



Community
Resource
Unit Inc.

Expanding Ideas; Creating Change

Annual Report

2013/2014

Community Resource Unit Inc

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Overview of the Organisation

The Association

The origins of Community Resource Unit (CRU) lie in a 1987 initiative of Queensland families, professionals and people with disabilities who recognised that legislative change was insufficient to support authentic change for people with disabilities and their families. CRU was developed to support grassroots change in Queensland. CRU has 139 members who include people with disabilities, families, and workers from the disability field. CRU is an Incorporated Association, it was incorporated on the 20th of October 1988.

Purpose

CRU exists to create and promote positive change so that people with disabilities can belong to and participate in community.

Vision

To pursue full and meaningful lives for people with a disability.

Our Mission is to:

- Inspire and encourage individuals and organisations to challenge ideas and practices that limit the lives of people with a disability.
- Influence and equip others to lead positive change.

Management of CRU

The direction and management of Community Resource Unit is vested in the Committee of Management that is elected annually. The implementation of CRU programs is the responsibility of the Director and the staff team.

CRU COMMITTEE 2012/2013

President -	Matt Stone
Vice President -	Sharon Daley
Secretary -	Mike Duggan
Treasurer -	Sherryn West
Committee Members -	Richard Warner

STEWARDSHIP GROUP 2013

Tony Swords
Bob Lee
Anita Speed
Madonna Nicol
Melisa Ryan
Jane Hudson

CRU STAFF 2012/2013

Director -	Margaret Rodgers
Senior Consultant -	Lisa Bridle
Consultant -	Suellen Welch
Information Consultant -	Hugh Rose-Miller
Finance Officer -	Bill Kyle
Administration Officers -	Bobby Noone Kim Jensen
Administration Support -	Kathleen Fleming

President's Report

Introduction and Acknowledgements

It is my pleasure to report to members on the work of the CRU Management Committee for the year 2013 – 2014. I would like to begin my report by acknowledging the work of the committee and staff who have dealt with some challenging and complex issues over this 12 month period:

- To my Management Committee colleagues, Sharon Daley, Mike Duggan, Sherryn West and Richard Warner – thank you for your hard work, commitment and support throughout the past year. I believe we have achieved a great deal by working together.
- To the Staff at CRU – thank you for your patience, your flexibility and your preparedness to work with the Committee through some difficult times.

The 2013 – 2014 year presented the CRU Committee with some tough governance issues to resolve. Perhaps it was the universe's way of making sure Mike and Richard were still involved, so everything had to be dealt with before they left! We also got to enjoy and participate in some truly wonderful moments too.

25th Anniversary Celebrations

CRU celebrated its 25th Anniversary with a Forum and Dinner on 13 September 2013. These two events were a success and the Committee is grateful to all those that helped to make it happen. These events marked a moment in time. We hope it provided people with an opportunity to reflect on the past 25 years with a sense of achievement and look to the next 25 years with hope and optimism. Our sincere thanks to all those who shared their story with us that day and to those who spoke to key themes and values such as change agency and leadership.

We also used the celebrations to do some PR work and launched the new CRU logo and the "Together in partnership" DVD. The DVD is a fantastic resource due to the quality of the production, the stories it tells and the generosity of Mike, Sam and Ashley to allow us into their lives. Thank you. Thanks also to the committee and staff at LOI, Homes West and Kalpana.

Stewardship Group

CRU recognised in its' 2011 – 2014 Strategic Plan that many members and/or leaders, whilst interested, supportive and committed to the work of CRU, do not have capacity to serve on a committee. The inaugural Stewardship Group was established in 2013 for a 1 year trial to enable CRU to bring together a larger group of those leaders, on a less frequent basis, to contribute to CRU in the following areas:

- Safeguard the Vision but not set the Vision
- Safeguard the thinking of CRU (e.g. responses to education and information)
- Contribute to the analysis of sector developments & issues – local, state and federal
- Contribute to “Big Picture/Blue Sky” thinking and the identification/choice of “Battle Clouds”
- Provide strategic advice and thereby assist CRU to stay relevant and ‘in front of the game’

The Stewardship Group met three (3) times that calendar year as planned. They met twice in the previous AGM reporting year (2012 – 2013) on 19 January and 01 June 2013. The final meeting was an opportunity to contribute to the 2014 – 2017 Strategic Planning process. Patrick Herd was our facilitator and we thank him for an excellent job in facilitating the CRU crew. The Stewardship Group were joined in the final session with members of both the Management Committee and Staff.

The Management Committee then undertook a review of the Stewardship Group. This review included feedback from members and I sincerely thank them for the time they took to provide us with this feedback:

- “the opportunity to come together for ‘thinking and discussion time’ is useful in itself”
- “it was a very valuable process for reflection and consideration of the direction that people with disabilities are taking in the current social environment”
- “there's need to be a two-year term, or at least a timeframe that covers the Strategic Planning period”

The review was not completed in this reporting period and therefore should be covered-off in next years' AGM report.... However, I am very pleased to advise the CRU Stewardship Group will be re-established in 2015 (for a two-year term) and Mike Duggan has accepted a place on this group. Thank you Mike. There will be further announcements of other members soon.

Funding:

Although funding is the domain of the Treasurer's report, I wanted to make a brief mention here of the Management Committee's understanding of a key issue impacting CRU financially.

In the recent past we did incur an ‘efficiency dividend’ that reduced our core grant by 10%. This reduction, coupled with a re-tendering process for the Succession Planning funding in February has made us increasingly aware that our reliance on a single source of funding must be addressed.

During this year CRU has put 'its toe in the water' in regards to several strategies linked to reducing our exposure to risks associated with the loss of government funding:

- Exploring alternative sources of income as part of our Strategic Plan;
- The need for strategic, national Alliances; and
- Consideration of alternative governance structures such as moving to a Company Limited by Guarantee

In addition to these funding issues, there have been changes to Awards and Pay Rates that have affected the sector more broadly. The finance sub-committee has worked extremely hard to ensure we keep abreast of these changes and meet all our obligations in relation to these changes. It has been important to the committee, as the legal employer, that CRU pay its staff a fair wage, that we attract high-quality candidates to positions and that we retain good staff by offering good pay and conditions.

The knowledge and skills the finance sub-committee brought to this issue has been enthusiastically embraced by the committee. I am sure Sherryn is tired of me asking the difference between the transitional rates and the Fisher Rates! Typically these conversations were emphasised with hand gestures that represented two graphs that for some reason I assumed helped her understand my question better. Thanks Sherryn, Bill and Marg.

