

# My Housing Options Guide

For organisations and workers supporting people with disability

Version 1.12



## Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands on which we meet. We pay our respects to the Elders – past and present – and acknowledge the important role Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people continue to play within the community.

## Contributors

Queenslanders with Disability Network (QDN) would like to acknowledge the time, expertise, experience and insights that QDN housing champions, along with housing and disability support organisational representatives, shared in the development of the *My Housing Options Toolkit*, including QDN Housing Champions:

- Karin Swift
- Uncle Willie Prince
- Nigel Webb
- Grant Higham

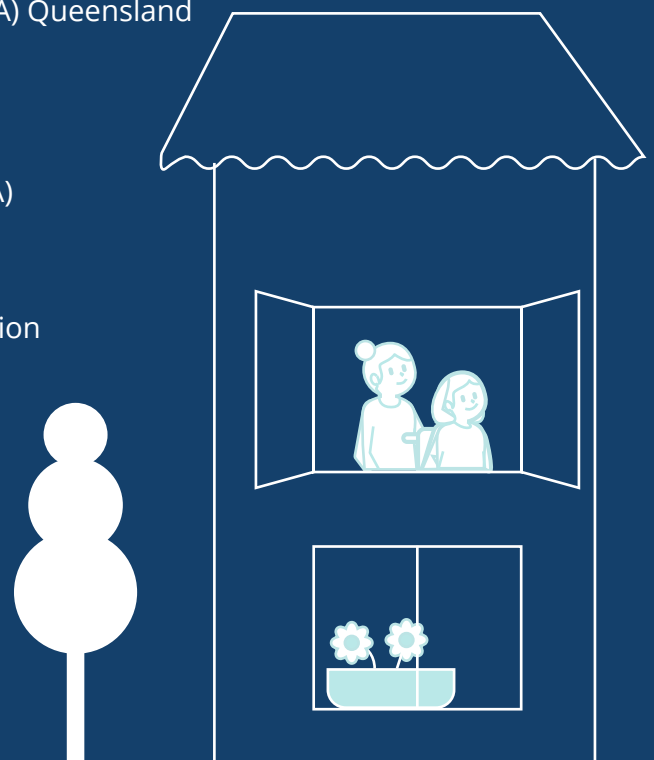
### Remembering Gary Matthews:

We respectfully honour Gary Matthews, who was the Deputy-Chair of QDN and a long-term Housing Champion. Gary worked hard to ensure people with disabilities have safe, affordable and accessible homes of their choice. Sadly, Gary passed away during the development of this resource. We send our respects to his family and friends.

### Organisational representatives:

- QShelter
- Community Housing Industry Association (CHIA) Queensland
- Anuha
- Youngcare
- The Office of the Public Guardian
- The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA)
- Tenants Queensland
- Residential Tenancies Authority
- Supported Accommodation Providers Association
- Queensland Council of Social Services
- Community Living Association
- Bric Housing
- Communify
- Micah Projects

The *My Housing Options Toolkit* is funded by the Queensland Government.



# Preface

Queenslanders with Disability Network (QDN) is committed to supporting people with disability to access safe, suitable, and sustainable housing. The **My Housing Options Toolkit** provides resources for informed, person-centred housing conversations.

The Toolkit includes:



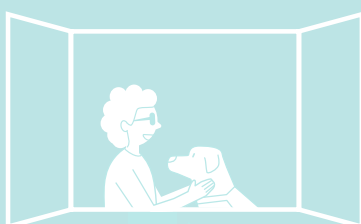
A **Guide** for workers and support people to help deliver tailored, person-centred support.



A **Workbook** and resources for people with disability to explore their housing needs and goals.

Building on QDN's earlier work, including the 2018 My Housing Matters and the 2019 My Housing Options Resource, this updated version was co-designed in 2024–2025 with people with lived experience and sector representatives. Engagement included statewide roundtables, workshops, and testing with 14 housing providers and 16 community members.

While designed as a general resource, this resource could be expanded in the future to meet the specific needs of people with disability including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, culturally and linguistically diverse people and LGBTQI+. We thank the Housing Champions and all contributors whose input shaped this inclusive Toolkit.



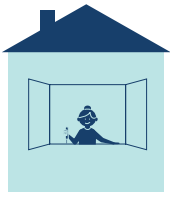


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## SECTION 1

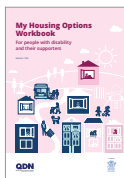


# My Housing Options Toolkit: What is in it?

The **My Housing Options Toolkit** encompasses a range of hard copy and online information and resources, including stories and examples of real people who have found housing that works for them. Including:



**My Housing Options Guide:** developed for housing and disability support providers/workers to support a person with disability completing the My Housing Options Workbook and use the different resources in the broader Toolkit.



**My Housing Options Workbook:** developed for people with disability, their families and supporters to assist exploring housing options and to plan and implement the person's preferred housing choice.

The workbook is built around three building blocks, which are colour coded to provide a visual guide, and includes five worksheets, and a list of helpful contacts and organisations.



## Building block 1

### Making a start - my home now

- Worksheet 1: My housing now



## Building block 2

### My home - my needs and what matters to me

- Worksheet 2: My housing needs and what I want
- Worksheet 3: Exploring my support needs



## Building block 3

### Planning for my future home

- Worksheet 4: Planning my budget
- Worksheet 5: My longer-term housing plan and goals

**Other resources:** Within the Toolkit is a suite of resources to assist people to work through the key building blocks and different worksheets.

The resources use a range of different graphics and pictures to engage with people's different needs for accessing and processing information. They include:



**Thinking about my housing needs:** A visual tool to assist thinking and planning around housing options.



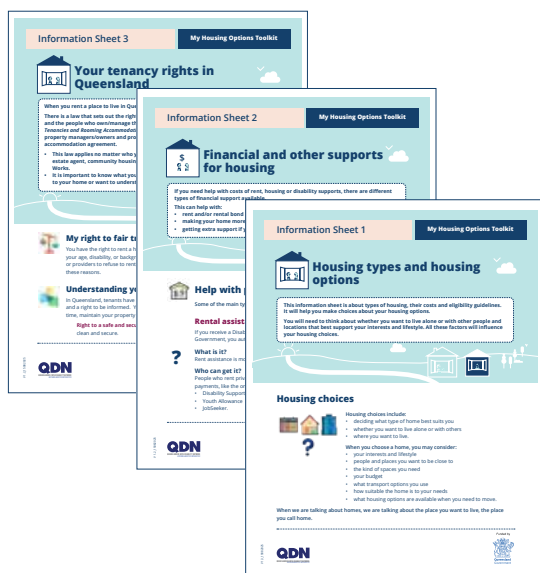
**My housing plan:** To document your housing goal/s and plan now and/or into the future.



