This annual report marks the second year of the Queensland Community Alliance, and my first year as one of the two co-chairs of the Queensland Community Alliance, alongside Mitra Khakbaz from MDA Ltd.

This year has been one of growth, development, taking action together and deepening our understanding.

We have grown, with the Electrical Trades Union, Presentation Sisters, the Social Responsibilities Committee of the Anglican Diocese, Logan Anglican Parish and Edmund Rice Oceania and the Uniting Church Synod joining the Alliance since our last Annual report.

We have developed further the process of community organising, running listening campaigns in Ipswich and Brisbane which have seen success with effective listening leading to action. Craig, a tenant advocate of Churches of Christ in Qld, told a powerful story that inspired a decision to work around access to health services. This culminated in a negotiation at Ipswich City Uniting Church with the Health and Hospital Service and Primary Health Network where both CEOs agreed to work together with us to find solutions.

The development process has also taught us valuable lessons about further work we need to do to extend this process of listening to our membership and community in Brisbane.

Our work in Brisbane is progressing around the themes of welcome, including negotiations with the Queensland Government to extend public transport concessions to asylum seekers on bridging visas; some of the most disadvantaged in our community.

Gerry Weatherall
Co-Chair of the Queensland Community Alliance
What is the Queensland Community Alliance?

We are an alliance of faith groups, charities, unions, neighbourhood centres, community organisations and ethnic associations working together for the common good.

This alliance is built on the relationships we will build across organisations in our local area. We identify and train people to become leaders in community organising, and decide our priorities for action together, through a process of listening to stories of pressures that our members face and witness.

Our alliance draws on the community organising tradition of the United States, and it is linked with the Sydney Alliance. The core elements of our alliance are:

- Non-partisan. Holding politicians of all parties to their responsibility to serve the community.
- Adhering to the rule of organising **never to do for others what they can do for themselves**. We will work in partnership to solve the problems we face together.
- A commitment to listening to the voice of the excluded, and partnership with the most vulnerable in our community.
- Self-funding. This alliance will be funded out of the dues of member organisations, contributing according to their size and capacity.
- Working only on issues that make our alliance stronger. This alliance will not work on issues which bring core values of our partners into tension. Instead, we seek to address the tension that exists between our shared values, and what we witness in the world.

Our 2015 figures at a glance:

- **330+85** people attending our two 2015 actions: Logan Assembly and Ipswich Negotiation
- **226** people attended Table talk training in 2015
- **309** people have attended two day Foundations of community organising
- **70** people attended Ipswich Discernment Assembly
- **46** Queenslanders attended six day national training since inception, including 23 this year
- **26** Partner organisations
Our organisations

Amnesty International Australia
Qld/Nrthn NSW Branch
Catholic Archdiocese of Brisbane
Churches of Christ in Queensland
Edmund Rice Oceania Province
Ethiopian Community Association
of Queensland
Electrical Trades Union
FSG Australia
Glebe Rd Uniting Church
Independent Education Union Q&NT
Logan Community Group Alliance
Logan Anglican Parish
Micah Projects
MDA Ltd

Presentation Sisters
Queensland Council of Unions
Queensland Nurses Union
Queensland Teachers Union
Rail, Tram and Bus Union
Sunnybank Uniting Church
Social Responsibilities Committee, Anglican Dio-
cese of Southern Qld
St Mary’s in Exile Community
The Services Union
Together, the union
Transport Workers Union
United Voice
Uniting Church Bremer Presbytery
Uniting Church Queensland Synod
Our people

Our board

Co-chair
Gerry Weatherall, Chief Mission Development Officer, Churches of Christ in Qld

Co-chair
Mitra Khakbaz, Executive Manager, MDA Ltd

Secretary
Vivienne Doogan, President, Together

Treasurer
Gary Bullock, Branch Secretary, United Voice

Board Member
Rev Beth Nicholls, Mission and Education officer, South Moreton Presbytery of the Uniting Church

Board Member
Fr David Pascoe, Dean of St Stephens Cathedral, Catholic Archdiocese of Brisbane

Board meetings

24 February 2015
Attendance
Beth Nicholls, Mitra Khakbaz, Gary Bullock, David Copeman, Vivienne Doogan, David Pascoe, Gerry Weatherall

12 May 2015
Attendance
Beth Nicholls, Mitra Khakbaz, Gary Bullock, David Copeman, Vivienne Doogan, David Pascoe, Gerry Weatherall

21 July 2015
Attendance
Beth Nicholls, Mitra Khakbaz, David Copeman, Vivienne Doogan, David Pascoe. Apologies: Gerry Weatherall, Gary Bullock

22 September 2015
Attendance
David Copeman, Vivienne Doogan, David Pascoe, Gerry Weatherall, Sheila Hunter for Gary Bullock. Apologies: Beth Nicholls, Mitra Khakbaz,
PREAMBLE

As leaders of diverse faith, education, labour, and other non-profit community organisations:

We acknowledge both our organisations’ responsibility to serve as cornerstones for a vibrant and responsive democratic society and the challenges we face in breaking through the parochialism and isolation that keep us from most effectively playing that role.

