



MEDIA RELEASE

28 June 2010

Hannah's House and CS Energy establish long-term accommodation facility for Ipswich's homeless young women

A long-term accommodation facility for young Ipswich homeless women is being established through a partnership between local community organisation, Hannah's House, and CS Energy's Swanbank Power Station.

The Hannah's House Long-Term Facility was officially opened by Ipswich Mayoress, Janet Pisasale, and dedicated by Hannah's House Director, Pastor John Hunt from Christian City Church, on Saturday, 26 June.

The new facility, which is being set up in a CS Energy-owned house in Ripley, will increase Hannah's House's capacity to help abused, troubled, and marginalised young women.

Hannah's House coordinator, Marie Dixon, said Hannah's House had been providing short-term accommodation and support services to teenage girls for close to three decades.

"With CS Energy's assistance, we will now be able to provide up to three homeless young women at a time with a home for a 12-18 month period," Ms Dixon said.

"When girls have come to us, we have usually only been able to take them in for about three months. During the three months, we care for the girls, help them access counselling and support services, and do the best we can in a short timeframe to help them learn how to look after themselves.

"After that, the heartbreaking reality is that many of these girls end up back on the streets.

"This long-term facility will give a few girls at a time the opportunity to have a stable and secure home environment – so they can go back to school or start a job, but most importantly, so they can have a chance to develop the skills they need to be independent.

Ms Dixon said that full-time House Parents will run the Ripley house.

"The House Parents set the 'house rules' and teach the girls how to budget, do the grocery shopping, and cook and clean and contribute to a household so that when they can find a place to rent and down the track, have children of their own, they have a sense of how a household should operate.



Hannah's House long-term accommodation facility (cont.)

“We are trying to break the cycle of neglect that sadly exists in parts of the community,” Ms Dixon said. “So many of these girls have just not experienced what it is like to be in a loving, caring household.

“This partnership with CS Energy means the world to us and together, I believe we have a real chance to change these young girls' lives for the better.”

CS Energy's Swanbank Power Station site manager, Alistair Brown, said the establishment of the long-term accommodation facility builds on the support Swanbank Power Station staff have already been providing to Hannah's House through CS Energy's Workplace Giving program.

“For more than a year now, CS Energy people have been making donations to Hannah's House,” Mr Brown said.

“Through our involvement with Hannah's House, we have recognised just how much need there is for accommodation for young people who don't have a place to call home.

“When our house at Ripley became vacant after being used for some years by Blue Care, one of our staff came to me with the idea of offering Hannah's House the opportunity to use the property to set up another home.

“We have been inspired by the work that Marie and the team do and are very proud to be able to provide them with this additional support,” he said.

ENDS

Contacts:

Marie Dixon, Coordinator, Hannah's House – 0402 347 766

Jacinta Finger, Manager Corporate Communications, CS Energy – 0417 782 339