Strategic & Operational Planning

Our initial Strategic Planning for 2014 – 2017 took place over two sessions in December 2013. As mentioned earlier, the first session was attended by staff, committee and stewardship group members. This was followed up with a staff and committee session and then much later, the committee undertook its operational planning.

The Plan document is complete and has recently had a 'make-over' on its layout to make it easier to read without altering the content.

The 5 key goal areas are:

1. **Governance and Leadership:** CRU will have appropriate legal, governance and organisational structures and systems that will enable the management committee to govern the organisation and the Director to manage the organisation; a partnership in leadership and management
2. **Our Networks Our Alliances:** CRU will further enhance existing networks and develop new strategic networks and alliances to effect positive change for people with a disability and their families

3. **Our Identity & Sector Position:** CRU will be widely known and acknowledged as the agency providing leadership, promoting positive change and safeguarding those elements that contribute to a better life for people with a disability and their families
4. **CRU – Agent of Change:** CRU will support the development of leadership and authentic change as a state-wide provider that enhances the possibilities for people with a disability and encourages individuals and organisation to pursue better lives for people with disabilities
5. **Organisational Sustainability:** CRU will be a sustainable organisation with the revenue, resources and reserves to ensure its future

Disability Leadership Project

At last year's AGM we announced the receipt of a generous private donation. The donation was gratefully accepted and will be used to contribute to the development of strong, principled leadership amongst people with disability and families throughout Queensland. A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed and the Disability Leadership Project Reference Group was established at the end of 2013 and has met regularly since April 2014. As President, it was my privilege to sit on the reference group and witness it move from ideas to action. You will be hearing more about this project in the years to come.

Quality Assurance

CRU has maintained its accreditation under ISO and the Committee acknowledges the important work of Lisa Bridle and the Quality sub-committee in preparing us for audit each year. In particular the Management Committee had input into:

- New policy: Development of Committee members and Stewardship Group members
- Review of existing policy: Amendment to the Purchasing Policy
- Review of Management Committee via annual internal survey

Application for PBI and DGR status

The Director's Report provides a detailed account of this situation which I will not repeat here. However I will say that a significant event unfolded during the year when we learnt CRU no longer had Public Benevolent Institution (PBI) status with the Australian Taxation Office. The implications for staff and a potential debt and fines to CRU were substantial.

The committee would like to thank the staff for the patience and understanding during this period when we needed to suspend salary sacrificing. Thanks also to Tresscox Lawyers for their Pro-bono work.

Bill Kyle and Marg Rodgers did a tremendous job in working with the ATO, the ACNC, Tresscox Lawyers, the Committee and staff to resolve this issue so successfully with no fines or debt to be paid. It was extremely complex and difficult. It felt at times like the rules kept changing (because they were) and that each time we thought we'd cleared the last hurdle another would appear further up the track.

As mentioned in the Director's report, a change to the Objects of the Association was required and these were passed at a Special General Meeting in March. Thank you to those members who attended the SGM and assisted in refining the wording of the new Objects.

Governance Review

A Governance Review sub-committee met throughout this year operating within the following Terms of Reference:

Review, research and analyse CRU's Constitution to ensure:

- there are no anomalies with other CRU documents E.g. Policies and Procedures
- operations are within the Incorporations Act and Regulations
- the constitution provides the management committee with a tool for good governance of the organisation
- it includes a dissolution clause in relation to any funds received under a DGR status

Review our Governance structure in light of:

- Moves by other similar organisations to become a Company limited by guarantee, rather than remain as an Incorporated Association
- The NDIS and the opportunities to work nationally – independently and as part of a Consortium or Alliance
- Strategic Goals and Objectives: research the current legal structure to ensure we have the legal entity that best suits the strategic direction

Bill Kyle was engaged as a Project worker above his regular duties in finance.

The sub-committee has completed its work on the review of the Constitution and a number of Special Resolutions will be put to you tonight for a vote. The sub-committee will continue to meet as we keep an eye on the issues relating to alternate legal structures (such as Company Limited by Guarantee) and the need for national alliances.

Conclusion

This has been a big year and that's why there has been so many 'thank-you's' dotted throughout this report - there is no way any one of us could have achieved what we did

without the support of one another and the support of our family, friends and allies. I am pleased and proud of the work the committee has done. As a committee we are proud of the position CRU is in and hope you are too.

It has been a year of extremes - from the high of the 25 year celebrations to moments of worry about a debt or fines worth hundreds of thousands. Sometimes the drive home to Murwillumbah had a dance soundtrack pumping and other nights I'd be holding my head visualising the pre-mix scotch and dry in the fridge at home. Tonight marks the end of my three-year term as President. It has been a pleasure and a privilege and I look forward to my continued association with CRU.

Thank you.

Matt Stone

12 December 2014

Treasurer's Report

I present the financial position of CRU at the 30th June, 2014. The recurrent income from our grants and income from other activities - workshops and publications resulted in a surplus of \$728. This year represents a full year of the Board's previous decision in 2012 -2013 to strategically assign some of the retained earnings. We did this by engaging a consultant, celebrating and recording Queensland's history with the production of a DVD and the continuation of OISD workshop for which funding was not continued. The Directors report will demonstrate the success of these investments. The net result after this commitment is a deficit of \$180,822 as illustrated in the audited Financial Statements.

Income remained similar to the previous year as grants from government, workshop income and interest income. Expenditure is represented predominantly as wages, consultancy and operational costs as predetermined with service agreements and budget formulation.

The retained surplus at the end of the financial year is \$555,551, a decrease from last year from \$736,373. As mentioned above this is a result of the projected deficit.

I thank the Board for their support throughout the year and to Margaret and Bill for their skills and dedication to enable me to have confidence in the strong financial accountability of CRU.

I also thank Peter Hallahan (Hallahan & Co) Chartered Accountant for the audited financial statements and his continued support of CRU.

I am confident that as a Board, and working with our Director we have made these decisions to ensure CRU's sustainability and continuity of work. We will continue to remain vigilant and strategic amidst an environment that is somewhat uncertain.