**My housing journey digital stories:** Videos about people with disability and their experiences using the Toolkit and their housing options.



**Building foundations activity:** An activity that helps people explore housing options using visual cards.



**3 easy-to-read information sheets:** Provide information to help someone work through the worksheets, including:

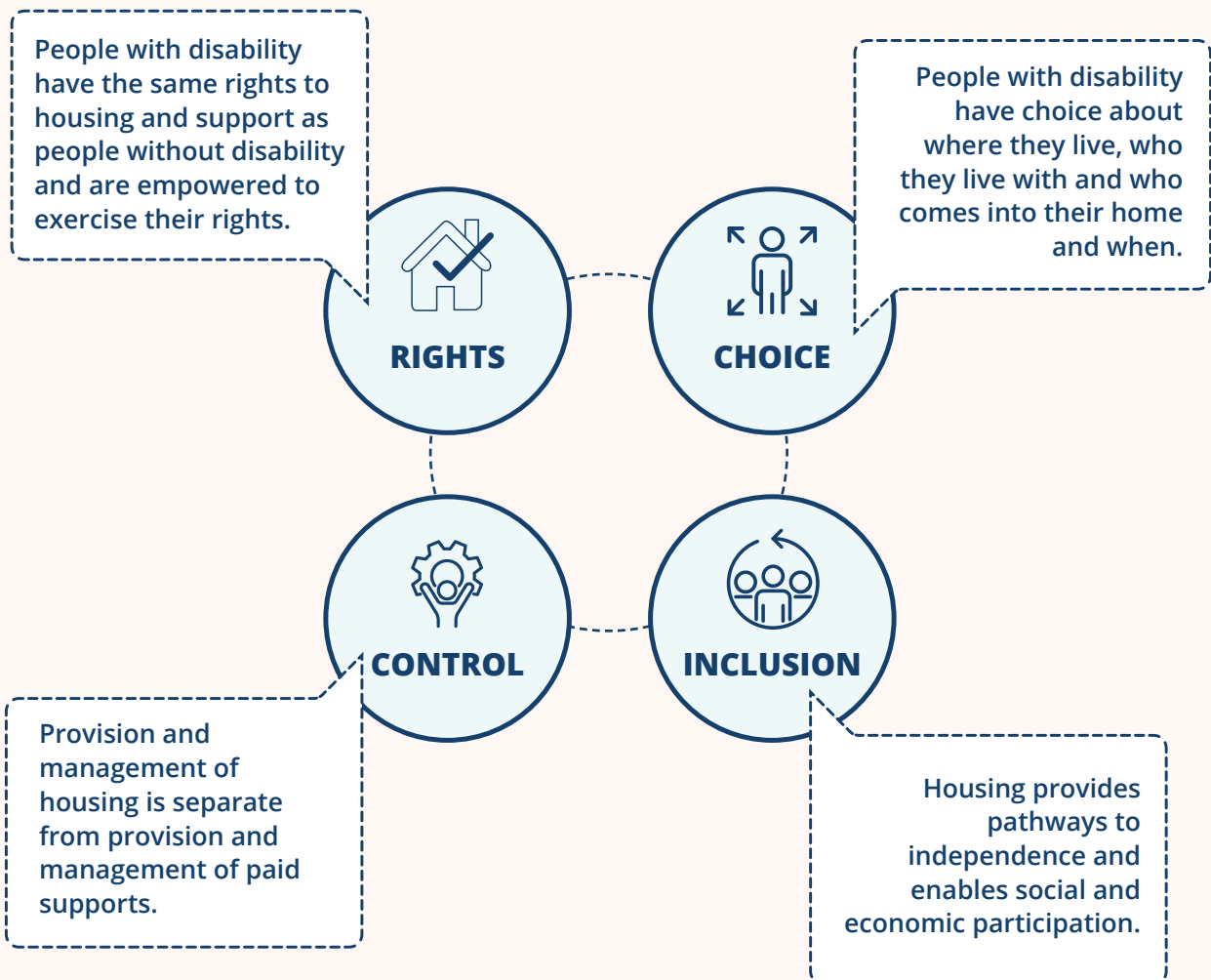
- Information sheet 1 - Different housing types and housing options
- Information sheet 2 - Financial and other supports for housing
- Information sheet 3 - Your tenancy rights in Queensland.



## Frameworks and principles which underpin this work

This **Guide** and the **My Housing Options Toolkit** is grounded in rights-based, person-centred, and inclusive frameworks including the social model of disability that empower people with disability to make informed housing choices, that recognise and uphold the rights, needs, and aspirations of people with disability.

The **Toolkit** is underpinned by the four housing principles for inclusive communities - [www.housing.qld.gov.au/initiatives/housing-principles-inclusive-communities](http://www.housing.qld.gov.au/initiatives/housing-principles-inclusive-communities).



## SECTION 2



## Working with the person – making a start

Below outlines how to work with someone to use the **Toolkit**, from how to start, what to think about, and how to tailor support depending on their stage in the housing journey.

In this Guide, we talk about the role of workers who support people with disability as person-centred conversation partners.

A person-centred conversation partner is someone who facilitates discussions that are led by the individual's voice, choices, and values. This means helping people make informed decisions about their housing by creating the right conditions for meaningful, person-led conversations.

The following information outlines things to think about in your role as a person-centred conversation partner.

### 1. When to use the Toolkit

The **Toolkit** can be introduced at different stages in a person's housing journey:



#### Early exploration

When a person is starting to think about where and how they might want to live in the future.



#### Making a change

When preparing for a move or transitioning to a new housing situation.



#### Responding to challenges

When facing issues such as unsuitable housing, lack of accessibility, or tenancy problems.

Timing should align with the person's readiness and interest in discussing housing. Early use is encouraged where possible, allowing time to plan for change and explore options.



#### Practical tip

- **Assess readiness:** Determine if the person is ready to actively engage in discussions about their housing needs.
- **Start early for long-term planning:** Encourage early use if the person is thinking about housing for the future, allowing them time to explore all options.

