



**Q:** This is LifeLink's 21<sup>st</sup> year of service. As the architect of its establishment, has it achieved what you hoped it would?

**"Yes, Pope Francis continues to remind us that serving the poor is an essential part of the Church's mission. The Catholic Church is fundamentally a servant Church and a voice for true moral values.**

In the Archdiocese of Perth, we have many wonderful agencies and people committed to helping alleviate suffering, alongside other wonderful lay organisations such as St Vincent de Paul Society.

I'd like to think that if Pope Francis was to conduct a review here of how we respond to those in need, and commit ourselves to the dignity, value and importance of all people, our report card would give us more than a pass mark.

I'm very pleased indeed with what has been achieved through LifeLink. It has caught the imagination of parishioners and the Clergy and has helped build awareness of 'our' collective mission.

I hope it not only continues, but expands and grows so to reach out to help even more people, those who are poor or homeless, those living with disability and those who feel excluded or have special needs.

I'm so grateful for the generosity of everyone who has and continues to donate to LifeLink.

God bless them all".

**Q:** What do you feel are the biggest issues facing our society today?

**"The breakdown of family life is of greatest concern;** In far too many cases breakdown leads to poverty, pain and suffering, and personal distress. The Church can and should be a healing presence to help strengthen families and by doing so, strengthen our communities.

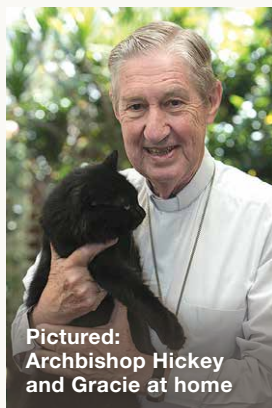
**Drugs and Alcohol;** We see a lot of media attention devoted to alcohol abuse, but it is the combination of both alcohol and drugs which has emerged as a priority. The 'war' seems to be on stopping the supply and distribution of drugs but what we need is a successful campaign that targets people at risk and puts in place strategies and assistance to put an end to this abuse.

The 'war' on drugs is mostly on halting the supply of drugs, but what we need as well is a campaign to urge people to have nothing to do with drugs. Something like the "quit smoking" campaign which has been so successful.

Our faith is about the love of God. We should all try to see the face of Jesus in others, especially in the poor, and go out to them with love. Not to do so is to let God down".

**Q:** May we ask about the newest addition to the household – your cat?

"Yes, this is Gracie. I went to see a family I often visit but they had gone away. I found 'Gracie' looking rather hungry and worse for wear, so I brought her home with me. On their return, the family said they could no longer care for her, so Gracie now lives rather happily with me".



**Pictured:** Archbishop Hickey and Gracie at home



*"A while ago, I was really in a bad place. I was stressed and tired and desperately looking for help. I prayed to God. I said 'God, please help me. I can't do this on my own, I need some help'... and God answered my prayers.*

*The very next day, I received a call from out of nowhere by a man introducing himself as 'Joe' saying he'd heard all about Emmaus Community from Greg Russo (CEO, Archdiocese of Perth) and inviting me to share a coffee with him in West Perth.*

*Joe, I later found out, was Rev Fr Joseph Walsh, Parish Priest of the Subiaco Parish.*

*Our initial coffee and chat went well. I subsequently met with Father Joe, Jim Murphy and Milenna Lennon (both Subiaco parishioners) at St. Joseph's.*

*We discussed plans, or rather my hopes, for the new properties we'd just acquired"* said Br Alan.

