

# Wintringham



## RESPONSE TO TASMANIAN HOUSING STRATEGY DISCUSSION PAPER

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## TASMANIAN HOUSING STRATEGY DISCUSSION PAPER: WINTRINGHAM SUBMISSION

*Wintringham is a not-for-profit welfare company that works to support, and house impoverished older men and women aged 50-plus who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. Wintringham currently operates in Southern Tasmania and Victoria.*

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### INTRODUCTION

Wintringham appreciates the opportunity to provide this response to the Tasmanian Housing Strategy Discussion Paper.

Central to this submission is that to prevent marginalised and impoverished elderly people from becoming homeless, or returning to homelessness, an adequate supply of affordable housing with appropriate support is required.

Wintringham's homeless service delivery model is fundamentally different from most other housing and homeless service providers. We endeavour to live up to our motto of providing "A Home 'til Stumps" which means that from the time one of our outreach workers contacts a vulnerable aged person, we aim to care for that person until their death. This has in turn resulted in Wintringham building an extensive range of residential aged care services including a nursing home, all of which are funded by the Commonwealth Government.

Our model blends State and Commonwealth funding to provide care and housing to elderly disadvantaged citizens regardless of whether they live in local country regions or metropolitan suburbs and demonstrates how the Tasmanian State Government can assist with the provision of appropriate housing and support to elderly people experiencing homelessness, without having to assume responsibility for bearing all the cost.

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

This submission will provide evidence to support the following recommendations

### Keeping People Housed

1. Fund appropriate housing support programs to ensure longevity of housing for vulnerable residents. By ending homelessness, this makes the housing system more cost effective and results in cost savings in other jurisdictions (health, emergency services, community services, etc). Supported, long term and affordable housing in appropriate locations saves money.
2. Strengthen the linkages between Aged Care support programs and affordable housing. Effective support programs work with older people to ensure tenancies are long term, properties are maintained, and stops people returning to homelessness.
3. Provide brokerage funding to establish new tenancies and to assist tenants to maintain existing housing if at risk of eviction. When long-term housing is available, brokerage funds are essential to ensure new tenancies are successful.
4. Supportive tenancy management is required in housing where residents have experienced chronic homelessness. Capital funds should be allocated to specialist housing provider who can provide supportive tenancy management to those most at risk of homelessness.
5. Work alongside the Department of Justice to progress transitioning residential Tenancy matters from the magistrate's court to the Tasmanian Civil & Administrative Tribunal. This will support the resolution of Residential Tenancy matters in a faster and more accessible format, aiming to keep people housed.

### Increasing Affordable Housing

6. Development of a discrete capital funding pool that is independent of the requirement to leverage external debt. This supports housing providers, such as Wintringham, who work exclusively with people who are financially disadvantaged.
7. Develop a mechanism for fast tracking town planning and building approvals. An accelerated assessment process with transparent and clear criterion, such as economic value, policy alignment and public benefit can promote the faster development of appropriate housing.
8. Consider a property developer levy to generate funds which can support growth and development of social housing. For developments over a certain size, a percentage of the project value is contributed to a fund supporting the growth of social and affordable housing across Tasmania.

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## WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

Guided by principles of social justice, Wintringham has a single mission to provide dignified, high-quality care and accommodation to those who are profoundly financially and socially disadvantaged, and particularly to men and women aged 50-plus, who are experiencing homelessness, or at risk of homelessness.

Our organisation operates an innovative and integrated range of programs providing a continuum of care; ranging from assertive outreach, social housing (777 units; all with housing support), in-home aged care (850 packages), a registered Special Residential Service (SRS), and seven residential aged care sites (333 beds), which are in receipt of the Homeless Supplement. With 873 dedicated staff, Wintringham supports well over 2,000 clients each day in Victoria and Tasmania.