We recognise our shared values related to the dignity and the inherent worth of all individuals and to the sanctity of the natural world but realize that we too often act alone and then struggle to see those values fully expressed in the public arena.

We know that there are deep pools of underutilised and untapped leadership potential within our memberships and that the vitality of our organisations will be greatly enhanced by investing in their development.

We therefore make the following commitments to each other to uphold the standards and disciplines in order to effectively build and sustain the Queensland Community Alliance, an Alliance that will:

• challenge and support us in pursuing our organisations’ role to contribute to society;
• unite us in our shared values and responsibilities;
• help us more fully engage the leadership potential which will strengthen our own organisations;
• serve as a powerful vehicle for expressing our values and interests in the public arena and serving the Common Good.

OUR COMMITMENTS TO EACH OTHER

Reflection

We will reflect on the values, history and traditions of our organisations and work to make them the best they’ve been and can be.

Relationships

We will work to create meaningful relationship among the members of each of our organisations by conducting relational meetings, building a Core Team and engaging in periodic Listening campaigns.

We will invest in relationships with leaders from other Alliance member organisations building trust, finding common ground and working through conflicts and misunderstanding through face to face conversations.
Leadership Development

Each of us will invest in our own development as a public leader by taking advantage of opportunities such as: participating in local, and national leadership institutes; committing to develop our leadership within our organisation and the Alliance; welcoming constructive critiques from mentors or other leaders.

We will encourage the development of others in our organisation by: taking time to discover and help them see both their leadership potential and the connection between their interests and public life; encouraging them to take advantage of training opportunities; creating the spaces and helping them find appropriate leadership roles; and serving as a mentor when appropriate.

Accountability

We will be held accountable for the commitments that we make to each other -- we will strive to be known as people who do what we say we are going to do.

Action & Evaluation

We will have a bias for action -- exercising our power to secure concrete victories that help alleviate the pressures or realise the dreams of the people in our organisations and communities. We will take research seriously -- learning about issue content and power dynamics so that our actions are effective and productive.

We will evaluate each action we take together (meetings, negotiations, trainings, etc) reflecting on what we have learned and assessing areas needing improvement. We will work to make sure that our organisation's interests and values are reflected in the Alliance's action agenda. We will respect the need to use the Alliance name only for action that has been agreed upon by all Alliance member organisations at the relevant level.

Ownership

We will own the Alliance as our collective vehicle for strengthening each member organisation and exercising power for the Common Good. We will work to secure and maintain our organisation's full membership in the Alliance, including a dues commitment that represents our fair share of the financial needs of the Alliance.

Hope, Imagination and Vision

We will use our collective power to help inspire hope among our members, to stimulate our imaginations in developing creative solutions to the challenges we face and to motivate us to create and pursue our vision of the world as it should be and could be.

(Accord drafted at Leaders retreat on 18 September, and adopted at the Leaders Council 8 October 2015)
Dave Copeman

Dave Copeman is the Lead Organiser of the Queensland Community Alliance. He has previously worked as a human rights campaigner for Amnesty International in Queensland and East Africa, and was first inspired to work on human rights after volunteering with the Movement for Democratic Change, the political opposition in Zimbabwe, in 2002-2004. Dave has also dabbled in trade union campaigning and working for the Queensland government, an experience that only reinforced his belief that communities need to organise around their common interests through mechanism other than just electoral politics.

Devett Kennedy (nee O’Brien)

Devett Kennedy is an organiser with the Queensland Community Alliance, focusing on the Logan area. He is the former International Secretary-General of the Young Catholic Students movement, after first joining Young Christian Students as a high school student. In this role he worked with over 3.5 million members running global campaigns and leadership development programs.

Devett also has experience as a union organiser working with Together. In 2011 Devett was State Coordinator of the Say Yes campaign, organising unions, community organisations and environmental groups to support a price on carbon.
Our interns

In 2015 the Queensland Community Alliance offered a successful 17 week internship program to three University of Queensland social work students Sia Carlyon, Florence Lim and Ashleigh Smith, as well as two independent students interns, Bonnie Rose and Ali Lovell.

The interns participated in 2 day foundational community organising training and later went on to become small group leaders in the same training. They helped to organise and participated in the Ipswich discernment event, heard powerful stories about the pressures people face and learnt discernment and research processes.

Sia, Flo, Ash, Ali and Bonnie all brought their own strengths to the internship program. They each worked on issues such as the abuse and isolation suffered by international students, transport rights for asylum seekers, access to health services in Ipswich. We are grateful for their service and commitment to the Alliance, and we look forward to their ongoing involvement in the work of building a strong civil society.

Our affiliations

The Queensland Community Alliance is inspired by the Sydney Alliance, and together with the Sydney Alliance is affiliated with the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF).

This year, Sr Maribeth Larkin and Joe Chrastil from the IAF have played a prominent role in supporting the Queensland Community Alliance through their mentoring and support. We also wish to thank Rev Terry Moe from Salt & Light Lutheran Church in Portland, Oregon and the IAF.