Sherryn West

Treasurer

2013-2014

Community Resource Unit Inc.
Detailed Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2014

	2014	2013
	\$	\$
Current Assets		
Cash Assets		
Term Deposit & Cash Management Account	625,107	776,349
Petty cash	200	200
Pay Pal Account	1,899	1,675
Go Via Account	81	13
Go Card Float	<u>15</u>	<u>0</u>
	<u>627,302</u>	<u>778,237</u>
Receivables		
Trade debtors	11,528	14,042
Accrued Income	<u>23,592</u>	<u>0</u>
	<u>35,120</u>	<u>14,042</u>
Other		
Prepayments	8,952	8,035
Inventory	18,592	14,820
Deposits with Vendors	<u>0</u>	<u>1,382</u>
	<u>27,544</u>	<u>24,237</u>
Total Current Assets	<u>689,966</u>	<u>816,516</u>
Non-Current Assets		
Property, Plant and Equipment		
Vehicle, Furniture, Plant & Equipment	311,677	309,451
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(300,983)	(291,014)
Motor vehicles - at cost	19,270	19,270
Less: Accumulated depreciation	<u>(19,270)</u>	<u>(19,270)</u>
	<u>10,694</u>	<u>18,437</u>
Total Non-Current Assets	<u>10,694</u>	<u>18,437</u>
Total Assets	<u>700,660</u>	<u>834,952</u>

Community Resource Unit Inc.
Detailed Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2014

	2014 \$	2013 \$
Current Liabilities		
Payables		
Unsecured:		
Workshop Income in Advance	18,409	0
Sundry Creditors & Accrued Expenses	17,310	18,120
Super Payable	<u>8,789</u>	<u>7,372</u>
	<u>44,508</u>	<u>25,493</u>
Financial Liabilities		
Unsecured:		
Visa Credit Card	<u>1,385</u>	<u>2,447</u>
	<u>1,385</u>	<u>2,447</u>
Current Tax Liabilities		
GST clearing	11,418	8,969
PAYG Withholding	<u>7,226</u>	<u>3,132</u>
	<u>18,644</u>	<u>12,101</u>
Provisions		
Provision for Holiday Pay	47,923	36,317
Provision for Long Service Leave	<u>32,649</u>	<u>22,221</u>
	<u>80,572</u>	<u>58,538</u>
Total Current Liabilities	<u>145,109</u>	<u>98,579</u>
Total Liabilities	<u>145,109</u>	<u>98,579</u>
Net Assets	<u>555,551</u>	<u>736,373</u>
Members' Funds		
Reserves		
Capital Reserve	Note 2 236,029	236,029
Accumulated surplus (deficit)	<u>319,522</u>	<u>500,345</u>
Total Members' Funds	<u>555,551</u>	<u>736,373</u>

Community Resource Unit Inc.
Income and Expenditure Statement
For the year ended 30 June 2014

	2014	2013
	\$	\$
Income		
Donations Received	0	70
Interest received	18,829	35,006
Membership Fees	2,677	1,727
Gaming Fund - Equipment Grant	0	24,749
Operating Grants - State Government Note 3	514,971	512,242
Other income	1,969	758
25th Anniversary Grant	10,857	0
Publication Income	11,941	10,797
Workshop Fees & Subsidies	76,495	69,814
Consulting Fees	0	7,768
Project Partnership Income	1,787	30,334
Gifts	<u>300</u>	<u>0</u>
Total income	<u>639,826</u>	<u>693,266</u>
Expenses		
Meeting expense	3,811	2,466
Advertising and promotion	148	40
Audit fees	2,800	2,885
Bank Fees And Charges	3,107	2,269
Bursaries	6,347	0
Internet Expenses	829	1,017
Car Expenses	2,073	3,263
Cleaning/rubbish removal	3,150	2,690
Computer Expenses	8,336	6,289
Consultancy Services	45,048	40,398
Depreciation	9,969	14,421
Donations	0	400
Fees & charges	1,733	120
Health & Safety	125	0
Insurance	6,846	6,814
Interest - Australia	80	34
Annual Leave Expense	22,034	36,287
Memberships	2,644	1,894
Postage	2,313	2,171
Printing & stationery	6,862	3,939
Publication Expenses	46,317	8,977
Quality System Audit	5,018	3,270
Rent and Outgoings	80,277	76,901

Community Resource Unit Inc.
Income and Expenditure Statement
For the year ended 30 June 2014

	2014	2013
	\$	\$
Repairs & maintenance	224	120
Salaries	388,680	319,498
Small Assets	2,421	618
Staff amenities	430	389
Staff training	6,851	4,036
Director's Professional development	12,594	6,540
Sundry expenses	(123)	551
Superannuation	36,439	32,140
Telephone	4,961	5,110
Utilities	5,574	5,207
Travel, accom & conference	1,281	1,554
Workers Compensation	3,360	3,039
Workshops & Seminars	98,090	141,514
Total expenses	<u>820,649</u>	<u>736,859</u>
Profit (loss) from ordinary activities		
before income tax	<u>(180,822)</u>	<u>(43,592)</u>
Income tax revenue relating to ordinary activities	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Net profit (loss) attributable to the association	<u>(180,822)</u>	<u>(43,592)</u>
Total changes in equity of the association	<u>(180,822)</u>	<u>(43,592)</u>
Opening retained profits	500,345	543,937
Net profit (loss) attributable to the association	<u>(180,822)</u>	<u>(43,592)</u>
Closing retained profits	<u>319,522</u>	<u>500,345</u>

Director's Report

I would like to dedicate this report to our friend, colleague and long-time disability advocate and activist Marg Schroder who passed away at her home in Wavell Heights on 13th December last year – while we were having our last Annual General Meeting.

Marg was one of the people who grabbed with both hands the opportunities presented by the introduction of the Disability Services Act in 1986. Not just for herself but for others too. She was a founding member of Queensland Advocacy Incorporated and Lifestyle Options Incorporated.

Marg began her influence on me when we met in 1989. We (with others) travelled to Melbourne together for a weeklong conference with Wolf Wolfensberger. I assisted her to interview for staff when she moved out of home and into her first flat in 1990 and we were fellow participants in a yearlong CRU Leadership course in 1994.

I worked with Marg to prepare her presentation for the CRU conference in 2003 at the Hilton and again in about 2006 when she shared her story at a forum of families with young children. Preparing presentations like that is an opportunity for reflection on some of the big questions and I was privileged to talk some of those through with Marg as she decided what to say.

In my current role, she would occasionally send me a witty one liner or an impossible question just to keep me on my toes. In recent years, most of our contact was by email – I remember particularly a long email debate with her last year about staff support while on holidays.

Home ownership, community, full time work, education, travel, choice and control. Marg was one of our leaders in this movement for community living, long before there was a funding program for any of that. I know she often reflected on the pros and cons of having paid service in her life – even a service where she had control. She reflected on the impact that the presence of paid workers, as necessary as they were, had on her friendships and relationships. Her life was not without struggle – but at least some of those struggles were ordinary struggles of the human condition, not disability specific struggles. Her life started and finished in the midst of her family; with the assumption that she would do what her brother and sisters did.