Based in Bellerive, our Tasmanian team currently

- Provide Housing Connect services to older Tasmanians experiencing homelessness
- Provide case management support to residents of Housing Tasmania who are at risk of losing their tenancy
- Manage 172 social housing properties on behalf of Housing Tasmania, including ongoing support to maintain tenancies
- Provide case management to vulnerable older Tasmanians through Assistance with Care, Commonwealth aged care funding
- Provide in-home supports to older Tasmanians through Commonwealth Home Support Program
- Operate 40 Residential Aged Care beds providing the highest level of 24-hour support to frail aged Tasmanians who have experienced homelessness. This is an exceptional example of State and Commonwealth governments working together. With the generous capital support of the Tasmanian government, and the ongoing care funded by Commonwealth Aged Care services many Tasmanians will benefit from this new service for years to come.

Wintringham's pioneering work with elderly people experiencing homelessness has received national and international recognition, most notably when in 2011 the United Nations awarded Wintringham their Scroll of Honour, the highest accolade awarded by UN Habitat and the first time it was given to an Australian organisation.

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## HOW WE CAME TO BE

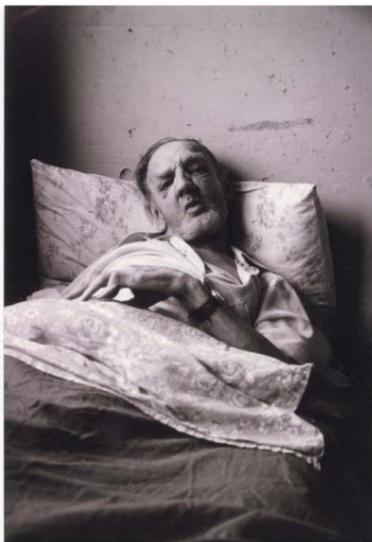
At the time of the commencement of Wintringham in 1989, elderly homeless people lived and died at homeless persons' night shelters that were run by a variety of charitable services and funded under the Supported Assistance and Accommodation Program (SAAP), a Federal Government multi-lateral agreement with the States and a separate bi-lateral agreement with each individual State.



These buildings were often violent places where people were routinely bashed, raped and on occasions, murdered. It hardly needs to be stated that they were totally inappropriate for frail aged people, yet many of the residents were elderly and in desperate need of aged care services.

In spite of the best efforts of social workers at places such as Gordon House in Melbourne, Australia's largest night, it was almost impossible to have any referrals to aged care residential services accepted, even though these services were managed by church or charitable organisations who

received generous tax concessions.



Gordon House could accommodate 300 people each night. We estimated more than half of the residents were elderly and over 110 people were eligible for Commonwealth aged care services. Not one of those residents were in receipt of such services.

It is difficult to explain just how appalling conditions were in these night shelters for the aged, but a simple comparison is that Gordon House provided 20 hours per week of personal care for the 300 clients. Our estimate is that a Commonwealth aged care service catering for 300 people would provide 5,000 hours of personal care. It is important to note that in both instances the clients are the same people - it is the accommodation and resultant eligibility for care that differs.

Given the unwillingness of aged care providers to accept referrals on behalf of elderly homeless people, Wintringham was established to provide this care. The initial reaction from both the aged care sector representatives and the public service was one of resistance, with claims from providers that the problem did not exist, and from the Government, that homeless clients were being provided for via the homelessness service system.

In response to the claim that our clients were homeless and therefore should be part of the homeless services system, we argued that they were not homeless and aged but aged and homeless and should therefore be entitled to aged care services. This argument was not simply semantics but signaled a new paradigm in viewing the rights of the elderly homeless. The representation was successful and eventually funding was approved for Wintringham to develop 3 aged care facilities for elderly homeless people.

