestions were in response to the question, “Is there anything the Y can do to help you feel like this is your home?” and answers varied but included a request for a bedroom air-conditioner at Nowell B Taylor House, a request for a security door at Melville Place, two requests to keep small pets for mental health reasons at Nowell B Taylor House, and a request to not change units from a two-bed by a tenant whose child is due to move out at Edward’s Place.

**“I wish to stay in this home and not be asked to move to a smaller unit without a spare room. I have three daughters and anxiety. I would like to have a spare room for them. I also have two cats and have enclosed the balcony for them.”**

(Female, 55, Edward’s Place)

A young man in a studio apartment at Melville Place requested to take over his father’s one-bedroom unit at Nowell B Taylor House and requested a ramp instead of steps to get to the mezzanine level.

## Safety Outcomes

The tenants were asked three questions about safety in the unit and the complex. **90% reported feeling safe** in their unit a lot of the time (27%) and all the time (63%).

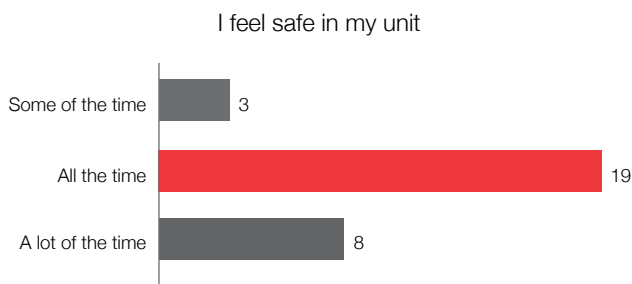


Figure 4: Tenant’s sense of safety in their units

**Most (87%) feel safe in the complex** a lot of the time (40%) and all the time (47%), and 62% reported that they have never felt unsafe in the past three months.

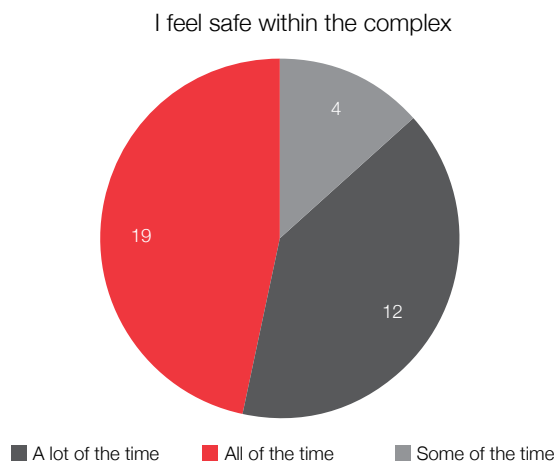


Figure 5: Tenants sense of safety within the complex

The 37% who have felt unsafe cited nosy neighbours or having heard rumours about someone trying to open random doors as their reasons. Tenants at Melville Place also mentioned the people living in tents as a threat to their safety and sometimes seeing drug sellers outside the complex. Three tenants at Melville Place also mentioned one tenant who made them feel unsafe because of his unpredictable behaviour and outbursts. At Edward’s Place, they mentioned that youth from the community sometimes jump over the fence.

Other comments mentioned gates and tenant behaviours at the gates; some examples include;

- “I need a gate at the front to avoid teens coming in” Edward’s Place
- “Key issue - access to gates” Edward’s Place
- “Maybe extra cameras in the carpark or gates at the front. My daughter’s number plates were stolen” Edward’s Place
- “Stop the people selling drugs” Melville Place
- “Some people don’t close the gate access. I have had my car broken into twice. Anyone can access the basement lift, and the stairs go into the basement” Nowell B Taylor House
- “The gate sometimes breaks because people slam it.” Nowell B Taylor House
- “We need spikes on the gates because of the people in tents” Melville Place

## Community Outcomes

Y Housing tenants have been engaged in various activities, including bowling, swimming, bingo, knitting, karaoke, YMCA BBQs, Yoga, live music, women's and rehab groups, and the Nerang Neighbourhood Centre. These activities help them stay connected with each other and their broader community. This year, 86% of the tenants reported feeling more connected to other people since living at the Y.