#### Example

If a person is living at home with family and wants to plan for future independence, the Workbook can help them start mapping out what they need to achieve that goal.

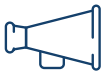


## 2. Steps to begin

Starting the process involves creating a supportive environment where the person feels comfortable exploring their housing options.



**Introduce the My Housing Options Workbook and Resources:** Explain what the **My Housing Options Workbook** is and how it can help guide housing decisions. Discuss the topics it covers, such as identifying housing preferences, exploring support needs, and understanding available housing options.



**Set the tone:** Explain it is a flexible tool designed to help the person reflect on their goals and needs. It's not about finding immediate answers but about exploring possibilities at the person's pace.



### Practical tip

**Begin by asking open-ended questions, such as, "When you think about where you will live in the future... what does that look like and where?"**

## 3. Stages of the housing journey

Each person is at a different stage in their housing journey. Here's how to use the **Toolkit** to meet people where they are at:



### A. Early exploration

When a person is beginning to think about their future housing, focus on:

- understanding what is important in a home (location, accessibility, independence)
- understanding personal and community interests
- exploring different housing types
- raising awareness of available supports.



#### Questions to explore:

- What do you like about your housing now? What would you change?
- Where would you like to live—near family, friends, or in a different area?
- What do you want to achieve by living independently?
- What interests do you have?



### Useful resources

- **Considering the type of house the person would like to live in –**  
Workbook: Worksheet 1 & 2
- **Considering where the house is best located based on preference –**  
Workbook: Worksheet 1 & 3
- **For budget planning and understanding available supports (e.g. NDIS funding, informal supports) –** Workbook: Worksheet 4
- **Looking at longer-term goals depending on the person's readiness –**  
Workbook: Worksheet 5



**Support needed:** At this stage, the person may need more information about different housing approaches and support options. For example, explaining renting compared to social housing and support provided through the National Disability Insurance or the Queensland Community Support Scheme.



### Practical tip

Use the Toolkit's Workbook and digital stories to educate the person about housing possibilities they might not be familiar with. Help them compare the pros and cons of different options based on their goals.



## B. Preparing to move

For someone preparing for a move or a significant housing change, the **Toolkit** and resources can help with decision-making and planning.

This can help people preparing for a housing transition to:

- assess what support they will need to live independently
- explore practical steps—how to apply for housing, plan a move, or request modifications
- discuss tenancy rights and service options.

**Questions to explore:**

- What kind of support do you need to maintain your independence?
- Do you need any specific modifications in your home, like grab rails or step-free access?
- How do you feel about sharing a living space with others?

**Useful resources**

- **Housing planning tools – The Workbook**
- **Exploring housing options in detail – Digital stories, resource directory**
- **Looking at longer term housing goals – Workbook: Worksheet 5**



**Support needed:** At this stage, the person may need more detailed help with comparing housing options, understanding financial implications, and coordinating with housing providers.

**Practical tip**

**Work through the Workbook, helping the person set clear action steps for their move. Assist with practical tasks like reviewing tenancy agreements or applying for housing support.**

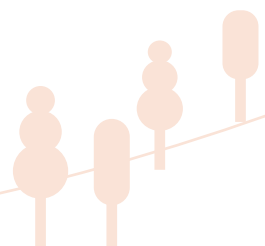


## C. Facing current housing challenges

For someone facing challenges in their current housing (e.g. inadequate support, inaccessible housing), the **Toolkit** can help identify issues and explore solutions.

It can help when someone is experiencing issues in their current home to:

- identify what is not working
- explore whether changes can be made (e.g. home modifications)
- support the person to find and consider alternatives.





### Questions to explore:

- What isn't working about your current housing situation?
- What changes would improve your living conditions?
- What support do you need to feel safe and comfortable?



### Useful resources

- **Evaluating current housing – Workbook:**  
Worksheet 1 and Information sheets 1 & 3
- **Identifying support and modification needs** – Information sheet 3
- **Exploring alternative housing options resource** – Contact directory



**Support needed:** The person may need help with accessing funding for home modifications, exploring housing alternatives, or advocating for their rights as a tenant.



### Practical tip

**Use the Toolkit resources to document current issues and work through potential solutions. Help the person navigate support services, such as the NDIS, to secure the necessary modifications or funding.**



## 4. Ideas to support good engagement



### A. Pace and engagement

Support the person to move through the **Workbook** and resources at their own pace. Some may need more time to reflect, while others may want to dive straight into planning. The process needs to be empowering and not rushed.



### B. Adapt the workbook to individual needs

Some people may benefit from additional support in understanding the **Workbook's** content such as the building foundations pictorial board activity. Use Easy English, visual aids, or assistive technology to make the process more accessible. Consider breaking down complex sections into manageable steps.



### C. Regular check-ins and ongoing conversations

Housing planning is not one-off. Revisit the **Workbook** regularly, reflect on changes in the person's situation, and update plans accordingly. Regularly check in with them as they work through the **Toolkit** resources. This allows for reflection, reassessment of goals, and adjusting plans as needed. Housing decisions often take time, and regular follow-ups ensure ongoing support.



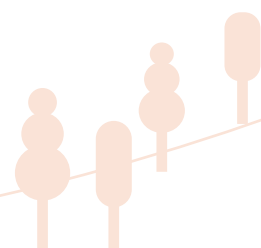
### D. Supporting decision-making and independence