I think Marg's example has a lot to teach us about what our priorities should be as we move into another big change. I will give Marg the last word on this, as she said in her presentation at the CRU conference in 2003:

“My parents never held back despite my significant disability and two medical conditions of asthma and epilepsy. I was allowed to explore and push my own boundaries and those of my family members. The phrase ‘community inclusion’ had not been heard of, yet my parents practiced it with gusto with the unfortunate exception of my schooling. I have little doubt that my upbringing put

me in good stead for what lay ahead. If nothing else it provided me with the expectation that I would have an ordinary life. Like my parents, I want to keep pushing the boundaries and live a life that even they, who were ahead of their time, never dreamt of for me.”

Given that CRU exists to create and promote positive change so that people with disabilities can belong to and participate in community we thank you Marg for your leadership – particularly the way you led by example.

At CRU, it is our mission to both inspire and encourage individuals and organisations to challenge ideas and practices that limit the lives of people with disability and to influence and equip others to lead positive change.

CRU has outlined five strategic goals for the period 2014-2016 to help us achieve this. We wish to build and maintain our networks and alliances as that is critical to enabling a small organisation like ours to widen our influence. We will pay attention to our identity, place in the sector and reputation. In order to influence change, we recognise that it is important to be respected and also to be known as broadly as possible. We will focus our work and resources to work for change particularly in intentional leadership development; provision of information both by offering workshops on topics and ideas and responding to requests. We will work to raise expectations of what is possible for people with disability. We will aim to achieve sound governance and sustain the organisation into the future.

This report will outline the activities undertaken by the staff of CRU during 2013-2014 to meet and further this mission.

AIM: INSPIRE AND ENCOURAGE INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANISATIONS TO CHALLENGE IDEAS AND PRACTICES THAT LIMIT THE LIVES OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY.

I will report here on the delivery of workshops and the other ways we provide information including the essential role of our networks and alliances.

Workshops

CRU offered twenty two workshops across the state this year, ranging in length from 2 hours to 3 days, with a total of 922 registrations. We were able to make at least one visit to every region with nine of these workshops being held outside Brisbane. We

Table of Events Offered in 2013/2014

Date	Workshop	Region	No. of days/ hours	No. of Participants	Partnerships
2013					
July 8,9,10	Far North Queensland Visits Conversations Margaret Rodgers & Lisa Bridle	Cairns, Innisfail Atherton, Mareeбра	3 days	8 Orgs in Total	
July 30	Queensland Regional Conversations Margaret Rodgers & Lisa Bridle	Stanthorpe	1 day	4	
July 31	Queensland Regional Conversations Margaret Rodgers & Lisa Bridle	Warwick	1 day	10	
July 29	Queensland Regional Conversations Margaret Rodgers & Lisa Bridle	Goondiwindi	1 day	4	
Aug 6, Sept 3, Oct 8	Learning to Facilitate – Introductory Course Catherine Allen	Brisbane	3 days	13	
August 21	Crucial Conversation – Human Rights for Women with Disability Karin Swift	Brisbane	2 hrs	30	
August 29	Gathering Brothers & Sisters (Dinner) Lisa Bridle	Brisbane	2.5hrs	25	
September 13	Celebrating 25 Years Forum and Dinner (Guest Speakers)	Brisbane	1 day	Forum -144 Dinner - 160 (225 total)	
October 23	A Conversation about Making Inclusive Education Work Glenys Mann & Lisa Bridle	Brisbane	3 hrs	28	QPPD
October 29	A Conversation for Families – Setting Direction for a Good Adult Life Bronwyn Moloney	Brisbane	2.5 hrs	24	
November 19,26	Getting to the Heart of What Matters -Support Worker Training Suellen Welch	Brisbane	2 x 3hrs	23	

2014					
February 19	A CRUcial Conversation – People with Disability & The Co-Operative Movement Richard Warner, Felice Kirby, Ian Williamson, Bernard Denny, Michael Cherry	Brisbane	2.5hrs	29	
March 5	Principles and Strategies of Advocacy Lisa Bridle & Jeremy Ward	Cairns	1 day	17	
March14	Taking Charge of Change Dr Michael Kendrick	Rockhampton	1 day	43	
March 15	Taking Charge of Change Dr Michael Kendrick	Gold Coast	1 day	46	
March 21	Taking Charge of Change Dr Michael Kendrick	Townsville	1 day	44	
March 26, Apr 30, May 28	Learning to Facilitate – Introductory Course Catherine Allen	Sunshine Coast	3 days	12	Parent2Parent
Mar 31, Apr 29, May 26	Learning to Facilitate – Introductory Course Catherine Allen	Brisbane	3 days	11	
May 5	Playing Our Part in Leading the Change Towards the NDIS – Guest Speakers	Brisbane	1 day	149	
May 6	Playing Our Part in Leading the Change Towards the NDIS – Follow up conversation	Brisbane	1 day	31	
May 23-25	Starting with Gifts and Possibilities Family Leadership Weekend Ann Greer & Meg Sweeney	Boonah	2.5 days	32	
June 12	Sport, Recreation and Leisure: What it takes to be included and connected in the local community Lisa Bridle	Brisbane	2.5 hrs	21	
June 16, June 23	Getting to the Heart of What Matters Support Worker Training Suellen Welch	Brisbane	2 x 3 hrs	27	
June 30	Pre-OISD “Deep Quality Conversation #1”	Brisbane	2 hrs	23	

Date	Training	Organisation	Comments
2013			
December 2	Working Inclusively with People with Disability Suellen Welch and Lisa Bridle	Brisbane City Council	30
November 8	“Early Days Group” Inclusive Education & Advocacy Lisa Bridle	Carers Qld (Betterstart Program)	9 Families
November 28	Individual & Family Governed Organisations Lisa Bridle	Community Visitors	28
December 3	Taking the Helm Suellen Welch, Margaret Rodgers, (Dan Read & Sharon Bourke & Penny Harland)	Vision Australia	20
2014			
February 20	Navigating the Disability Landscape Lisa Bridle	Open Minds	20. Part of an Open Minds Forum
February 25	A Life Of Adventure And Purpose: Asking, Planning and Believing Lisa Bridle	Believe in People Inc – Gold Coast	12
March 4	Facilitating Conversation about the future Lisa Bridle	Tableland Respite Assoc	20
March 4	Individual & Family Governed Organisations Hugh Rose-Miller	Kyabra Community Association - Brisbane	25
May 12	“Early Days Group” Inclusive Education & Advocacy Lisa Bridle	Carers Qld (Betterstart Program)	5 Families
June 12	Community Connections – Finding A Place For All – Suellen Welch	Carers Qld – Camp Hill	10

hosted two large events at the convention centre which also drew participants from around the state.