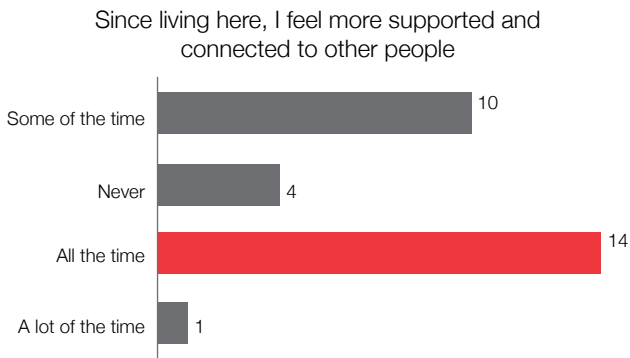


Figure 6: Tenant's sense of connection to others

Over half (51%) of the tenants surveyed reported having between 1 and 4 friends at their complex. About a third (35%) reported having no friends at their housing complex and opting to have external friends. Four tenants (13.7%) reported having more than five friends at their complex; they all lived at Nowell B Taylor House.

## Health Outcomes

When asked if tenants could access the medical services they need, 77% reported accessing health-related services and support when needed.

**"It would be great to have a bus from here that would take people to appointments. The bus is always booked out."**

(Female, 68, Nowell B Taylor House)

In the Personal Wellbeing Index (PWI) scores, tenants reported a low score of 5.8 out of 10 on satisfaction with health. This was the area with the lowest score on the PWI. The individual stories of tenants also captured a range of health concerns among tenants, suggesting the need for additional support in this area.

## Financial Outcomes

Since living at the Y complex, 77% of the tenants reported that their lives have been more stable. The most common theme for changes from the in-depth interviews was how affordable the Y accommodation is and how the tenants do not have to worry about being evicted. 79% of the tenants reported that their income is sufficient for their needs, and 26% said they never worry about money.

This was supported in the qualitative interviews where almost all (96%) tenants mentioned that the Y was best for them because it was affordable and adjusted to their income. Hence, they never worried about not being able to afford their rent anymore.

## Autonomy

Autonomy refers to the capacity of people to make informed, uncoerced decisions. The person-centred practice used in Y Housing empowers tenants with individual decision-making power over their care and lives. Among the tenants who participated in the survey, 52% reported feeling more in control of their lives due to living at the Y, and 64% reported feeling freer to live their lives how they wished. Some quotations supporting these scores are included below.

**"Being single, this is the first time that I have really felt independent."**

(Female, 65, Edward's Place)

**"Just having this time to myself to get to know myself, what I want and what I don't."**

(Female, 59, Melville Place)

## Overall wellbeing

Concerning satisfaction with their lives, health, relationships and security, tenants scored highest on the standard of living and future security, which are both attributed directly to feeling confident that the Y will provide appropriate, safe, accessible, and affordable housing for them. Their mental wellbeing scores collected through the Quality of Life Likert Scale where one is low, five moderate and ten high are tabled below;

The participants obtained an average life satisfaction score of 6.9 out of 10, 0.3 below the Australian national average of 7.1 (AIWH, 2020). In qualitative interviews, participants highlighted improved quality of life since living at the Y.

### Personal Wellbeing Index Scores (2024)

Life satisfaction	6.4
Standard of living	7.7
Satisfaction with health	5.8
Satisfaction with life achievements	6.7
Satisfaction with personal relationships	7.1
Satisfaction with how safe you feel	7.4
Satisfaction with feeling part of your community	6.7
Satisfaction with future security	7.5

## Most significant change stories

Twenty-five (25) tenants also participated in in-depth interviews, sharing stories of the most significant changes in their lives due to living at the Y Community Housing. The most significant stories were collected using the five trauma-aware principles of safety, trustworthiness, choice, collaboration and empowerment. Interviews promoted tenants' choice to participate in the data collection, to choose which questions they wished to respond to, to determine

the interview location, and space to share anything else they wished to talk about that may not have been in the questions.

