

Structural review progress report

Dear Abbeyfield Australia members and supporters,

The Abbeyfield Australia Board met on 8 April 2017 to further consider issues relating to the necessary restructuring of Australian operations. A further background paper was presented to the Board discussing the options under consideration. This paper was prepared for us by John Landos, a highly experienced executive manager, and we are most appreciative of this contribution by John. We are also aware that all Local Societies provided John with information and details and we thank you all for this input.

This and previous reports highlight the importance of Local Societies and their volunteers. They do an excellent job and often under difficult circumstances. In turn the Local Societies value the support of the Abbeyfield National Office. Nevertheless Abbeyfield Australia's operations must be restructured to meet current and emerging needs. These needs include:

- The declining financial position of Abbeyfield Australia Ltd and an increasing proportion of Local Societies;
- A mounting difficulty in many Local societies to find volunteers willing to serve on their Management Committee, particularly in the key Executive roles of Chair, Secretary and Treasurer;
- A steady rise in management issues requiring external support e.g. with regulatory reporting vacancies, OH&S, governance, resident administration, house promotion, etc.;
- the lack of capacity in the National Office with 1.4 FTE staff to address these issues as raised by Local Societies.

A significant new development discussed at the 8 April Board meeting related to possible support for Abbeyfield Australia Ltd from The Abbeyfield Society (TAS) in the UK.

At the 4 March 2017 Board meeting, Cheryl Dean, a Director of The Abbeyfield Society (TAS) responsible for international liaison and Chair of the Abbeyfield South Africa Board invited Abbeyfield Australia to seek TAS financial support for a restructuring of its Australian operations. The Abbeyfield Australia Board has now submitted a proposal to TAS for this funding support to enable a successful restructure to take place. In general terms we are looking to a financially viable restructured Abbeyfield Australia that incorporates the following principles:

- Encouraging continuing local support for the houses and residents ;
- Supporting Local Societies who request support through the National Office;
- Providing the National Office with the capacity to pursue critical issues such as;
 - Securing Federal, State and Local Government support for Abbeyfield Australia;
 - Increasing corporate sponsorship funding.

My expectation is that discussions with TAS will take some months to complete but I believe these discussions will result in a restructuring option that is attractive to and able to be strongly supported by Local Societies.

In the meantime we will continue to keep you regularly informed of any updates to progress on this Structural Review.

We much appreciate your patience as we work thoroughly through the options realistically available to us and look forward to steadily securing, with your assistance, a sustainable future for Abbeyfield Australia.

Yours sincerely,

David Kay

Chairman, Abbeyfield Australia