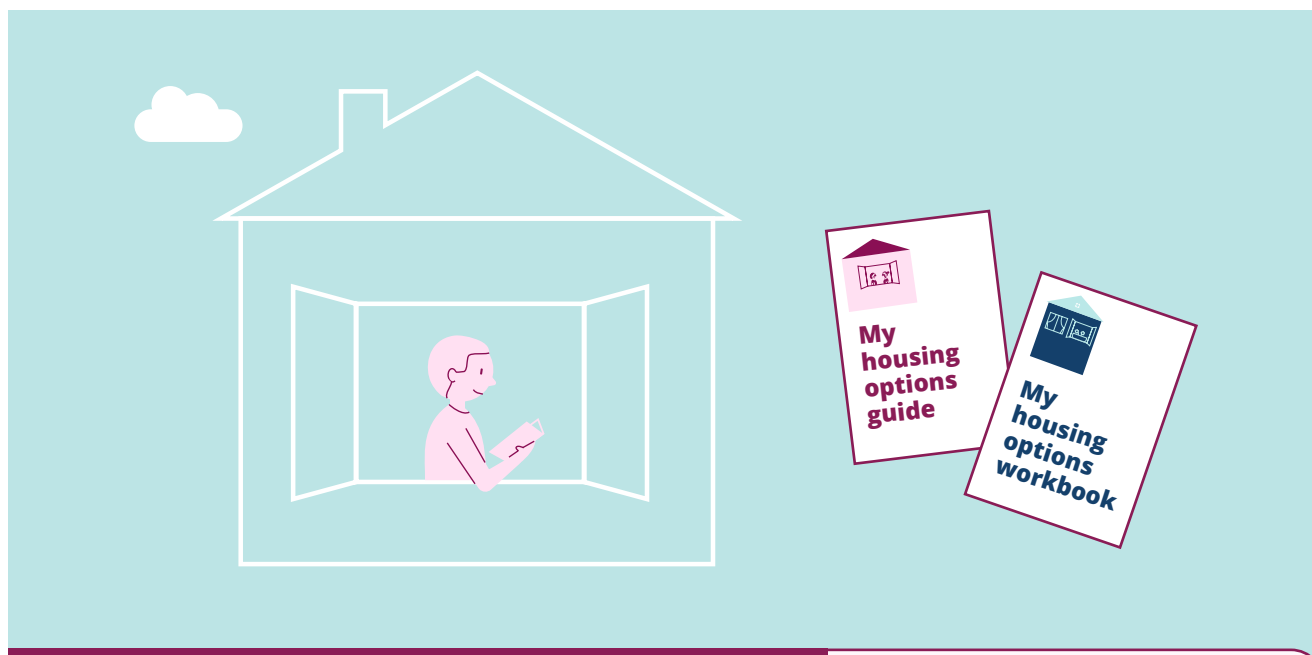
Throughout the process, ensure that the person feels empowered to make their own decisions. Use the **Toolkit** resources for guiding decision-making and allow the person to take ownership of their housing journey.



#### Practical tip

Reinforce the person's autonomy by asking, "What feels right for you?" and "How can I support you to achieve this goal?"





### Example 1: Alex finds a housing solution

Alex, who has an intellectual disability, wants a new home but cannot find the perfect one yet. A housing worker helps Alex find a temporary home that meets his basic needs.

Together, they use the **My Housing Options Guide** and **Workbook** to inform and support their plan to:

- Think about Alex's interest and the things he likes to do.
- Think about what Alex wants in a home – design, location, community connections.
- Keep looking for the ideal home – exploring housing models that align with Alex's preferences.
- Set short-term achievable goals to ensure safety and comfort.
- Develop a long-term plan about Alex's 'forever' home.

This plan helps Alex feel secure now, and hopeful, as he has a plan to search for a long-term solution.



## 5. Using the worksheets

Below are helpful tips for supporting a person through exploring the five worksheets in the **My Housing Options Workbook**.

The five worksheets can be used flexibly depending on where the person is in their housing journey.

### Worksheet 1: My housing now (Building block 1)

Worksheet 1 helps the person reflect on their current living situation. It prompts discussion about what is working, what is not working, and what they would like to be different in the future. It supports early thinking around personal housing values and priorities.



#### Conversation partner tips:

- What do you like about your house now?
- What do you like about the home you live in?
- What don't you like about your home now?
- If you could change anything, what would you like to change?

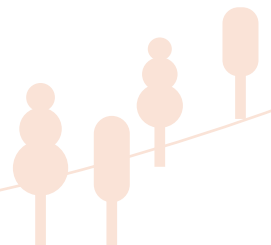
### Worksheet 2: My housing needs and what I want (Building block 2)

Worksheet 2 encourages the person to describe their ideal housing situation. It includes preferences about housing type, location, living arrangements, accessibility needs, and proximity to services and supports. This helps to clarify what a good housing match looks like for them.



#### Conversation partner tips:

- What does your ideal home look like?
- Where do you want to live? Have you thought about where the house would be located?
- How close do you want to be to family, friends, other social networks and services?
- What does accessibility mean for you?
- Do you want to live alone or with others?





## Worksheet 3: Exploring my support needs (Building block 2)

Worksheet 3 assists the person to identify the supports they require to live safely and independently. It includes consideration of personal care, household tasks, budgeting, transport, and community access. It also prompts reflection on current supports (formal and informal) and whether these may need to change in a new housing arrangement.



### Conversation partner tips:

- What help do you need to live independently?
- Do you want assistance to choose who provides your support?
- Would you like to share support with others, or have your own?
- How might your support needs change in the future?



## Worksheet 4: Planning my budget (Building block 3)

Worksheet 4 helps the person consider how they will afford and sustain their housing. It supports budgeting around rent or mortgage payments, identifying income sources, and exploring eligibility for financial supports. This step is essential to match housing preferences with financial reality.



### Conversation partner tips:

- What budgeting plans should we make?
- How will you cover your housing costs



## Worksheet 5: My longer-term housing plan and goals (Building block 3)

Worksheet 5 focuses on future planning. It helps the person consider how long they want to stay in their next home, whether their needs may change over time, and what supports, or home modifications might be needed in the future. It encourages setting long-term housing goals and thinking about how to build stability.



### Conversation partner tips:

- What are your long-term housing goals?
- How will your needs change over time?
- What kind of stability do you want in housing?
- How can your housing support your goals?



### Practical tip

The completed worksheets support planning housing applications, NDIS planning, or tenancy transitions. They are also a useful tool for revisiting goals and tracking progress over time.





## Resources to support person-centred conversations

In using this Guide as a conversation partner in your role as a housing or disability support worker, family or support person, it is important to actively support the person to explore and pursue their housing goals in a way that is inclusive, respectful and empowering.

The following resources provide practical strategies and considerations to support these conversations.

Before engaging in these conversations, consider the following key areas:

- managing personal conflicts and working in the person's best interest
- organisations that can assist with conflict resolution
- addressing conflicts that may arise in your role as a housing or service provider
- reflecting on personal values, assumptions, and beliefs, and understanding the impact of bias and inclusion
- applying the four housing principles in practice.

### What is a person-centred conversation?

A person-centred conversation:

- helps the person say what they want and make their own choices
- focuses on the person's goals, needs and interests
- respects the person's right to make decisions
- works together to find the best solution for the person.

### Why are person-centred conversations important?

Person-centred conversations give people with disability the power to:

- make informed decisions about their housing
- choose a home that matches their needs and values
- lead conversations about their personal interests and things they like to do
- live more independently and be part of the community.