The stories shared highlighted the increased sense of stability, safety and security among tenants.

The themes are illustrated in Figure 6 below, and the size of the text indicates how frequently that theme was mentioned in the in-depth interviews.



Figure 7: Most Significant Changes Experienced by Y Tenants

## Conclusion

The Y Queensland Community Housing program aims to offer secure and affordable long-term housing to vulnerable individuals at risk of or experiencing homelessness. The recent addition of Edward's Place contributed to an increased number of participants in the bi-annual evaluation. The 2024 findings highlighted high stability, safety levels, and housing satisfaction. The general sentiment among tenants was gratitude for a secure and affordable home.

Tenants provided feedback to Y Queensland, such as addressing accessibility issues, enhancing security, and supporting tenants with anxiety. Due to the proximity to each other and each tenant's varied, complex histories, it was unsurprising that many of the issues raised related more to other tenant behaviours than to the complex management. This supports the evaluation recommendation to support and refer tenants with disruptive behaviours promptly.



## Appendix 1: Most Significant Stories

### Jacob's Story

Age: 68, Melville Place

Jacob had been living in the same apartment for about five years. It wasn't the longest stretch he'd ever been in one place, but it felt like home in ways he had not experienced before. His journey to this apartment began under less than ideal circumstances. He drove from Sydney with a car that had become more than just a vehicle—it had been his temporary sanctuary.

In those early days, Jacob was struggling. He had spent nights in his car and was facing health issues due to his smoking and asthma. Things had seemed bleak until he reached out to the YMCA, a decision that marked a turning point in his life. The YMCA had stepped in, finding him this place to live, and Jacob was deeply thankful for that.

As he settled into his new apartment, he felt an immediate sense of relief and safety. The building was secure, with gates and a quiet neighbourhood that offered him peace of mind. He was pleased to have a letterbox for the first time in years and appreciated the basic comforts of home—a fridge, sink, and stove. It wasn't much, but it was everything he needed.

Since moving in, Jacob has stayed in the same unit. It was his space, a place where he could be himself and feel secure.

The people in the complex were friendly, and though interactions were mainly limited to brief greetings and small talk, Jacob valued these simple connections. "How are you going?" was a common phrase, a reminder that he was not alone.

Jacob shrugged off any concerns when asked what he liked least about living there. "Haven't got one," he said simply. His philosophy was to take life day by day without dwelling on things that he couldn't change.

The interviewer probed further about potential improvements or changes he might want. Jacob found himself at a loss. "That's too hard for me to answer," he admitted; though he was open to social events like farmers' markets, the community seemed content in its current state, with everyone mostly keeping to themselves.

Reflecting on his past, Jacob recounted a painful chapter of his life. His wife's new job and subsequent relationship led to their separation, leaving him to navigate the fallout alone. It was a tough time, but his sister's presence in the area provided some solace, and eventually, the YMCA's support helped him turn a corner.

As the interview wrapped up, Jacob had little more to say. He had shared what he felt was important: his gratitude, his contentment, and the simple satisfaction of having a safe place to call home.



## Andrew's Story

Age: 43, Melville Place

Andrew's story began five years ago when he moved into his current unit, seeking stability and proximity to his ailing father. He has stayed in this unit the entire time, finding solace in its security and convenience, especially in being close to his dad. This move was a significant shift from his past life, marked by transient living arrangements and personal challenges.

Before settling here, Andrew had lived with friends and in a unit in Labrador. His previous home life was unstable, characterised by frequent changes in roommates and a series of personal crises, including two major relationship breakups. The decision to move was driven by the need for a more secure environment for his daughter and to be closer to his father, whose health was declining.

Living in his current unit has been a mixed experience. On one hand, the location allows him to be near his father, which is a significant benefit given his father's deteriorating health. On the other hand, Andrew struggles with some aspects of his current living situation. The long and unreliable bus journeys to Southport, where his friends reside, make it difficult for him to maintain his social connections. He also finds the presence of substance abuse issues among some residents and the presence of problematic individuals challenging.

