

ANNUAL REPORT 2016



North Sydney Women's
Benevolent Association Limited

Trading as Mary's House, a refuge for women
and children escaping domestic violence

Corporate Information

North Sydney Women's Benevolent Association Limited

40 Merrenburn Avenue
Naremburn NSW 2065

ABN 43 606 187 839

Endorsed as a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) and covered by Item 1 of the table in section 30-15 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.



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www.maryshouse.org.au



www.facebook.com/maryshousesydney/



https://au.linkedin.com/in/maryshouse



@MarysHouseSyd



@MarysHouseSyd

Board

Tricia Ho-Hudson

Louise McCoach

Roger Williams

*Additional Board members
appointed in July 2016:*

Richard Harpham

Elizabeth Mackinlay

Emma Rossi

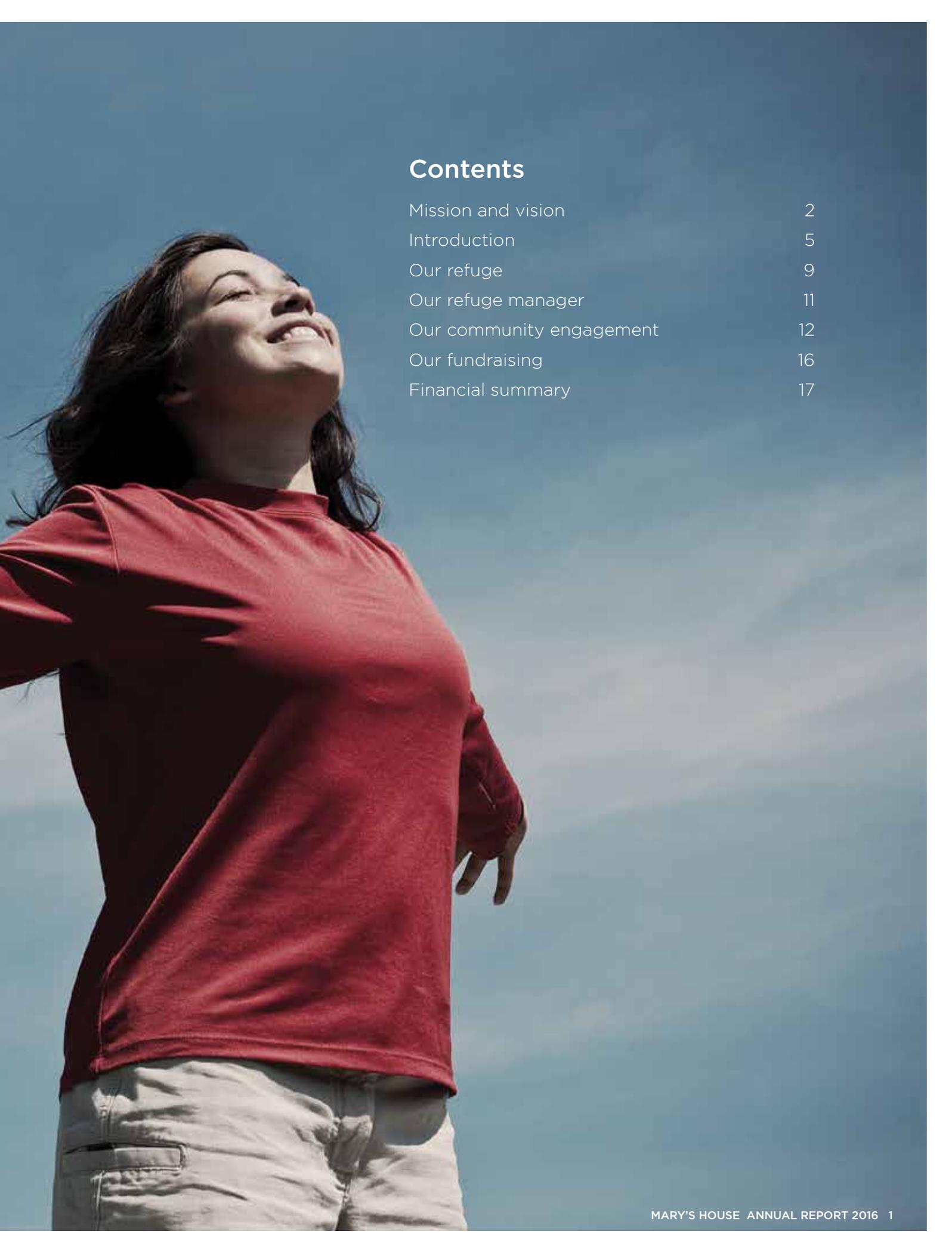
Pro Bono Auditors

Hill Rogers

Level 5, 1 Chifley Square
Sydney NSW 2000

Pro Bono Lawyers

Johnson Winter & Slattery
Level 25, 20 Bond Street
Sydney NSW 2000



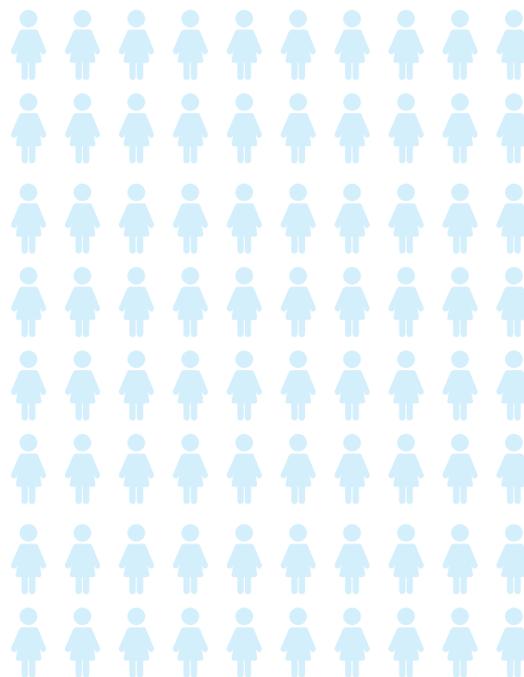
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Research from the 2012
ABS Personal Safety
Survey and Australian
Institute of Criminology
shows that women, men,
and children of both
genders, in Australia
experience substantial
levels of violence

However, over
3 times
as many people
experienced violence
from a male

For
sixty two
percent
of the women who had
experienced physical
assault by a male, the
most recent incident was
in their home



80 women were
killed through
violence in Australia
in 2015. This equates
to nearly two women
every week

Source: ANROWS Violence Against Women Key Statistics
factsheet and Destory The Joint Facebook page

Mission

Our mission is to be a quality refuge for women and their children escaping domestic violence that enables them to be safe, hopeful and empowered to rebuild their lives.





Introduction

North Sydney Women's Benevolent Association Limited (NSWBA) is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee and established to be a charity. It is registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission and endorsed as a deductible gift recipient (DGR).