### How to have a person-centred conversation:



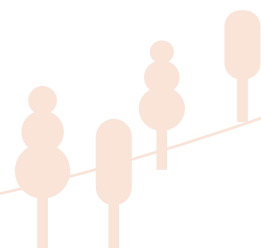
- **Create a safe space:**

Make sure the person feels comfortable. Ask if they need support to communicate, like Easy English or visual aids.



- **Focus on the person's goals:**

Ask questions about what the person wants in a home. For example, What does your ideal home look like?





- **Listen carefully:**

Repeat back what the person says to show you understand. This helps make sure the conversation is about their needs.



- **Provide information:**

Explain housing options clearly. Break information into small parts and ask if they have any questions.



- **Respect their choices:**

Support the person's right to make their own decisions, even if others don't agree.



- **Offer ongoing support:**

Be there for follow-up conversations and help the person as they make their decisions.



- **Celebrate success:**

Acknowledge the person's progress and achievements along the way.

### Examples of person-centred conversations

Consider starting the conversation by getting to know the person. What are their interests? What skills do they have? What do they like to spend time doing? Who do they like to spend time with? This information is as valuable in understanding a person's housing needs and what additional spaces, a person may need to be able to access either at home or in the community.

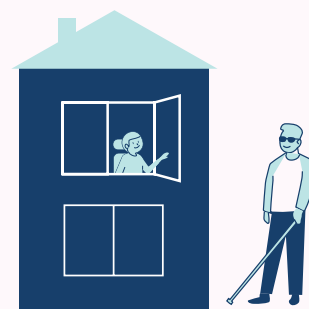
The following examples show how person-centred conversations can help people with disability make housing decisions, gain independence, and solve problems with the support of housing providers and workers.

#### Example 1: Finding housing that fits goals

**Emma's story:** Emma has a neurological disability and wants to move out of her parents' house to live on her own. She needs an accessible home but still wants her independence. Emma talks with a housing provider about her needs.

They talk about what Emma's ideal home would look like.

Emma wants a home that's easy to get around in her wheelchair and close to her work and public transport. The housing provider listens to her needs and agrees to find an apartment that is accessible and near her work. They also talk about possible changes, like ramps and grab rails, to make the home more comfortable for Emma.



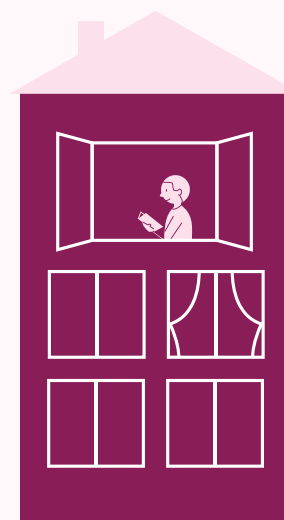
## Example 2: Gaining more independence

**Juan's story:** Juan has an intellectual disability and currently lives in a boarding house where he shares a room and bathroom with another person and communal living space with 20 other residents. He wants to live more independently but still needs help with some tasks like personal care, cooking and cleaning. Juan talks with the facility manager about his next steps.

Juan explains that he wants his own place but still needs some support. The facility manager suggests Juan talk with NDIS about options for funded supports through the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), where Juan can live on his own and have support workers come when he needs help. The manager also suggests Juan apply for a social housing unit.

Juan and the manager work together to develop a plan, including completing NDIS and housing applications which are successful. The manager also makes sure Juan understands current wait-times for housing, and ways he can use his NDIS supports doing things in the community whilst waiting. This keeps Juan's housing expectations realistic and Juan hopeful.

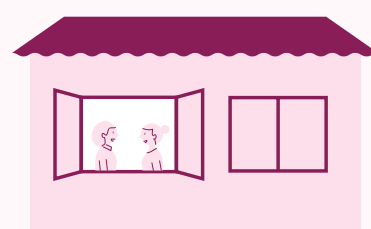
Juan is excited to have more control over his life and moving towards housing of his choice — his "forever" home.

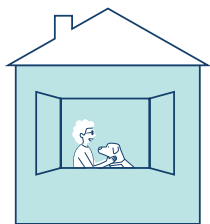


## Example 3: Solving problems to stay in a home

**Mary's story:** Mary has a psychosocial disability and has been living in a rental home for years. She receives low level NDIS supports to participate as an active member in her community. Mary's mental health has recently worsened, significantly impacting her functioning, including her ability to undertake activities of daily living and maintaining her tenancy. As such, she is now finding it more difficult to manage at home with the current level of support she has. Mary now needs additional supports around medication management, meal preparation and budgeting. Mary has a conversation with her support coordinator and support worker about making these changes.

Mary is worried about the costs of increasing her support services, but her support coordinator explains that she can get increased funding through the NDIS to cover the additional supports. Supported by reports from Mary's mental health team, the support coordinator submits a change of circumstances application to the NDIA. This requested the additional NDIS funding so Mary can continue to live safely and independently.





## Resource 1:

# Managing conflicts and working in the person's best interest

Conflicts may arise between the person with disability and their family, support network, or service providers. Sometimes this might mean you see a conflict or disagreement about what is best for the person. It is important you support the person with disability in a fair and ethical way. This includes thinking about whose interests you are here to serve.

Here are some ways to manage conflicts if they arise:

### 1. Understand what the person wants

The first step is to clearly understand what the person with disability wants. Ask them about their interests, goals, preferences, and concerns.



**Tip:** Ask questions like, What is most important to you in this situation?

#### Example

Sarah, you have mentioned you want to live independently. Can you explain what that looks like for you?

### 2. Listen to others' concerns

While the person's wishes are most important, sometimes it is also good to listen to the concerns of family, the person's support network, formal substitute decision makers and/or support providers. There may be other times when this isn't appropriate. Their input should not take away from the person's choices.



**Tip:** Use respectful language that shows you understand everyone's concerns but keep the focus on the person.

#### Example

I hear that you are worried about John living on his own, but we need to also focus on what John wants for his future.

### 3. Find a compromise

Sometimes you can find a solution that is a 'win-win' for the person and the other parties involved. Work together to find a solution that respects the person's choices while considering practical concerns.



**Tip:** Ask, how can we find a solution that works for everyone, while still respecting the person's choice?

#### Example

Can Alex live on his own if we secure a support worker who can do drop in support with him each day and help with his shopping and meals?