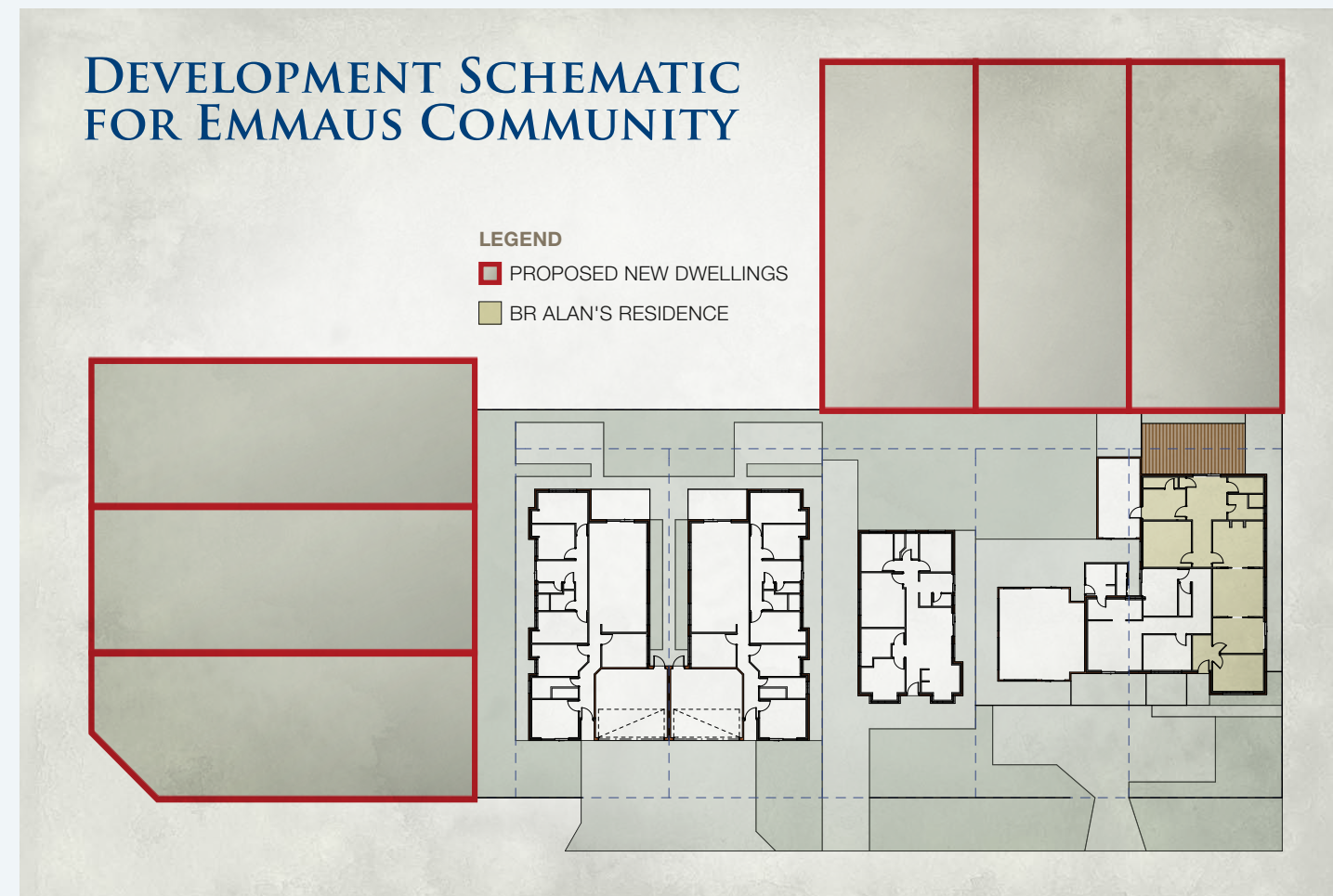
**Fr Joseph Walsh, PP, St Joseph's in Subiaco** recommended a number of strategies.

- 1/ A business plan based on sound research for the project as Government, lotteries and donors are reluctant to get involved otherwise.
- 2/ This project must have the full backing of the Archdiocese of Perth, which gives it prominence, transparency, and authenticity.
- 3/ In terms of structure - the board, management team, pastoral care, and fundraising needs to be clearly defined to facilitate volunteers and paid staff.
- 4/ It is great to have a vision for buildings, whether it is a Church or accommodation, but it is essential that the overall plan is attended to first.

Fr Joseph Walsh said *"The St. Joseph's team continue to meet with corporates, builders, architects and governments to move this project forward, and after Easter we will be visiting Emmaus on reconnaissance."*

Fr Joe added *"our Parish has a valued mission to Kolkatta, India, now in its 9<sup>th</sup> year, which reaches out with education, food and health. We also have a vibrant St. Vincent De Paul, which the parish continues to support.*

*In response to Pope Francis's call 'You cannot call yourself Catholic unless you connect with the homeless' the parish of St. Joseph's, Subiaco, has decided to reach out and support Br Alan and this worthwhile mission"* he said.