Our mission is to be a quality refuge for women and their children escaping domestic violence that enables them to be safe, hopeful and empowered to rebuild their lives. The refuge is called "Mary's House".

Our work was prompted by the generosity of a benefactor who offered a property to use as a refuge. Most refuges struggle to find a suitable property to use, and a landlord who is willing to allow it to be used in this way. This is both because of the constantly changing nature of the residents, as well as a sad but common perception that it is risky for the landlord and the property to become involved in the area of domestic violence.

Motivated by our benefactor's generosity, since July 2015, NSWBA has:

- Re-designed the property to enable it accommodate up to 19 women and children;
- Worked through planning, fire safety and other issues;
- Renovated the property;
- Recruited the first Refuge Manager of Mary's House;
- Engaged our community to develop a volunteer-led model to resource the renovation project and the longer-term operation of Mary's House;
- Engaged our community to raise funds for the renovation costs and at least the first year's operating costs for Mary's House; and
- Most critically, built awareness in our community of the real need to help women and children suffering as a result of domestic violence.

Mary's House opened its doors in late November 2016.

Next year will be our first year operating Mary's House and therefore another big year for everyone involved. On the financial side, our aim is to further develop our fundraising capability to be able to fund future operating costs and ensure the sustainability of Mary's House for many years to come.

Board members for the period ended 30 June 2016

Tricia Ho-Hudson

Tricia is the Head of Capital & Regulatory Strategy for the Commonwealth Bank of Australia, responsible for managing the capital on the bank's balance sheet with a value of over \$59 billion.