On September 13th we celebrated the 25th Anniversary of CRU with a one day Forum and dinner at the Convention Centre. It was a day of reflecting together on what we have learnt in order to prepare for the future. We heard of local achievements and we explored some of the things that are needed so that everyone can expect a good life. We are indebted to the speakers from the day Craig and Ann Roveta; Luke Farrelly and Ann O'Brien, Leigh Tabrett, Michael Kendrick, Lorna Hallahan, Anne Cross, David and Ann Rallings; Alison and Marlene Crawford and the many people who contributed to our audio visual presentation, showcasing people from around Queensland who are directing their own lives. We enjoyed hearing many birthday messages from our friends and colleagues nationally and internationally. I also wish to acknowledge the generous support of SWITC and Fachsia which assisted more people with disability to participate.

At the forum we launched the DVD "Together in Partnership- stories of individual and family governed organisations in Queensland". It was a chance to publicly thank and acknowledge Ashley Haxton, Samantha Rogers and Mike Duggan for generously sharing their story in order to illustrate how family and individually governed organisations operate. Peter Hegedus from Soul Vision films worked with CRU, Kalpana, Homes West and Lifestyle Options and other allies to develop this inspiring production.

At the dinner that night we enjoyed a very entertaining presentation by an esteemed panel of CRU experts, past and present, each giving a fresh and very funny perspective to topics that have been central to CRU's teaching over the years. Topics such as leadership, change, social role valorisation, relationships and community had to be addressed in three minutes and with no more than one PowerPoint slide!! Jane Sherwin, Lynda Shevaller, Matt Stone, Beverley Funnell and Michael Kendrick rose to the challenge with the panel very ably chaired by Lesley Chenoweth, dressed in full academic regalia.

In the lead up to the celebrations, we gathered a group of people to help us plan and it was agreed "at this time of change, we need to bring people together and to provide a space to meet that will strengthen us all. We need to be inspired, encouraged, reminded and connected. We need to get our hearts racing.' We received very positive feedback on the day of the forum but we were particularly touched by the large number of people who emailed or wrote to us in the days and weeks following, expressing their appreciation for the day – I think we did in fact achieve what we set out to do.

29 People presented for and with CRU during this year!!! Of these 11 live with a disability and shared from their personal experience. Their willingness to do this is one of the most fitting ways to demonstrate and illustrate what's possible. I wish to thank all our guest presenters throughout the year - Catherine Allen, Bronwyn Moloney, Jeremy Ward, Penny Harland, Dan Read, Sharon Bourke, Karin Swift, Glenys Mann,

Michael Kendrick, Ann Greer, Maria McCaffrey, Meg Sweeney, Richard Warner , Ian Williamson, Bernard Denny, Michael Cherry , Felice Kirby, Frank Crupi and Trina Steed; as well as the speakers from the forum who were already mentioned. Suellen, Lisa and myself were also involved in presenting workshops.

In a big change from previous years CRU only had one international presenter during the year and that was Michael Kendrick who has been a long-time associate of CRU. This is quite a different pattern from the past few years and is I believe, a reflection of a number of things – CRU has a little more capacity to harness the wealth of local experience and wisdom than it has had in recent years; the lack of financial certainty has meant that we haven't initiated international invitations and there were fewer than usual invitations from others to collaborate in hosting an international visitor.

In September we began using an on-line booking system for workshops. This worked very well and we have used it for the majority of workshops in 2014. We can continue to assist registrants who do not have a credit card or computer or need additional help. This has saved CRU a lot of time and money and we are pleased that the majority of people have been willing to make the change with us.

Providing Information

There was a steady stream of requests for information during the year via phone calls, emails and visits to the CRU office. We take an average of 14 calls per month.

- Since the updating of the Resource Collection there have also been a growing number of requests for papers, articles and written information.
- Two editions of CRUcial Times were published during the year. The first Edition 46 captured the presentations from the September forum that celebrated the 25th Anniversary of CRU with a theme of change, particularly change at the heart level. We followed this with Issue 47, also on Change but with a focus on what it takes to change our thinking and mindsets. These editions were compiled and edited by Hugh Rose Miller. We are indebted to the authors who share their writing with us. During 2013 we continued to update the CRU website, adding more resources and refining many of its features. All copies of CRUcial Times are now available through the site and individual articles can be found more easily. Our thanks to Sarah Briggs who came and did four days' work experience in August and assisted Hugh Rose-Miller with this task.
- In late 2013 we decided that a new website was required. We invited a range of people to join us for a conversation in January. This focus group gave great advice and recommendations and I would like to thank Rebecca Mellberg, Sharon Daley, Melissa Ryan, Sofie Falkenbach, and Lyndell Murray for their enthusiasm and interest. Work on the development and transfer continued for the rest of the year with the site finally launched in October 2014.
- CRU continues to offer its own publications for sale and additional publications that may be of interest or difficult to obtain. In 2013-14 CRU sold a total of 491

publications. We also added the DVD "Together in Partnership" to our online book store and one new book 'Getting to Community' by Susan Stanfield and updated editions of a number of others.

- In 2013 we began a series of visits to regional areas of Queensland. The purpose of these visits was to meet with a small number of local contacts – some of whom were known to us and some not – to listen to the issues for people with disability in their locality. During this year we visited Cairns, Atherton, Mareeba, Innisfail, Goondiwindi, Warwick, Stanthorpe and Townsville.
- We accepted invitations to present at a variety of forums. Lisa presented a keynote address at the Belonging Matters conference in Melbourne in August and to Social Work students in September; I spoke at the Queensland Disability Conference in Brisbane in March and at a Family Leadership forum in Dublin in June. On the attached table you will see that we also spoke to Carers Queensland Betterstart Program; Believe in People Incorporated, Open Minds, Vision Australia, Brisbane City Council, Community Visitors statewide forum; Kyabra and the Tableland Respite Association.

During the year we had visitors from Ireland, Tasmania and Holland – these visits inform us of what is happening elsewhere but also help us reflect on our own experience here.

Networks and alliances – working with others

To magnify our efforts we work hard to partner with other individuals and organisations. During the year CRU continued to be a member of:

- **Community Safeguards Coalition** contributing financially to this work which safeguards the rights, interests and lives of people with disabilities but not attending meetings regularly.
- **Communication Rights Alliance** - a small group of facilitated communication users, family members, service workers and interested professionals who are concerned about a threat to people's right to communicate in the manner of their choice.
- **Queensland Planning and Implementation Group** which meets every 6-8 weeks to advise the Minister, Tracey Davis on the implementation of the NDIS.
- Reference groups of the **Community Living Initiative** and the **Community Enablers** until both initiatives ceased in early 2014.