# LIFELINKS

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LifeLink™ - CATHOLIC CARING AGENCIES  
61 Fitzgerald Street, Northbridge WA 6003

Telephone 08 9427 0311  
Facsimile 08 9427 0379

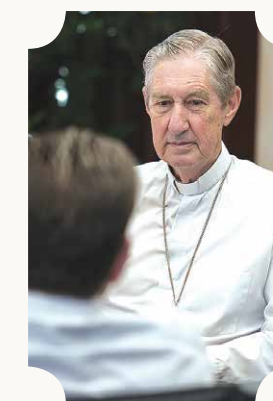
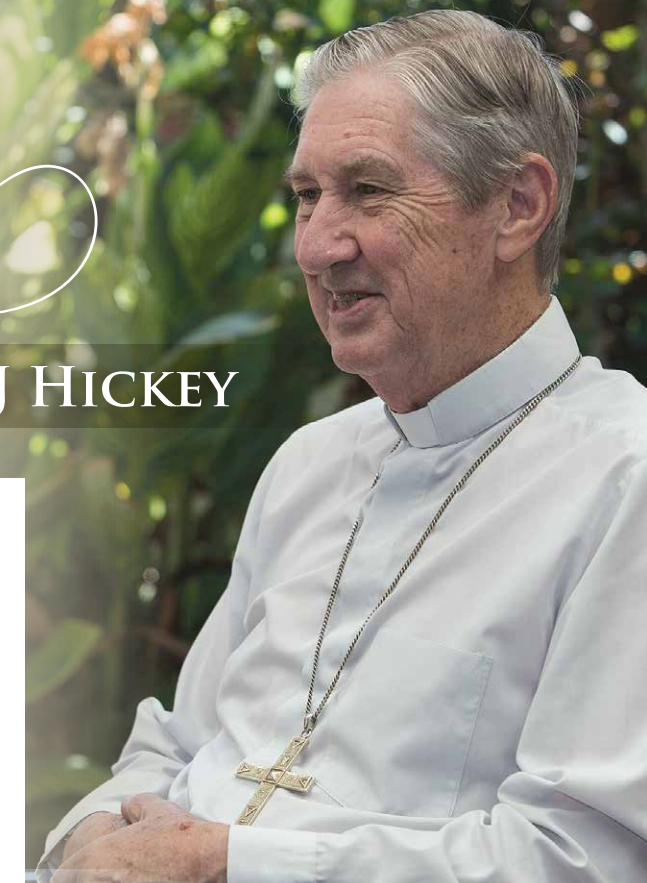
Email admin@lifelink.com.au  
Website www.lifelink.com.au

The material in this newsletter may be reused for school projects with our compliments

## A CONTINUING LIFE OF Service

EMERITUS ARCHBISHOP BARRY J HICKEY

*By the time you receive this copy of LIFELINKS, Emeritus Archbishop Barry Hickey will have recently celebrated the 2<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of his 'official' retirement. In this 21<sup>st</sup> year of service for LifeLink, an organisation established by Archbishop Hickey, we thought we'd take a moment to catch-up and chat with His Grace about what he's been doing, his thoughts on LifeLink and what he feels are the big challenges in society today.*



**Q:** So tell us what you've been doing lately?

"I must say I'm enjoying retirement and have no regrets about laying down the burden of such a huge and important job (as Archbishop of Perth). Of course, whilst I resigned from the Office, I have not retired from the priesthood. God is still calling me to serve and it is my continuing vocation and joy to do so.

Life has been very busy actually. I have been delighted to support and assist Archbishop Costelloe in any way that I can and that he feels I may be of help. I hear confessions, administer Confirmation and visit schools, visit and celebrate Masses at our LifeLink agencies such as Emmaus Community, Daydawn and Shopfront and I am involved with the Italian community and many other Archdiocesan organisations. Many people come to see me at home personally for advice, spiritual counselling and support.

