



Nightingale, not-for-profit.

You might have seen some public discussion recently about Nightingale Housing and some changes we have recently made to our structure and how we do things. Because the confidence and trust of the Nightingale community is a precious thing to us, we thought we'd take you through the reasons behind these decisions.

Since it was founded in 2016, Nightingale's mission has been to create housing that people can afford, which fosters deep social connection and is kind to a planet in crisis. The Nightingale model is a response to an Australian housing system that is fundamentally broken and eroding the community it is meant to support.

Over the past five years, 78 Nightingale homes across three sites have been completed and sold at-cost to buyers - many of whom are entering the property market for the first time. All homes are 100 per cent carbon neutral in operation, and have been delivered at below market prices. Today, 318 more Nightingale homes are under construction across 11 projects, and an additional 514 are in planning stages, as part of 15 new, sustainable communities.

Twenty per cent of these new homes will be allocated to a registered community housing provider, enabling access to long term secure accommodation for those most in need. On top of this, 20 per cent of homeowners are identified through the Nightingale priority ballot which enables Indigenous Australians, people living with a disability, key community contributors, and single women over 55 to gain access to home ownership.

To date, 57 per cent of people who have entered Nightingale ballots are prospective first home buyers.

The three completed Nightingale buildings, and a further 11 under construction, have all been developed using a licensing arrangement, where Nightingale has granted licenses to architecture firms who meet strict criteria to develop homes using the model. Leading architects such as Six Degrees Architects, Austin Maynard Architects, Kennedy Nolan, Clare Cousins, ClarkeHopkinsClarke, EHDO, Hayball and Architecture Architecture have all developed projects after being granted licenses. Breathe Architecture, led by Nightingale founders Jeremy McLeod and Tamara Veltre, has also developed a number of Nightingale projects.

While this approach has led to the creation of some great residential buildings, it has fallen short in a number of other ways. Of the 33 Nightingale licenses that have been issued to architects around the country, only a handful of projects have been realised. This has in part been due to the difficult nature of raising capital: many architects who were ready to embark on their first Nightingale project struggled to secure funding.

Another issue is the inability of Nightingale to ensure the intent of the model is honoured once homes are allocated and construction commences. In some instances this has resulted in outcomes that do not align with Nightingale's ethos, such as builds that are too expensive and licensees failing to run priority ballots for



marginalised groups.

To discourage property speculation and windfall gains, all Nightingale purchasers are required to sign a caveat that gives first right of refusal to existing residents of the building and limits the apartment's resale value to average gains in the suburb.

However, residents of a recently-completed Nightingale community were not asked by the project's developers to sign the caveat and, as a result, an apartment was recently sold to an external purchaser for a profit of almost half a million dollars on their original purchase price.

To avoid this kind of situation in the future, and ensure Nightingale fulfils its objectives around cost, community and environmental performance, the organisation has moved away from the licensing model and now handles all aspects of project delivery – from site acquisition, securing funding, construction delivery, and community engagement, all the way to handing over the keys. This not only ensures the completed homes stay true to Nightingale's principles, but it also keeps overall costs down and buildings are completed on time.

This move is part of a broader set of changes that have seen Nightingale move from being architect-focussed to a resident-focussed organisation. In April, Nightingale gained not-for-profit status, meaning it can never be monetised. Importantly, as a not-for-profit it can't be owned or controlled as it is driven solely by purpose which is set out in the constitution. It's a change that's about enshrining Nightingale's absolute commitment to delivering high quality housing that's built for people and the planet.

In undertaking these reforms, some have questioned the relationship between Breathe and Nightingale. Breathe has been or is the nominated architect in seven of the 21 projects that have been completed, are in construction or are planned.

Breathe has bought five of those projects to Nightingale under the licence model. The additional two projects that were allocated to Breathe by Nightingale were done so on merit, recognising the studio's proven track record in delivering great buildings while keeping costs within budget.

In both instances, the Nightingale delivery team worked in conjunction with external partners and funders to select the architect that was best placed to bring confidence to future residents and could complete the design and delivery under tight timelines.

The move away from a licensing model means more architecture firms are able to undertake Nightingale projects, without the burden of raising capital and managing a development. At least four upcoming developments in the Nightingale pipeline of work are being delivered by other firms, chosen because they put forward the best proposal.

As part of moves to further strengthen governance at Nightingale, the organisation plans to appoint a Chief Executive Officer in the medium term. Adding three additional members to the Not-For-Profit entity also remains a goal in a similar timeframe.



At Nightingale, we know that bringing about real and meaningful change in the world is never easy. Instituting changes to the way we do things is also often hard and sometimes more than a little messy.

But those who believe in the Nightingale vision - an Australia where housing is more socially, financially and environmentally sustainable - should have faith that these reforms are all about ensuring that our original purpose is embedded deep in the foundations of every future Nightingale building, and can never be undone.

If you've got any further questions or concerns, please free to reach out to the Nightingale team via info@nightingalehousing.org

Angela Perry
Chair, Nightingale Housing

We are proud to acknowledge the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation, the Traditional Custodians of the land upon which Nightingale Housing stands. We recognise their continuing connection to land, waters, and culture.