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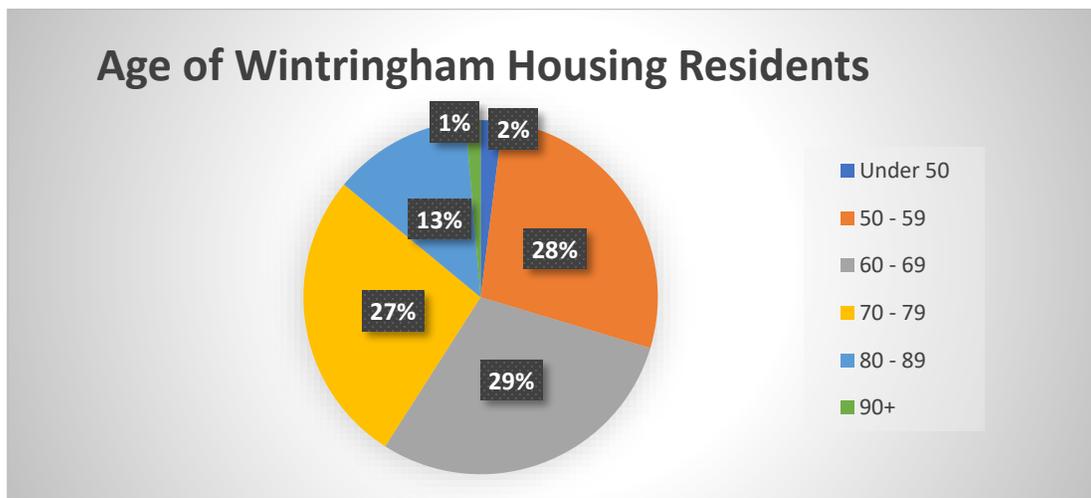
## 50 YEARS AND OLDER: HOMELESS PEOPLE AGE PREMATURELY

Working with the elderly experiencing homelessness presents particular problems for service delivery, in part because the often noted incidence of premature ageing and complexity of care needs (physical, psychological and social), combined with a general reluctance to accept services due in part to a strong sense of independence and demeaning experiences with a range of previous health or community care providers.

Our model of care has been developed in direct response to these 'special needs' of our client group. Many clients who have been, or who are experiencing, homelessness arrive at Wintringham in very poor health, undernourished and frequently frightened or so 'battle hardened' that they are difficult to communicate with. In addition, it is quite normal for our clients to have had a very isolated life with little or no contact with family members.

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare recognises that within a homeless population, 'older people' are commonly defined as those aged 55 years and over<sup>1</sup>. Based on our own experience working with older people who have experienced homelessness, Wintringham defines older people as those who are 50 years and older. Premature ageing is caused by the disproportionately high rate of preventable diseases, progressive morbidity and premature death prevalent in the homeless population. This can mean that a person is 'older' at 40 or 50 years of age. It makes a key difference to service provision if we 'label' a client aged and homeless, rather than homeless and aged.

Currently across Wintringham's social housing properties 86% of our residents are aged under 80 years, as demonstrated in the graph below. It highlights that a broad age range of 'older people' require suitable accommodation and support.



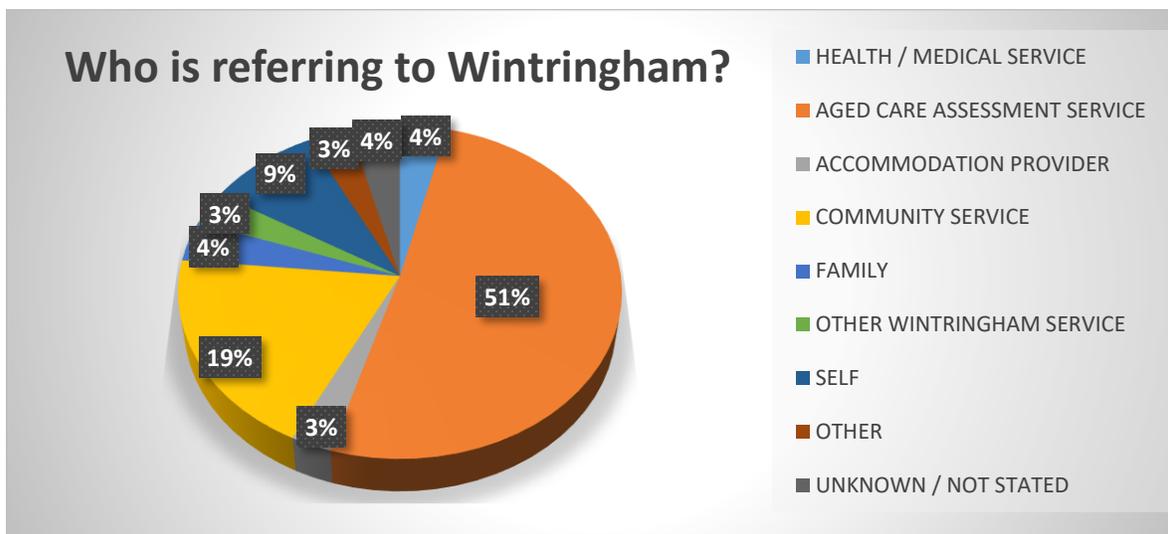
Wintringham has successfully secured acknowledgement from the Australian Commonwealth Government that the lifestyle of many of our homeless men and women had prematurely aged them; similar to the