**"GOD IS STILL CALLING ME TO SERVE AND IT IS MY CONTINUING VOCATION AND JOY TO DO SO."**

EMERITUS ARCHBISHOP BARRY HICKEY

As you know, I feel I must start writing before it's too late. I have two new books in the works, one I've almost finished and very excited about, entitled "Vademecum" or 'Go with me' – a prayer, beliefs and practices book for Catholic lay people. The other is an update of my book "Preparing Couples for Marriage."

I must say my life has been full and very satisfying. My health is good, I'm enjoying my tennis, I've enjoyed some overseas travels and I have especially enjoyed spending a lot more time with my family. My only regret thus far is that I haven't found nearly enough time to attend as many music concerts and cultural events as I would have liked. It's my new resolution to try and make that happen more over this year" said Archbishop Hickey.

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On 1 July 2014, the introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) will usher in a new approach to the way people with disability and their families are assisted and supported by organisations such as **Identitywa**.

The NDIS is a move towards empowering people with disability and their families to take control of, and have a choice in, the services they want and need and the way these services are provided.

We spoke with Marina Re, Chief Executive Officer of **Identitywa**, and asked how this change will impact on this LifeLink supported agency, and what benefits it will deliver for their many clients.

Marina said: "Our organisation has developed and adopted a new strategic plan for 2013-2016, one which sets forth a bold new vision in which **"All people live with a sense of purpose, a sense of belonging and a sense of wellbeing"**. This important statement will guide us in all we do for the next three years.

Our vision encompasses people with all types of disability and people of all faiths and backgrounds. For each individual and family it means we'll begin our relationship with the question **"What does a good life look like for you?"**

**Our role is to build relationships, to work collaboratively with people with disability and their families and together, in partnership, help them achieve their individual goals**" she said.

**Q:** So what does the introduction of the NDIS mean for people with disability? How does it work and what are the benefits for the people you work with?

**"The NDIS is a scheme which entitles any person with a disability to receive the support they need. In this sense, it's similar to the way Medicare operates. It's designed to be a more equitable approach to support.**

The Scheme also means that people with disability and their families and carers will receive the financial support they need directly. Up until now, organisations like **Identitywa** have received funding to offer a set of services and supports.

We would ask people with support needs, **"Which of our supports do you want?"**

The introduction of the NDIS turns that question around and gives people with disability choice and control. They will be able to shop around for the supports they require from an organisation of their choosing. It means they are asking of us, **"What can you offer me?"**

The onus is on us then to be more responsive to the wants and needs of people and their families and carers.

At **Identitywa**, we started preparing for these changes well before the NDIS Bill passed through Parliament in March 2013. We are now listening to people describe what a good life looks like to them, and working in partnership with them to make that happen. It's a person-centred approach to providing support rather than a service-driven approach. We're very much looking forward to sharing the journey with people in this way."

## A STRONG SENSE OF PLACE

A 6 bedroom, 3 bathroom house is bigger than the average Australian home, but for five **Identitywa** housemates, this is the spacious new living environment they'll soon call home.

**Identitywa** Coordinator, Michael Wolfenden has been getting the new home ready for the men who currently live together in a duplex.

He said, **"We're making some internal modifications to better suit peoples' needs. We're also planting a front garden with the back garden to be landscaped later this year. It's got some beautiful trees in the back yard, with a big purpose-built shed and patio area."**

**"Everyone including the men's families are really excited. It's a better living environment, and big enough for people to have their own space and time alone if that's what they want."**

Tim is one of the men making the move. He's been sharing his current home with some of his house mates for 12 years, and they've developed strong bonds and a strong sense of place.

**"It will be a big change for everyone"** said Tim's dad Phil. **"One we're looking forward to."**

**"We've worked closely with the Identitywa staff to make sure the transition goes smoothly. The bigger living areas, particularly the outdoor areas, can only be a positive thing. I'm sure it will provide a more relaxed living space for all the men."**

**Identitywa** has been an outstanding provider of quality support to people with disability for more than 35 years. Today, the organisation works with 130 people accommodated in the many group homes operated by this agency, and supports an additional 400 clients and their families each year. This is achieved through the dedication and hard work of approximately 415 professional full time, part time and casual staff.