CRU worked with other organisations to deliver workshops

- In October, CRU partnered with Queensland Parents for People with a disability to run a workshop on Inclusive Education. Both organisations are keen to partner so that younger families continue to receive access to this important information while QPPD is in a period of renewal.

- We also partnered with Parent to Parent to deliver the Facilitation Course on the Sunshine Coast in early 2014.
- We worked with seven organisations – Kalpana, A Place to Belong, Mercy Disability Services, Uniting Care Community, AS&RS; Staffing Options and Mamre to ensure the ongoing viability of the ten day Optimal Individual Service Design course planned for August 2014. These organisations assisted us to recruit participants; keep prices down; invest in young leaders and work co-operatively.

In a bid to co-ordinate strategies and timetables and to work together more efficiently, CRU convened a meeting in late 2013 with other organisations who offer development and training opportunities for Queensland families, particularly those that work on a state wide basis.

CRU worked with Griffith University, SAMS New Zealand and 'Pathways to Leadership' to explore evaluation processes for individuals who are self-directing. CRU also worked with Griffith University to assist people with disabilities to attend their symposiums about the NDIS in February and June.

Following the Finding My Place workshop at the Convention Centre in June 2013 we worked with the Anti-Discrimination Commission of Queensland staff to record and film positive stories of people with disability particularly in regard to employment.

In early 2014, CRU worked with Parent to Parent and Pave the Way to develop a joint statement on Succession Planning.

AIM: INFLUENCE AND EQUIP OTHERS TO LEAD POSITIVE CHANGE

I will report here on leadership development; how we have tried to address issues of strategic significance and the longer or deeper events that have been designed and offered by CRU.

Leadership development

CRU continues to prioritise the development of leaders and leadership as a critical element of change.

We hosted a large leadership event in May 2014 titled "Playing our Part in leading the change towards the NDIS". One hundred and fifty people joined us that day to hear a variety of speakers on this topic, including Michael Kendrick, Neil Barringham, Suellen Welch and Deborah Lugsden; David and Jan Goldsmith, Trina Steed, Frank Crupi and Leigh Tabrett. This was followed by a conversation with a smaller group the following day to take the conversation further.

Since 2012 CRU has taken a particular focus on the development of family leadership. In May, CRU offered a family leadership weekend at Boonah which was open to the

whole family. Over the course of the weekend, 24 adults and 10 children attended from 15 families. Seven of these families were from regional Queensland. Meg Sweeney and Ann Greer joined Lisa and I in facilitating the sessions and conversations over the weekend. Feedback was very positive and this event will be offered again in 2015.

We also offered a variety of day and half day events for families and four family members were supported to attend the Belonging Matters conference in Melbourne in August.

The family leadership development strategy was reviewed with a small external team in September 2013. Generally this review confirmed the direction we had taken in offering a series of events exclusively to families but also highlighted the benefit of continuing to offer events that gave families the chance to link with allies in the sector.

As announced at the AGM last year, in late 2013 CRU was offered a private donation, to be paid annually for five years to contribute to the development of strong, principled leadership amongst people with disability and families throughout Queensland. We were delighted to accept this generous offer. The first planning meeting was held in November and an advisory group was convened early in 2014. The group began meeting monthly in late April and we have appreciated their commitment, creativity and focus as together we have explored how to use these funds. Our thanks to Narissa Wilson, Dave Cohen, Bianca Gamble, Rebecca Murphy, Lesley Chenoweth, Leigh Tabrett, Matt Stone and Jeremy Ward. At 30th June, we were documenting our principles and guidelines to establish a firm base for future decision making.

Our focus on Family leadership development does not signal an intention by CRU to move away from Leadership Development for other constituents.

Strategic significance

Preparation for the NDIS.

July 2013 saw the National Disability Insurance scheme Act 2013 become operational through a series of trial sites in other states. While there is no trial site in Queensland and implementation won't begin here until mid-2016, the results of our Annual Survey conducted at the end of 2013, delivered a very strong message that our members wanted to hear more from CRU about the NDIS. We had covered many topics in the previous year that related to the NDIS without making the link explicit.

As a result of the survey results, this year we developed the "Taking Charge of Change – what will it take to be ready for the NDIS?" workshop with Michael Kendrick. This was delivered in Townsville, Rockhampton and the Gold Coast in March and we followed that up with a day of local people telling their story to illustrate self-direction in action. These workshops known as Finding My Place, were delivered in the same locations in July 2014.

We also submitted tenders to deliver the state government Participant Readiness project in March 2014 and the NDIA peer support initiative in April 2014.

I have participated in the Queensland NDIS Planning and Implementation group since it was convened in February 2013.

Promoting and Sustaining person centred responses

CRU has appreciated for a long time the need to safeguard the family and individually governed organisations and responses that we have here in Queensland. These organisations have been delivering choice and control and self-direction for a long time. In 2013, we decided to invest resources in the production of a DVD. The process of creating the DVD was an opportunity to stop and reflect; to connect or re-connect those involved and to record and share what our community here in Queensland has achieved. The DVD is captioned and also NTSC to enable it to be shared internationally. Our thanks to the members of Kalpana, Homes West and Lifestyle Options and our other allies who made this possible. A particular thanks to Ashley, Mike and Sam.

Between November and May we also conducted a small project with the families from Homes West Association. Suellen and I facilitated conversations with each family in preparation for the organisations strategic planning. During the year we also participated in a number of meetings and conversations to strengthen the direction of Allamanda Housing.

As in previous years, CRU continued its interest in the topic of Agency Transformation ie the particular issues concerned with unbundling of group models to serve people one at a time. This was demonstrated through regular mentoring of some agency staff and families and a presentation during the year by Frank Crupi from Milparinka in Melbourne.

Courses

In addition to short conversations and one day workshops, CRU delivered a number of short courses during the year. These give people more time and opportunity to engage with the material and to connect with CRU staff and the other participants.

We delivered three "Introduction to Facilitation" courses during the year – two in Brisbane and one on the Sunshine Coast in partnership with Parent to Parent. This course was developed by CRU to equip people with the skills to facilitate groups including meetings, planning sessions and Support Circles. We believe that confident, skilled facilitators are an essential part of the self-direction landscape. Unfortunately, as the funding that subsidised this initiative ceased on 30th June 2014 we have worked to modify the format so that the learning can continue in 2015.