Tricia has experience in the not for profit area, particularly in relation to social care businesses. She is currently a member of the Advisory Council to CatholicCare Diocese of Broken Bay, a past Board Member of UnitingCare Ageing NSW/ACT, and a past Board Member of Kincoppal-Rose Bay School of the Sacred Heart. She is a Graduate Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and a Chartered Tax Adviser.

Louise McCoach

Louise is a finance lawyer, formerly a senior partner of a major Australian law firm, currently Consultant with Gilbert +Tobin. She has served on a range of boards in the not-for-profit and for-profit sector. She is currently a board member of Sports Taekwondo Australia (Member of Finance and Risk Committee) and Virtu Financial Asia Pty Ltd and also holds an advisory board role for a start-up. She is a former board member of Women in Banking and Finance and a former advisory board member of the NSW Council of Women's Economic Opportunity.

Roger Williams

For several years, Roger was the Co-Chair of Our Lady of the Way North Sydney Parish Council. He is a director of the St John's College Foundation, University of Sydney.

He also works as a volunteer in the Outreach Programme of the Matthew Talbot Hostel, Woolloomooloo.

Until his retirement, Roger held senior legal and commodity marketing positions in CSR Ltd and the Australian Sugar Industry.

He was also for several years an industry advisor to the Australian Government in various international trade agreement negotiations.

Additional Board members appointed in July 2016

Richard Harpham

Richard spent forty years in the financial services industry. He held senior marketing roles in Citibank's corporate and consumer businesses in Australia, the USA and Asia. Subsequently he was General Manager Credit Risk Management, consumer and business banking, for Westpac. He spent the last five years of his career as a consultant on credit management to St. George Bank.

He has had extensive governance experience in the not for profit area including as deputy chair of St. Vincent's Health Australia (the largest not for profit health care provider in the country); director of St. Vincent's College Potts Point; and inaugural chairperson of the Trustees of Mary Aikenhead Ministries which was established to have governance responsibility for all the health and aged care facilities, research institutes and schools under the care of the Sisters of Charity of Australia.

Elizabeth Mackinlay

Liz has over 20 years' experience in the not-for-profit sector, with extensive senior executive experience internationally and in Australia. She has held roles with a variety of not-for-profit organisations including with World Vision International as Global Vice President of Strategy, with World Vision Australia as Director of Indigenous development, International Red Cross Society in Cambodia as a gender specialist as well as serving on a number of not-for-profit Boards.

Liz has a passion for community development and community mobilisation, and for developing effective and efficient organisations to facilitate this. She is a specialist in gender equity and reducing violence against women and children and is committed to children's rights to care, participation and protection.

Liz is currently the CEO of Australian Doctors International and a Board member for Reality Learning Limited.

Emma Rossi

Emma Rossi is a Director of the Jesuit Communications board and has previously served as Chairperson of the non-for-profit, Sisters of St Joseph's Peruvian Project, trading as Ethica Accessories.

Emma is the media manager at the Federal Government's independent regulator, The Australian Media and Communications Authority. She has more than three decades of experience in media and communications roles, having reported, produced and presented news and current affairs for television networks, Seven, Nine and Sky.

Emma holds a Masters in Management from Macquarie Graduate School of Management.



Our refuge

Our mission is to be a quality refuge for women and their children escaping domestic violence that enables them to be safe, hopeful and empowered to rebuild their lives.

The refuge is named “Mary’s House”, as “Mary” is a welcoming and well-recognised female name across many cultures.

Accommodation

Mary’s House will provide temporary accommodation for periods between one week and three months for women and their children, and single women, escaping domestic violence with a wrap-around case management model provided by qualified and experienced social workers who can link our clients with the services and support that they need. We will continue to provide case management support to the women and children that leave Mary’s House for a period of between 12 and 18 months depending on the ongoing needs of that particular client. This is vital to ensure that the women and their children stay safe and connected to the appropriate services for their needs.

To achieve this purpose, Mary’s House will adopt a staffing model that is a mix of paid professional staff and skilled volunteers. The model is designed to be responsive to the needs of women and their children requiring crisis accommodation as a result of domestic violence whilst ensuring that the service is available regardless of the availability of government funds. There is a chronic shortage of refuge and crisis accommodation beds and the advice provided from the various levels of government in 2015 and 2016 is that there are no new funds to be made available for new beds in this sector in the coming 2 to 3 years. Mary’s House aims to address this through engaging a variety of philanthropic and community partners to ensure that our service is available to all who need it.