### 4. Respect the person's choice

If no compromise is possible, the person's choice should be respected. If their decision is safe, a person's right to be supported in their decision-making and to make their own choices must come first.



**Tip:** Remind everyone that the final decision centres around the person with disability.

#### Example

I understand your concerns, but it's important that we respect Sarah's decision to live on her own and support her to achieve this. Let's work through the My Housing Options workbook with her to identify and develop a plan around practical housing and support options.

### 5. Keep talking

Conflict management might not be solved in just one meeting. Be prepared for more discussions and check in with the person regularly to make sure their needs are being met.



**Tip:** Schedule follow-up discussions to keep the process going.

### Organisations that can help manage conflicts

If there is a conflict between a person with disability, their family, support network, formal substitute decision maker and/or support provider, these organisations can help:

#### Disability advocacy organisations:

These services support the rights of people with disability.

##### Example

Disability Advocacy Pathways provides a state-wide advice and referral service for people with disability. Pathways can also link people with regional and specialist individual disability advocacy support (for example, First Nations peoples, culturally and linguistically diverse people, children, and young people aged 0-18 years). Visit: [www.disabilitypathways.org.au](http://www.disabilitypathways.org.au).

#### Legal Services:

Community Legal Centres provide free advice about disability rights and family conflicts.

##### Example

Basic Rights Queensland provides state-wide legal and advocacy services, including advice around Social Security (Centrelink/employment services), disability discrimination and women in the workplace matters. Visit [www.brq.org.au](http://www.brq.org.au).

#### Mediation Services:

Mediation services such as community mediation services and family relationship centres can help families work through disagreements in a fair way.

##### Example

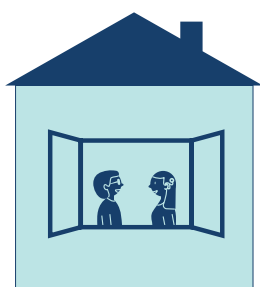
Uniting Care Mediation Services provides state-wide mediation services covering family, neighbourhood, and business disputes. Visit <https://www.unitingcareqld.com.au/services-and-support/family-support/family-law-services/unitingcare-mediation-services>

#### Crisis Supports:

These organisations offer support during tough times.

##### Example

Lifeline offers state-wide, 24-hour crisis support, including telephone, SMS, and online chat services. Visit [www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au).



## Resource 2:

# Managing conflicts in the context of being a provider of housing

Conflicts can also happen with services providing housing and may be because the service's goals do not match the person's needs. Here is how to manage these situations:

### 1. Put the person's needs first

Always focus on what is best for the person with disability, not what's best for the family/ support network/substitute decision maker or is easiest for the housing service.



**Tip:** Ask, is this decision in the person's best interest?

### 2. Be honest about limits

If there are limits (like money or housing availability), be open and honest with the person with disability and their family.



**Tip:** Say, we understand your needs, but here are the options we can offer at this time.

### 3. Don't push the person with disability into unsuitable housing

Do not pressure someone to take housing that does not meet their needs just to fill a vacancy.



**Tip:** Make sure the person with disability knows you are trying to find the best option for them.

#### **4. Link the person with disability with other independent advice and support**

When matters are complex it is helpful to link the person with disability and/or their family/ caregivers with other independent organisations that may contribute extra information, ideas and perspectives to support the person's decision making (refer to the organisations on page 22).



**Tip:** Support the person to connect with disability with disability advocacy, legal, mediation or crisis support organisations outside the housing service to independently assist and support them.

#### **5. Review policies regularly**

Check your housing service's policies to make sure they focus on the person's wellbeing.



**Tip:** Regularly review your policies to see if they need updating. Ensure organisational policies are accessible for people with diverse disability and communication needs, including complaints processes.

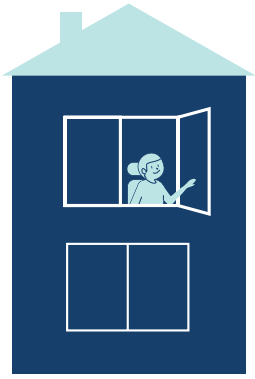
#### **6. Make ethical decisions**

When conflicts happen, focus on the person's rights and wellbeing.



**Tip:** Ask, what is the best decision for the person with disability, not for our organisation or for other parties?





## Resource 3:

# Understanding individual values, assumptions and beliefs and how they impact on practice

Everyone has different ideas and different things that they see as important in their place to call home. Through the co-design process, as part of developing *Partnering for inclusive housing with Queenslanders with disability 2024 - 2027* ([https://www.housing.qld.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0028/61957/partnering-for-inclusive-housing-with-queenslanders-with-disability-2024-2027.pdf](https://www.housing.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0028/61957/partnering-for-inclusive-housing-with-queenslanders-with-disability-2024-2027.pdf)), people with disability shared what is important to them and having ordinary homes in ordinary places.

When asked about what home means to people, there were a variety of different things.... these included:

Where I choose where to live, how to live and with whom to live.

Where I can have a cat, even if support staff don't like them.

Where I can trust others and experience intimacy and friendship.

It is my home, not a workplace for paid staff. Having dinner when I'm hungry and going to bed when I'm tired.



**Reference:** Our co-design journey: what 'home' means to people with disability

[https://www.housing.qld.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0027/61956/our-co-design-journey-what-home-means-to-people-with-disability.pdf](https://www.housing.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0027/61956/our-co-design-journey-what-home-means-to-people-with-disability.pdf)

These are important considerations as we reflect on how our individual values, assumptions, and beliefs as workers influence our practice.

## Social model of disability, bias, and inclusion

Sometimes conflicts arise related to underlying values, assumptions and beliefs people may hold at conscious or unconscious levels, about the strengths and abilities of people with disability. These are explored below along with models and approaches that support person-centred conversations.

The **Social Model of Disability** explains that disability is not caused by a person's condition but by barriers in society. These barriers include:

- **Environmental:** Buildings or transport that are not accessible
- **Attitudinal:** Negative stereotypes about people with disability
- **Organisational:** Policies that don't meet the needs of people with disability.

By removing these barriers, society can help people with disability participate fully, be independent, and feel included.

### **Conscious and unconscious bias:**

- **Conscious** (explicit) bias is when people are aware of their unfair beliefs or actions, like choosing not to hire someone with disability on purpose.
- **Unconscious** (implicit) bias happens without people realising it, like assuming someone with disability cannot do a task, even without proof.