We offered two courses for Support workers entitled "Getting to the Heart of what matters" - in response to many requests, this course particularly focuses on the role of the support workers engaged by people and their families who are self-directing or managing their supports.

In addition to workshops, presentations and courses CRU also hosted less formal conversations over lunch or dinner, with a gathering of adult brothers and sisters in August; follow up discussions for people who had attended the "One Person at a Time" conference in Melbourne in August and participants of the "Playing our Part in Leading the Change towards the NDIS" in May.

Since 2009, CRU has been involved in follow up to the Optimal Individual Service Design – Emergency and Crisis initiative which focused on the most highly funded people in Queensland. This year CRU continued to support one person till February 2014. This work of informal network development, linking and planning was done by Jane Sherwin on behalf of CRU. We were honored and humbled to play a small part in this man's journey back to his own community.

Organisational Sustainability.

The other goals of governance, sustainability and paying attention to the identity and sector position form the supporting structure that helps this work to happen. During 2013 – 2014 year we were busy with the usual routine tasks required to keep the organisation functioning well.

- We conducted our Annual survey for the second time in October 2013. This is conducted on survey monkey and all material is collated by a third party, 99 Consulting. There was a very clear message that people wanted CRU to talk more about the NDIS. Up until that point we had talked about many aspects of self-direction, choice and control and change but had not specifically linked that to the change to the NDIS.
- Our Strategic Plan, developed in mid-2011 was scheduled to be completed by mid-2014. We were keen to align our planning to the calendar year rather than the financial year so we brought the planning forward to late 2013 so that the new Strategic Planning period would cover 2014-2016 inclusive. Three sessions were facilitated by Patrick Herd in November and December 2013. The Management Committee and staff were joined by the Stewardship group for the first session and then the Committee and Staff continued with the more detailed planning. We were very grateful to have the skilled facilitation of Patrick as we tried to look three years into the future knowing that we would lose some funding in June 2014 and that other funding was only committed till June 2015.
- Operational planning sessions continued with the staff in March and the Management Committee in July 2014.
- Investing in the development of the staff, committee and stewardship group continued to be a priority for CRU with people attending a variety of forums and conferences both in Queensland and interstate.
- I had the opportunity to travel to Canada in October 2014 and over a period of 2 weeks on a self-designed study tour I visited people and organisations across the country. In Victoria and Vancouver in British Columbia I met with Catriona Johnson,

Professor Tim Stainton, Spectrum Association, Cheryl Hughes, Family Support Institute and PLAN Canada. In Toronto I visited Deohaeko Family support – spending time with individuals, the group of families as a whole, some staff and Janet Klees the co-ordinator. I also met with the manager and staff of Durham Association Family Respite services and with Gillian Chernets. In Nova Scotia, I travelled to Canning to meet with Capre and in Edmonton I spent 3 days with Alberta Association for Community Living. I am extremely grateful to all of these people for opening their doors and sharing their ideas and experience with me. It was a full and busy two weeks and in addition to seeing what was happening in those areas it also helped me to reflect on what we have here.

- In June this year I also attended the International Initiative for Disability Leadership meeting. I participated in and presented at a 2 day exchange on Family Leadership in Dublin with delegates from Canada, UK, New Zealand, Australia and Ireland. I then attended the 2 day meeting in Manchester at the end of the week. This is the third time I have attended this meeting and it is a wonderful opportunity to develop and deepen relationships and connections with our international colleagues.
- Despite the lack of clarity about future funding, the CRU committee began an overdue wage review in May and June and this has continued into the new financial year.
- We successfully gained reaccreditation under ISO 9001:2008 at our Audit conducted by HDAA in early February. My thanks to Lisa Bridle who plays a key role in maintaining our Quality Systems.

Particular organisational challenges in the 2013 – 14 year

- **Funding:** We were advised in September that there would be a variation to our service agreement at the 30th June 2014 as the Succession funding stream was being discontinued. In mid-November Matt Stone and I attended a co-production meeting with Department of Communities Disability Services and the 8 other organisations who were to lose funding, to give input in to how that funding should be redirected in the future. We collaborated with Parent 2 Parent and Pave the Way on a position paper on Succession Planning. In February, tenders were called for Participant Readiness strategies to help prepare People with Disabilities and their families for the NDIS. With the assistance of 99 consulting we submitted a tender in late March and heard on 1st July that our bid was successful subject to negotiations on location, content and funding. Those negotiations were successful and we will be delivering a Participant Readiness initiative in Brisbane, Central Queensland and South West Queensland regions during 2015. We have also been asked to work with the families of people supported by the Accommodation Support and Respite Services of Department of Communities.
- In late April, we also submitted a tender to the NDIA, once again with support from 99 Consulting, to undertake peer support development.

- In June 2014 our service agreement for Information and Referral funding was extended from June 2015 til June 2016.
- We were fortunate to have cash reserves and so were able to take the risk of retaining staff in the latter part of the financial year, despite the lack of clarity about our income.

Future proofing

- We know we are quite vulnerable as a small organisation, to the upcoming changes in the funding arena – funding will transfer from state to Federal and from grants to more competitive tendering. During the year we have explored the possibility of formalising some of our informal alliances. In late March we invited Michael Kendrick to speak with us about the values questions that we need to think about when forming alliances and followed this with another conversation with Paul Paxton-Hall on the legal structures necessary. We invited three advocacy organisations who have little or no funding to attend these sessions with us. It was not our intent to form alliances with them but to share resources about what would be required, if they wished to formalise alliances themselves.

Status as a Public Benevolent Institution

- In July 2013 we submitted an application to the Tax office for DGR status to enable us to be registered as a deductible gift recipient. The Australian Business Register showed CRU as a PBI and having charity tax concessions relating to income tax exemption, GST concessions and a FBT exemption but not DGR as had previously been the case. We were informed that DGR was not possible as we did not have PBI status. This was a huge concern as we had been paying Salary sacrifice to staff for some years, based on the ABR and correspondence from the ATO. After conversations with the ATO, we found the status had not only been revoked but backdated which meant the potential debt to be repaid and accompanying fines could total hundreds of thousands of dollars. We were told the letters from the ATO were computer generated and not correct. We sought the assistance of Tresscox Lawyers who agreed to assist us pro-bono to first regain our PBI status and then negotiate with the ATO about having the debt waived. This was further complicated by the fact that the new Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission (ACNC) was now handling applications for PBI status. Salary sacrificing for staff was discontinued immediately in early August. With the assistance of the lawyers, it took until October to prepare our Application for Status Review with the ACNC as we needed to prove that our work, our constitution and our selection criteria were in line with PBI requirements. In late December we were notified that our work was suitable but that our Objects of Association were too broad. The definition of a charity also changed within this period requiring further paper work. The lawyers assisted us to prepare new draft objects; the Secretary called a Special General Meeting of members in January but the draft objects were then deemed too broad by the ACNC and the meeting needed to be postponed. The lawyers assisted us to

draft a further set of Objects which were submitted for feedback to the ACNC in late January. These objects were seen as more likely to succeed and another Special General Meeting of members was called for 24th March. With minor modifications, members accepted the new Objects. After notifying the Office of Fair Trading, we notified the ACNC and they replied within a few days to say that our PBI status was reinstated, but... that they could only cover the period since they began operating, so it was only backdated til 3rd December 2012.

