

New disability respite home removes barriers



It has been a long time coming, but a specially-designed residence has opened its doors in Castlereagh Street, Coonabarabran, providing short-term accommodation and respite care for people living with disabilities, along with their carers.

by CHRIS WARD

The four-bedroom, two-bathroom home was purchased and then leased by Disability Consulting Support (DCS).

DCS has been operating in Tamworth since 2016 and recently branched out to include Coonabarabran.

Chris Buckman, from DCS, said he recognised a

need for the service when he held talks in the town earlier in the year.

"I said then that we wanted to come to Coonabarabran to offer this service," Mr Buckman said.

"It has taken me longer than I would have liked, but we've finally done it. We are here now.

"It's a big buzz for us to

be finally opened."

The new residence means DCS can provide day activities, but also short-term accommodation (respite care).

Mr Buckman described the residence as the "jewel in the crown" of the organisation's existing homes.

"It's beautiful. It's a big,

open-plan home that has different spaces for people to enjoy and make use of," he said.

"The thing I like most about it is that it's so central. You can walk or push someone up the road and you're in the main street and a part of the community."

Mr Buckman said formalising the lease for

the facility was the first step in what he hoped to be a much larger project.

Depending on how the facility is received, he said he would eventually like to expand further in Coonabarabran.

"This place is really a base to demonstrate that we are here to provide the area with this service," he said.

"In the future we could definitely be looking to provide even more facilities.

"Coonabarabran is the perfect spot because it's so central to a lot of towns like Binnaway and Baradine and Gwabegar. People in those towns no longer have to travel all the way to Tamworth or Dubbo."

Bill Callahan, Chris Buckman, Kandice Croser, Tammy Bracken and Michael Bell in front of the new disability respite facility in Coonabarabran.