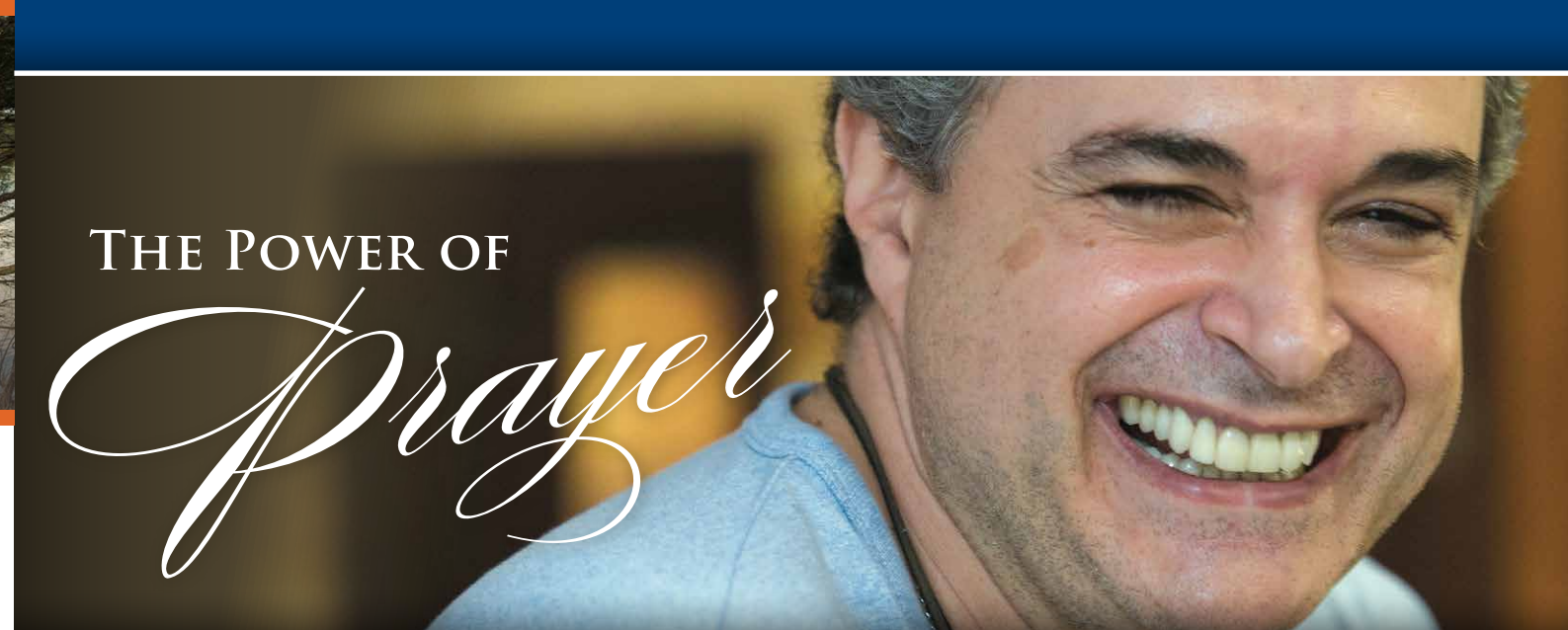
In 2014, **Identitywa**, an organisation funded and supported through your generous support of LifeLink, will deliver \$25 million of care throughout the community.



**"While Tim is adjusting to his new surroundings, he'll continue to pursue the things he loves and is familiar with including swimming and walking each day,"** Phil added.