- Our plan was to regain PBI status with the ACNC before declaring and negotiating the debt with the ATO. We were concerned about the delay and sought further advice from the Lawyers on the risk of delaying notifying the ATO. Before we could act on their advice the ATO contacted us in mid-March with a routine review. Following more legal advice, we notified them of the situation and our attempts to rectify it.
- The ATO notified us that their review only covered particular financial years and also that we still could not proceed with our application for DGR status as we needed another change to our Constitution, concerning the distribution of assets. Notification in writing of our PBI status arrived at the end of April. We reinstated salary sacrifice from that date. The ATO then notified us in May 2014 that they had backdated our status for that period .While the Management committee took responsibility for this issue it was also very time consuming and stressful for Bill, our finance officer and myself, as the staff responsible. The potential for that huge debt also impacted on decisions about finances for most of the financial year.

Constitution review

In late 2012 the Management Committee had considered some changes to the constitution but during 2013 decided to wait and conduct a more thorough review. With the regaining of PBI status and the need to change the rules to be eligible for Gift Deductibility, it was timely to begin the review. A subcommittee comprised of Matt Stone and Mike Duggan from the Management Committee and Bill Kyle and I began meeting in June to carry out this work.

Identity

- In May 2013 we began a process of updating the 'Look of CRU" and after much discussion by the committee and staff and many ideas and draft logos and colors we settled on a new multi-coloured logo, which represents for us the idea of a spark – with the tagline "Expanding Ideas-Creating Change". My thanks to Sharon Daley from the Management Committee, without whom this would never have happened and to Pauline Heaney who was incredibly patient as she drafted logos for us to deliberate over. This new look was launched at the 25th Anniversary dinner in September.

People

- The work of CRU and the supporting structure that enables the work to happen depends on the people of CRU. In addition to the monthly meeting, the Management Committee of Matt, Sharon, Sherryn, Richard and Mike also took on other tasks and roles between meetings and I want to thank them for their support to the staff and myself during the year. The Stewardship group met twice in the latter half of 2013 and brought a broader perspective to CRU, in particular to our Strategic Planning.
- There were no staff changes during 2013-2014 and Lisa Bridle, Suellen Welch, Bill Kyle, Bobby Noone, Kathleen Fleming, Hugh Rose-Miller, and Kim Jensen joined with me in attempting to make the mission of CRU a reality. We are very fortunate to have this team – they have all been involved in the conversations around the uncertain future of funding and thus job security and yet they have been able to put that to the side and commit themselves to the work we need to do. They were also extremely patient with the drop in income caused by the suspension of salary sacrificing arrangements between August and April and the delayed wage reviews due to uncertainty re finances. I personally appreciate the commitment, initiative and common sense and good humour of this group of people. Throughout this report I have mentioned and thanked Lisa, Bill, Suellen and Hugh for their contribution. I now want to particularly thank Bobby Noone, Kim Jensen and Kathleen Flemming who make up our Administration team. Bobby and Kim play an essential but sometimes invisible co-ordination role. They are often the first or only connection that visitors or callers have with CRU and I really appreciate the high standards they bring to their work and their commitment to protecting CRU's identity and culture. Kathleen Flemming joins us each Monday and assists with photocopying and preparation of folders. Kath is the longest serving staff member on this team having been with CRU for eight years and I want to thank Kath for her support.
- In addition to the internal staff we contract people for particular tasks. Many of these people have had a long commitment to CRU and are a critical support layer that is often invisible. I want to take this opportunity to thank Paul Hebinger, Dave Drinkall, Helen Wallace, Jon and Judith at 99 Consulting, Catherine Raju, Peter Hegedus, Patrick Herd, Catherine Allen, Pauline Heaney, Peter Hallahan, Jane Sherwin, Michael Kendrick, Stephen Tonge and Paul Paxton-Hall. A particular thanks this year to Tresscox Lawyers who worked with us pro-bono for 10 months to regain our PBI status.
- We are in the fortunate position that we have too many friends and supporters to name – our presenters; the people who support them in the background; our writers for CRUcial Times, people scattered around the state who promote us in their town or region and who answer our calls for advice on venues, dates etc. We could not do what we do without them.

Reflections

That's a lot of detail about all our activities during the 2013-2014 year. The challenges have seemed different this year. We have seen initiatives and organisations that were doing good work close their doors through lack of resources and we to have needed to face that possibility head on, as a whole organisation.

Planning gets so much more challenging when there is no clarity of income!! This year we walked the tightrope of retaining staff knowing we were losing one lot of funding, but not knowing if we would gain more, with a requirement to still schedule workshops and keep the work of CRU moving. As we lose the notions of recurrent or core funding and permanent jobs there are many flow on effects that need to be responded to.

During the year it helped me to remember two things. Firstly that CRU is an Incorporated Association of members and its future will be decided by the members not by funding bodies. That's not to be naive or simplistic about the benefits of recurrent funding and what that has enabled CRU to do over all these years but just to remind us that we are not powerless in the face of these changes. Secondly, CRU currently receives government funding for Information and Referral and we do that well. We have never actually received funding to do that in the way that CRU does it. There is no funding or NMDS category for change and leadership; for inspiring and encouraging; for giving hope; for gathering like-minded people or for getting hearts racing. As things change around us, it will be up to us to do the 'CRU thing' with what's on offer – and we can be consoled by the fact that we have been doing that for a long time.

I saw a quote by Eric Ries that I thought was pertinent for our times. *"A pivot is a change in strategy without a change in vision. When we see a new way to achieve our vision – we have to remain nimble enough to take it."*

CRU has always wanted to be pivotal but I think our challenge for the 2014-2015 year is to be both pivotal and pivotable.

Margaret Rodgers

12th December 2014.