Our Refuge (continued)

Activities

A range of services will be provided to women and their children, and single women, residing in Mary's House. These services are described below and are inclusive of but not limited to the following:

Intake: A qualified social worker will assess the women presenting for refuge at Mary's House at an off-site location. This enables the social worker to assess the woman and her children's needs and to refer them to either Mary's House or another more appropriate service. This assessment is a comprehensive assessment of the woman's physical, emotional, financial and security status. Emergency services will be accessed at this time, including the Police if this is deemed appropriate.

Registration and orientation: If a woman and her children are deemed suitable for accommodation at Mary's House and if there is room, they will be taken to Mary's House and oriented to the premises. As most if not all women are in shock during this process, the Social Worker on-site, most likely the Clinical Director, will take responsibility for ensuring the woman and her children have adequate food, clothing, bedding, medical support and other vital resources during the critical first 72-hour period. At this stage, relevant departments such as Centrelink, the Department of Justice, Police, Education Department and others will be contacted to commence developing a care plan for the family or woman.

Case management: Once the woman and her children are settled into their room in Mary's House, the Clinical Director will establish a plan for activity for both the woman and her children based on their needs, and the wishes of the family in terms of future accommodation, services and support. Throughout this period, the Clinical Director is responsible for ensuring that the woman can attend all necessary meetings, appointments, tests and interviews.

The services that may be accessed by the woman and her children during this time include, but are not limited to community resources inclusive of material goods, education, finances, legal assistance, health care, social support, employment and all services that children require from occasional care, to kindergarten to school and schooling support.

During this time, women and their children will be expected to contribute to the general upkeep of the house on a daily basis and to cook the majority of their own meals. They will be provided with food vouchers from St Vincent de Paul which will assist with purchasing groceries and Mary's House, through its pro bono partners will provide two gourmet salads a week, a hot cooked meal once a week, all food incidentals such as milk, sugar, bread and other food as becomes available through our partners. Mary's House will provide a weekly laundry service for all sheets, duvet covers, towels and household linen as well as a once-a-week thorough house clean to ensure that the property remains in good condition for all residents.

Transition planning: Transition planning will commence as soon as the woman is settled and able to make choices that are informed. The transition will hopefully be to a safe and sustainable accommodation option although it is important to stress that the choice of where a woman transitions to and how is entirely at her discretion and her choice. Negotiations with Department of Housing for brokering private, community and public housing are all part of this stage. St Vincent de Paul, North Sydney has committed to provide appropriate furniture and goods to support a woman establishing her own home after time at Mary's House.

Post-stay support: Intensive planning will be undertaken during the transition phase of a woman's time at Mary's House to ensure that adequate post-stay case management support is in place as soon as they are living independently of Mary's House. This off-site, community based case management will continue for a period of up to 12-18 months to ensure that the woman and her children are accessing the appropriate support from all of the relevant services and to ensure that she feels safe in making choices for her family's future.

Confidential records will be kept for each woman and her children, which she will be able to access as she desires. These records will be kept for a period for up to 7 years. Demographic data will be extracted from these records so as to monitor the trends of women and their children utilising Mary's House and its services. This will help for further planning for Mary's House and for planning services within the Lower North Shore area that exist for community members experiencing domestic violence.

Our refuge manager

The position of the first Refuge Manager of Mary's House is an important one as the Refuge Manager will help set the framework for management and operation of the refuge, as well as being the welcoming face of the refuge for the women and children who come to stay.

We are pleased to announce that, after an extensive recruitment search, Jacqueline (Jacqui) Leonard was appointed and started at Mary's House in early September 2016.

Jacqui comments that "We often hear that it takes a village to raise a child - well, I believe it firstly takes a community to make a village, and that is what I have found with Mary's House. I am absolutely inspired by the vision and generosity of the North Sydney Community in taking this initiative to care for women and children who have experienced the trauma of domestic violence in their lives.

Having commenced my professional career in the support of women and children in need, I then raised my own family, ran a small business and re-joined community services in assisting independent community living for the frail aged and those living with a disability. My passion is contributing to a caring and just community.

I feel a real sense of privilege and purpose in my new role as Mary's House Refuge Manager. With the continued support of this motivated and passionate community I believe we can only succeed in empowering and supporting women to rebuild their lives."