Bias can affect many areas including:

- Hiring decisions
- Interactions at work
- School opportunities
- Healthcare treatment.

Recognising and addressing both types of bias helps create fairer, more inclusive spaces.

## **Questions to think about**

It is important to reflect on our own biases. Ask yourself these questions to help make better decisions:

- Do I treat people differently based on how they look or where they come from?
- Do I listen to some people more than others during decision-making? For example, focusing upon family/substitute decision maker needs, rather than the person's stated preferences and choice.
- Do I treat people with disability differently without meaning to? For example, assuming a person has limited capacity to make decisions, including more complex ones, because they have an intellectual disability.
- Do I try to include different points of view when making decisions? For example, including the person's family/support network and interested parties in discussions with the person, with their agreement, around options and solutions.

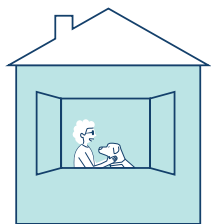
**Inclusion:** Inclusion means everyone, regardless of disability or background, has the chance to take part in society. It focuses on removing barriers so that everyone feels welcome, supported, and valued. Key ideas include:

- **Equity:** Giving people the support they need, not just equal resources.
- **Universal design:** Creating buildings, services and products that work for everyone.
- **Representation:** Ensuring people with disability are 'at the table', included in discussions around options and have a voice in decisions.
- **Active participation:** Encouraging involvement in education, work, and social activities.

Inclusion helps create a world where everyone can contribute and feel valued.

Managing conflicts means identifying any conscious or unconscious biases you or others may hold around the person and their strengths and abilities, actively listening to what the person with disability wants, respecting others' concerns, and finding fair solutions that work in the person's best interests.

Always put the person's needs first and focus on making ethical, person-centred decisions.



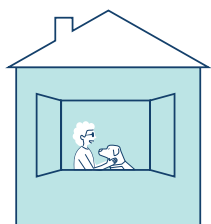
## Resource 4:

# Others to include in person-centred conversations

When you talk about the needs and wishes of a person with disability, it's important to include the right people in the conversation, so they can help support the person in making decisions through supported decision making. It is important to know if someone has a person or statutory representative formally appointed as their substitute decision maker and how they are involved. Options include:

1. **Office of the Public Guardian (OPG):** May need to be involved if you think there are issues about the person's ability to make decisions or about their rights and wellbeing. If formally appointed as the decision maker regarding a person's housing and support choices OPG needs to be actively involved.
2. **Public Trustee:** May help if there are concerns about managing the person's money or property. If formally appointed to act in this role the Public Trustee needs to be involved.
3. **Family members and carers:** Often know the person's needs and wishes very well. Their opinions are important to help make good decisions. Keep in mind that sometimes families/carers have differing opinions and ideas to the person as to what is in their best interest.
4. **Advocate:** If the person has an advocate, they can help make sure the person's voice is heard and that their rights are respected.
5. **Support Coordinators/case managers:** Can help bring everyone together and make sure the person's goals are achieved.
6. **Disability and community support organisations:** Can deliver a range of personal care, home support, community participation, and health and well-being services that may be key to sustaining the person's housing. Generally, organisations are funded to deliver services. Alternatively, some organisations may deliver unfunded support services or a combination of funded and unfunded supports, with volunteers delivering some or all service components.

By including all the right people, you can make better decisions that respect the person's rights and help them live more independently.



## Resource 5: Contact directory

### Where to go for more information about housing options

This resource pack supports people with disability, their families, and support providers to find the right housing and assistance. It includes information on support services, financial help, and advocacy, whether you're starting out or need help with your current housing situation.

#### Government Resources

- **NDIS (National Disability Insurance Scheme):** Helps pay for accessible housing (Specialist Disability Accommodation – SDA) and support services, like home modifications, depending upon eligibility. Visit [www.ndis.gov.au](http://www.ndis.gov.au) or call 1800 800 110.
- **National Injury Insurance Scheme Queensland (NIISQ):** Provides necessary and reasonable treatment, care and support to people who have serious injury and ongoing impairments due to a motor vehicle accident after July 1, 2016. Visit [www.niis.qld.gov.au](http://www.niis.qld.gov.au) or call 1300 607 566.
- **Queensland Community Support Scheme (QCSS):** Provides low intensity, time limited supports to assist people not eligible for the NDIS to live independently, increase social connections and participate in the community. Visit [www.serviceavailabilityregister.com.au](http://www.serviceavailabilityregister.com.au) or call 1800 600 300.
- **Queensland Department of Housing and Public Works:** Provides social housing, emergency housing, and rental assistance. Visit [www.qld.gov.au/housing](http://www.qld.gov.au/housing) or call 13 QGOV (13 74 68).
- **Residential Tenancies Authority (RTA):** Offers advice on your rights as a tenant and helps solve disputes. Visit [www.rta.qld.gov.au](http://www.rta.qld.gov.au) or call 1300 366 311.
- **Disability Gateway – Commonwealth (National) government:** Helps people with disability, their families and carers find the information, services and support they need in Australia. Visit [www.disabilitygateway.gov.au/](http://www.disabilitygateway.gov.au/) or call 1800 643 787.
- **NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission:** Contact the NDIS Commission if you have a complaint about NDIS services in all states and territories. Visit [www.ndiscommission.gov.au](http://www.ndiscommission.gov.au) or call 1800 035 544.

- **Report an issue with a residential service** (e.g. hostels and boarding houses) – Operators are required to comply with Accreditation Standards. If you are concerned about the way a residential service is operating, or you think a boarding hostel or rooming accommodation may not be registered, you can email [regulatoryservices@housing.qld.gov.au](mailto:regulatoryservices@housing.qld.gov.au), call (07) 3013 2666 or visit [www.qld.gov.au/housing/emergency-temporary-accommodation/rooming-accommodation/residential-services/report](http://www.qld.gov.au/housing/emergency-temporary-accommodation/rooming-accommodation/residential-services/report).