**Identitywa** CEO, Marina Re said **"We're delighted to be able to provide the men with a new home that better meets their needs."**

**"We've been looking at how well-suited our houses are to the people we support, and we're committed to making changes like these to ensure homes provide the best possible living environment."**



By Brett Mendez, Manager, LifeLink

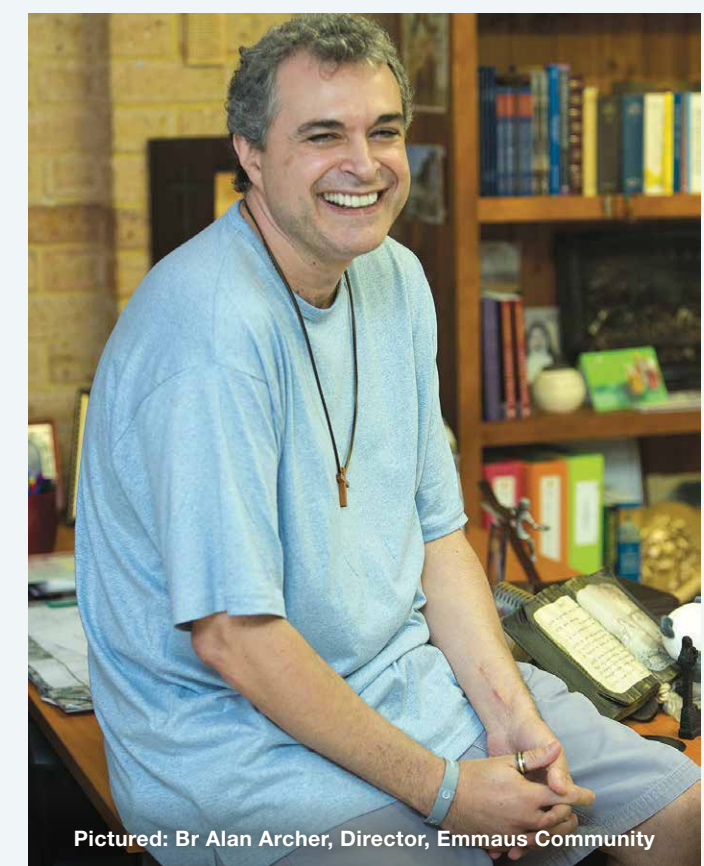
**I've just spent the morning chatting with Brother Alan Archer, Director of Emmaus Community.**

As a reminder, Emmaus Community, partly funded by LifeLink, is an agency which provides long-term independent community based living for adults with mental illness. They live together, support each other and take care of one another, with support from Br Alan and his team.

Our meeting starts in the same way I've come to expect when visiting this agency.

There's a huge welcoming smile, a warm handshake, a big chuckle... and a request that I please stop calling him 'Brother Alan' and simply call him **'Al'**...everybody does!

**"I've some big, exciting news to share with you when you're ready"** said Br Alan... sorry, Al.



In my opinion, Br Alan Archer is a remarkable, inspirational man with a true vocation, a calling, for what he is doing. He radiates positive energy which is almost palpable and speaks with such passion that you can't help but get excited too. But first, we chat about what's been happening at Emmaus.

The number of people with mental health issues seeking help within the community has grown significantly over the past 2 years. Today, Emmaus cares for 40 people who live together as 'community members' in 6 homes established by the agency. An additional 150 people (and their families) are assisted and supported to live independently throughout Perth.

Thankfully, perhaps the biggest changes for Br Alan since he started Emmaus Community is that he now has people to help – someone to lean on when needed.

Br Alan said **"It's been fantastic. I now have Patricia Gressieux on board as Manager and Dominic Julien is our Assistant Manager. Monica Perriera is our Pastoral Sharer and we of course have Kerry Messer and Amelia Bailey helping with the never ending mountains of admin... and even Kerry's husband, Peter Messer, a rock at Emmaus as a volunteer. And last but not least Henry McGill our Maintenance Manager, who always states 'life is never dull at Emmaus'."**

**I know this sounds terrible, but for the first time in years, I'm not on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.**

**It's taken awhile to get used to not jumping every time the phone rings late at night, but I have to say getting some sleep and having just one day a week for personal time – to watch a movie or read – it's really recharged my batteries. It's been wonderful.**

**But the big news is... We've just bought the two houses at the rear of our properties here, which means that the dream of building a real community can now be realised. My dream is that we will build 6 units on this land and provide housing for up to a dozen or more people, possibly up to 20 new members. The added advantage is that it will reduce travelling time between the various houses, and we'll be better able to coordinate help and support for the members when we are all together"** he said.

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