Jacqui Leonard, our Refuge Manager (left), receiving the key to Mary's House on her first day. She is with volunteer Fiona Pollack (right) who project managed the renovation.

Our community engagement



Australian journalist and television personality Chris Bath donated her time to help us produce a community awareness video for Mary's House.



A number of community members participated in the video, including Naomi Gibson, who conducted the community research which has supported Mary's House.



In April 2016, a group of women and men walked from Sydney's Lower North Shore to the Eastern Suburbs to raise awareness for Mary's House, wearing our signature blue colour.

Our community engagement (continued)



Volunteers are trained before helping at Mary's House. They attended the Federal Government's E-safety for Women training in August 2016.



Mumma Creatives ran a community workshop to create the art for Mary's House. Board member Liz Mackinlay rolled her sleeves up to help on the day.



A number of organisations have organised fundraising activities within their workplaces. For International Women's Day, the Commonwealth Bank Audit Team put together "welcome hampers" to be given to the women and their children when they first arrive at Mary's House.



And individuals like Lucy have organised spontaneous fundraising activities to help make a difference through Mary's House

Our fundraising

In line with our mission to engage our community to support women and children needing help to escape domestic violence, our focus has been to combine fundraising with community awareness.

We have raised funds for the costs of renovating Mary's House and at least the first year's operating costs. Our focus has been on private donations from community awareness and specific activities. There have been significant donations from individuals and private foundations. A number of these donations are multi-year pledges. We have received one government grant of \$20,000 from the Federal Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development to assist with the cost of security at Mary's House.

We have received support from local businesses for some of the services associated with the renovation and approvals, and for the fitout of Mary's House.

After starting operation, we continue to receive support from local businesses for food and essential services. There will also be dozens of volunteers performing key day-to-day tasks for Mary's House and its residents.

Our fundraising activities have included:

- Walk for Mary's House – this walk on a Sunday morning in April 2016 saw over 120 people walk from Bradfield Park to Watson's Bay. They wore distinctive "Mary's House" blue bandanas to demonstrate community support for women and children seeking to escape domestic violence;
- Crowd funding campaign – this campaign ran from Mother's Day until July 2016. It enabled donors to join others to achieve a fundraising target and had significant corporate support. It raised \$107,096, and included the largest single donation ever raised on the Chuffed.org fundraising platform;
- A legal industry lunch coinciding with White Ribbon Day in November 2015;
- A finance industry dinner; and
- The generosity of a number of community organisations and individuals who have organised fundraising activities amongst their organisations, workplaces and friends.

Next year, our aim is to further develop our fundraising capability to be able to fund future operating costs and ensure the sustainability of Mary's House for many years to come.

If you would like to make a donation, donations can be made online at www.maryhouse.org.au. If you are interested in making a pledge or bequest, please feel free to contact us at donations@maryshouse.org.au.

Financial summary

NSWBA's year ends on 30 June and its first year was the year ended 30 June 2016. As a result, it is not able to provide comparative financial information at this time.

NSWBA's cash position as at 30 June 2016 was strong, reflecting the funds which were raised in anticipation of the renovations required to convert the property for use as a refuge. Renovations commenced after year end, and renovation and fitout costs were estimated at approximately \$350,000.

Financial result

Income	30 June 2016 (\$)
Donations (cash)	505,281
Donations (services)	5,000
Donations (goods)	4,050
Government grant	20,000
Interest income	431
Other revenue	7,000
Total revenue	541,762

Less: Expenses

Consulting fees	37,637
Establishment costs and filing fees	3,661
Printing & stationery	1,544
Other expenses	9,739
Total expenses	52,581

Net result

489,181

In addition to donations received during 2016, a number of donors have given multi-year pledges which are not reflected in the above financial information.

The successful crowdfunding campaign was closed after 30 June 2016, which was also not reflected in the above.

Balance sheet

Assets	30 June 2016 (\$)
Cash and cash equivalents	463,887
Trade and other receivables	6,636
Total current assets	470,523
Property, plant and equipment	19,208
Total non-current assets	19,208
Total assets	489,731
Liabilities	
Trade and other payables	550
Total liabilities	550
Net assets	489,181

**If you are experiencing a difficult
situation and need help, you can
ring the Domestic Violence Line**

Toll free: 1800 65 64 63

TTY: 1800 67 14 42

Statewide service

24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Translators available