David Barrow, Amanda Tattersall and the other organisers and leaders of the Sydney Alliance have played a similar role in sharing the experience and learnings from adapting this work to an Australian context.
Our 2015 activities

Making Logan Safer- Our Accountability Assembly

It was standing room only at St Francis College for our third Assembly on Tuesday 7 July. More than 300 community members from the faith, union and community organisations that make up our Alliance gathered to gain the necessary commitments from local, and state decision makers in order to make the Logan community a safer place to live.

Listening sessions had been held with the Logan Community in September 2014 and common thread throughout the stories was safety; that people who lived in Logan wanted to feel safe in their own communities. Following the listening sessions, this assembly was convened. Stakeholders came together and invited their local decision makers (Councillors, Police, State Members, and Ministers) to obtain commitments on the establishment of three main projects that would help make the Logan community a safer place:

The Establishment of Safe Havens in Logan - Shops and other businesses that have made a commitment to report 100% of violent crime witness to police. The Logan City Council will support the Safe Haven concept with a placement of the City Council badge on Safe Haven signs as endorsement. This signs would then be placed on Safe Haven businesses. The Local Police will support the plan, and support the celebration once a year with local businesses who participate in the Safe Haven project.

The establishment of a new public transport taskforce that will look at innovative solutions to solve Logan's Public Transport shortfalls. Part of this plan is to combine the Logan City Council Public Transport Taskforce, with the Queensland Community Alliance Logan Transport Taskforce, commit to at least four meetings of this combined taskforce before February 2016, and to report back to the next assembly to be held in March 2016.

Funding to Logan Community Group Alliance to organise civil society to support the Logan Together project which aims to improve the lives of children 0-8-years-old in Logan and help close the gap.

The belief that many of the problems in Logan can be improved by giving its children the best start in life with all the opportunities possible underpins this project. The assembly saw this great project given a commitment of $75,000 in initial funding from the State Government — announced by State Minister for Communities, and Member for Waterford Shannon Fentiman MP.
Our 2015 activities

Ipswich Discernment and Negotiation

On Wednesday 19 October, 70 community members from Ipswich came together at Glebe Road Uniting Church for the Ipswich Discernment Assembly. We heard first hand testimonies about safety, drug abuse and the impact of inconsistent access to health services. These were just some of the 120+ personal stories that our organisations had gathered in the Ipswich area.

Access to health services was chosen as the issue which the greatest number of people committed to work to address, but there was considerable energy on safety as well.

Following our discernment, our research/action team met, and realised that we would need to engage health leaders.

On the night of the 28th of October in Ipswich City Uniting Church, we held a public negotiation with Sue McKee, CEO of West Moreton Health and Hospital Service and Ken Murphy, the CEO of the Primary Health Network, to negotiate how the Alliance will work with these organisations to identify solutions to improve access to health services, and then fight to ensure these solutions to be funded and implemented. More than 80 local community members were there to ensure these health leaders gave a commitment to work with us.

Following the negotiation, we are now begun meeting with the health services and discussing the solutions that might be possible around issue of access to mental health services, preparing for an accountability Assembly on 15 February 2016 in Ipswich.
Foundations of community organising training

The two day *Foundations of community organising training* is one of the key activities of our Alliance in our period of formation. Since August 2013, 309 people have completed this training over 15 separate trainings.

Each training has involved 20-40 leaders (ideally) from a mix of our partner organisations. Individuals from these organisation also play a key role in delivering the training, as trainers and small group leaders.

Attendees learn why we believe we need a broad-based community organising alliance in Queensland, and how they can use the practical tools of relational organising, including one-on-one and table talks to strengthen their organisations and bring the values of their organisation into the world.

Two day trainings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>No. of attendees</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12-13 February</td>
<td>St Paul’s Uniting Church, Stafford</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-10 April</td>
<td>Woodridge Catholic Church</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23-24 July</td>
<td>Woodridge Catholic Church</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-7 October</td>
<td>Ipswich Trades Hall</td>
<td>8</td>
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Tabletalk training

This year, we have engaged in a process of listening to the pressures that our people face and witness in their community. This listening largely occurs through table talks, 6-10 people gathering for 45 minutes to share stories. This year, we have trained more than 226 people the process of running table talks in Ipswich, Logan and across Brisbane.
Our training

National six day training

The Queensland Community Alliance sent 9 leaders to Sydney to attend National training in June this year, and in October this year, we hosted National Training for the second time at Woodlands of Marburg, with 16 Queensland attendees.

The 6 Day National Training is a program for people committed to understanding the craft of community organising—who want to play a key role in leading the activities of the Alliance inside their organisation and acting as a bridge between our member organisations.

The residential course builds a close community of leaders across participating civil society organisations that represent the diversity our communities in Sydney and Queensland.

Leaders are equipped with the tools they need to be more strategic and effective and to build and strengthen their organisations in the process. The course focuses on power, organisations, relationships and leadership.

National Training is led by a lead trainer from the UK or US, generally an organiser of 20+ years’ experience in community organising.

Attendees from Queensland have included Catholic clergy and religious, Uniting Church and Anglican ministers, Union leaders and delegates, senior community organisation leaders and community organising staff and interns.