Despite these issues, Andrew has made the most of his living situation. He notes that the unit is reasonably priced compared to the rising rental rates elsewhere, though he is concerned about future rent increases and their impact on his disability pension. He has also expressed frustration with the management's handling of rent adjustments and the lack of additional support or amenities in the complex, like a pool or more community activities.

Andrew's experience reflects the positive and negative aspects of living in a complex where security and proximity to loved ones are crucial in his daily life. While he has found a degree of stability and affordability, he remains concerned about future challenges related to his father's passing and the ongoing issues with the living environment.

In his reflections, Andrew also shares his observations about why some residents might avoid participating in surveys or interviews. He speculates that many have reasons to keep their situations private, perhaps due to personal issues or financial constraints. Despite these challenges, Andrew remains hopeful about the future and continues to navigate his circumstances with resilience and a pragmatic approach.



## Jennifer's story

Age: 79, Nowell B Taylor House

After adjusting to the close living conditions, Jennifer lives happily at Nowell B Taylor House. She appreciates the security and convenience of nearby shops and transportation and enjoys socialising with other residents. Although there were past issues with troublesome neighbours, those have been resolved. Jennifer values her sense of community and involvement in activities, though she wishes more residents participated. Before moving in, she experienced instability after her husband's passing. Significant changes include getting a cat and receiving counselling. Volunteering and forming relationships with the staff have also enriched her experience.

## Rose's story

Age: 83, Nowell B. Taylor House

Rose has lived at Nowell B Taylor House for 12 years. Here is her story in her own words.

"When I first moved here, four or five units were available. The manager before Janine let me choose, which was nice. There was one on the fourth floor and one on the third, each unique, but I chose this one because I love gardening. You must see my garden before you leave.

I'm glad I picked this unit, designed for handicapped residents with a seat in the shower and lower fittings. It's more spacious too, but I chose it for the garden and have never regretted it.

I'm very happy here because I can afford it, which is crucial now with high prices. It's safe, and I can leave and know someone will look after things. That's everything I need.

The best part of living here is the low rent, even though it might sound trivial. It's important. I can't think of anything I dislike about living here. It's convenient and suits me perfectly. I've adapted to it, or it to me.

Responding to "What has been the most significant change in your life since living here?"

"Security is the biggest change, especially as you get older. I do not often admit it, but security is a big concern. Many older adults are still in rented houses without security, worried every time their lease expires. Yes, you worry a lot."

## Dolly's Story

Age: 71, Nowell B Taylor House

Dolly has been residing in a one-bedroom unit at Nowell B Taylor House for nearly eight years. She feels profoundly safe and grateful for her home, particularly given her financial constraints on an aged pension. She appreciates the stability and security provided by the Y, which she believes she would struggle to afford elsewhere. Despite some minor inconveniences, such as the unit's small size and lack of natural sunlight due to its position, she finds the benefits of her current home outweigh these drawbacks.

She highlighted that living in this complex gives her a strong sense of safety, a fundamental improvement from her previous living situation. Before moving here, she lived with her son in a duplex in Nerang until financial difficulties and health concerns prompted their move. She found it challenging to cope with rising rent and a sleepwalking condition, which made a single-story unit more desirable.

Regarding the complex's community life, Dolly reminisced about past social events, like barbecues, which were less frequent recently. She valued these gatherings for connecting with others, though health issues sometimes prevented her from attending.

When asked about the future, Dolly expressed no intention of moving, citing her current residence's stability and economic practicality. She felt fortunate to have secured her unit quickly through government housing and considered herself lucky compared to other applicants.

In closing, she expressed a desire for a support animal, recognising the potential benefits of companionship and motivation to go outside despite the associated costs and practical challenges. Overall, she is pleased with her current living situation, feels well-informed by the housing management, and appreciates the complex's supportive environment.



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**YMCA AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

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