## Community and advocacy organisations

- **Queenslanders with Disability Network (QDN):** Supports people state-wide with disability through information, peer support and resources. Visit [www.qdn.org.au](http://www.qdn.org.au) or call 1300 363 783.
- **Mob4Mob:** Is the peak body here in Queensland for First Nations Mob with a disability, their family, friends, and carers. They have yarn-ups, meetings and hold community events. They will listen to your stories and experiences. Then 'proper way' they take your stories to the Government and start up a real conversation about how things can change for the better. Visit [www.mob4mob.org.au](http://www.mob4mob.org.au) or call 07 3059 5353.
- **Staffing Options:** A collection of resources to assist people to direct and manage their disability supports and funding. Visit [www.staffingoptions.com.au](http://www.staffingoptions.com.au) or call (07) 3254 1000.
- **Queensland Advocacy for Inclusion (QAI):** QAI is an independent, state-wide community-based systems and legal advocacy organisation for people with disability. QAI also has a Human Rights Telephone Legal Advice Service. Visit [www.qai.org.au](http://www.qai.org.au) or call (07) 3844 4200.
- **Disability Advocacy Pathways (Pathways) service:** Links people needing individual advocacy support to independent advocacy organisations across the state. Visit [www.disabilitypathways.org.au](http://www.disabilitypathways.org.au) or call 1800 130 582.

## Advocacy support for people with disability

The Queensland Disability Advocacy Program funds the following organisations to deliver regional and specialist individual advocacy services to Queenslanders with disability, their family members and carers.

The advocacy services support people to understand their rights, to navigate health and disability services and to address discrimination, conflict and unfair treatment. This includes providing information, advice and advocacy services related to decisions about improved, housing opportunities or resolving issues and complaints with housing services for people with disability who are, or are at risk of, homelessness or living in residential services.

## Specialist individual advocacy services

- **AMPARO Advocacy:** Helps people with disability from different cultures. Visit [www.amparo.org.au](http://www.amparo.org.au) or call (07) 3354 4900.
- **Aged and Disability Advocacy Australia:** Helping First Nations people with disability. Visit [www.adaaustralia.com.au/first-nations-yarn2action](http://www.adaaustralia.com.au/first-nations-yarn2action) or call 1800 718 969.
- **Queensland Advocacy for Inclusion:** Supporting children and young people with disability (0-18 years). Visit [www.qai.org.au](http://www.qai.org.au) or call 1300 130 582.

## Regional individual advocacy services

- **Speaking Up for You (SUFY):** In Brisbane and Moreton Bay areas. Visit [www.sufy.org.au](http://www.sufy.org.au) or call (07) 3255 1244.
- **People with Disability Australia (PWDA):** In Noosa, Sunshine Coast and Gympie areas. Visit [www.pwd.org.au](http://www.pwd.org.au) or call 1800 422 015.
- **Aged and Disability Advocacy Australia (ADA Australia):** In Redlands, Logan/Beenleigh, Gold Coast and Central Qld areas. Visit [www.adaaustralia.com.au](http://www.adaaustralia.com.au) or call (07) 3637 6000; Information and Advice or Free Call: 1800 818 338
- **The Advocacy and Support Centre (TASC):** In the Toowoomba, Ipswich, Roma, Hervey Bay, Bundaberg, Goondiwindi and greater south-west areas. Visit [www.tascnational.org.au](http://www.tascnational.org.au) or call (07) 4616 9700.
- **Rights in Action Inc:** In Cairns, North Queensland, Far North Queensland and the Townsville areas. Visit [www.rightsinaction.org](http://www.rightsinaction.org) or call (07) 4031 7377.
- **Capricorn Citizen Advocacy:** In the Rockhampton, Banana, Barcaldine, Barcoo, Blackall-Tambo, Central Highlands, Diamantina, Gladstone, Livingstone, Longreach, Winton, Woorabinda areas. Visit [www.capca.org.au](http://www.capca.org.au) or call (07) 4922 0299.
- **Mackay Advocacy Inc:** In the Mackay, Isaac and Whitsunday areas. Visit [www.mackayadvocacy.com.au](http://www.mackayadvocacy.com.au) or call (07) 4957 8710.
- **Tenants Queensland:** Gives advice about renting and your rights as a tenant. Visit [www.tenantsqld.org.au](http://www.tenantsqld.org.au) or call 1300 744 263.
- **Basic Rights Queensland:** Provides legal and advocacy services, including advice around Social Security, disability discrimination and women in the workplace matters. Visit [www.brq.org.au](http://www.brq.org.au) or call 1800 358 511.
- **Uniting Care Mediation Services:** Provides mediation services covering family, neighbourhood and business disputes. Visit <https://www.unitingcareqld.com.au/services-and-support/family-support/family-law-services/unitingcare-mediation-services> or call 07 5452 9700.
- **Lifeline Australia:** Provides crisis support to people experiencing emotional distress. Visit [www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au), call 13 11 14 or text 0477 13 11 14.
- **CRU – Community Resource Unit Ltd.** Has information in relation to succession planning for families and people with disability support networks. Visit: [www.cru.org.au](http://www.cru.org.au) Telephone: (07) 3844 2211.

## Financial support and assistance

- **Centrelink:** Provides financial support, such as the Disability Support Pension and Rent Assistance. Visit [www.servicesaustralia.gov.au](http://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au) or call 132 717.
- **Department of Housing and Public Works:** May be able to help with renting, including financial assistance (bond loans, rental grants). Visit [www.qld.gov.au/housing/renting](http://www.qld.gov.au/housing/renting) or call QGOV (13 74 68).
- **Home Modification Information Clearinghouse:** Offers tips on modifying homes to make them more accessible. Visit [www.homemods.info](http://www.homemods.info).
- **Caxton Legal Centre Inc.** Provides information and has resources in relation to developing Wills and Trusts in the context of succession planning. Visit: [www.caxton.org.au](http://www.caxton.org.au)  
Telephone: (07) 3214 6333.

## Online tools and housing support platforms

- **Housing Hub:** Helps people with disability find accessible housing. Visit [www.housinghub.org.au](http://www.housinghub.org.au). The Hub's Housing Roadmap (<https://www.housinghub.org.au/roadmap-directory>) also supports people planning around their housing journey and builds capacity to progress housing goals. Call 1300 616 463.
- **Home in Place:** Provides affordable housing options. Visit [www.homeinplace.org](http://www.homeinplace.org) or call 1300 333 733.
- **My Home, My Way:** Offers resources to help people with disability live independently. Visit [www.myhomemyway.com.au](http://www.myhomemyway.com.au).
- **The Deck:** Is a resource hub that has a list of community housing providers. Visit [www.thedeck.org.au/community-housing-providers](http://www.thedeck.org.au/community-housing-providers).