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<sup>1</sup> AIHW Older Australians Web Report, <https://www.aihw.gov.au/getmedia/a49cf1b5-0a25-46a1-804b-ef38fa805af4/Older-Australians.pdf.aspx?inline=true>

argument Aboriginal representatives were making, that this premature ageing should make them eligible for Commonwealth aged care from the age of 50 years, instead of having to wait until 65. As a result, Wintringham (and other homeless aged care providers), deliver residential and community-based aged care services to clients aged 50 and above.

The majority of referrals to Wintringham come from the Aged Care Assessment Service, which highlights the quantity of aged care funding that Wintringham brings into the homelessness service system. In addition, it highlights the ageing needs of older people who have experienced homelessness. It demonstrates that people who have experienced homelessness age before their securely housed peers.



## AFFORDABLE HOUSING

*“The vital task for Tasmania is to ensure an adequate supply of affordable housing for renters on low and moderate incomes. To do this we need to build more dwellings, to a target of 10% of housing stock as affordable and social housing (approximately 10,000 additional properties).”<sup>2</sup>*

The 2016 census shows that there are now 134,000 people aged 65 years and over paying rents more than 30 per cent of their income - an increase of 41.7 per cent in five years. The vast majority of those people are in need of affordable housing.<sup>3</sup>

The number of people aged 55 and over who accessed Specialist Homelessness Services in Australia increased by 37 per cent between 2012-13 and 2016-17, with more than half (56 per cent) of these people being women. Older people in the 55 - 74 age bracket were the fastest growing age cohort within the overall homelessness population, increasing by 55 per cent in the decade to 2016.

<sup>2</sup> Shelter Tas Budget Submission 2022, <https://shelertas.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Shelter-Tas-Budget-Submission-2022-23.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> ABS Census, Estimating Homelessness, 2016, cat no. 2049.0

In addition, older people represent one of the fastest growing groups seeking assistance from specialist homelessness agencies, with an average annual growth rate of 8 per cent each year between 2011–12 to 2016-17 compared to 4 per cent growth rate for other specialist homelessness services clients.

Demand for single occupancy housing is high for the older cohort. Older specialist homelessness services clients were more likely to be living alone (59 per cent) when compared to the rest of the specialist homelessness services clients (29 per cent).<sup>4</sup>

Wintringham strongly supports the need for additional affordable housing as outlined in the Tasmanian Housing Strategy.

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## OUTREACH AND HOUSING SUPPORT SERVICES AT WINTRINGHAM

Wintringham provides comprehensive services offering direct, face-to-face encouragement and assistance to access services, as well as advocacy and service coordination once assistance is in place. This form of Outreach and Housing Support also includes the ongoing ability to troubleshoot on the client's behalf when things may go off track.

Wintringham uses a Housing First approach. We know that support for this group is ongoing and lifelong and revolves around help to engage, coordinate and effectively participate with the services they need to maintain their health, safety and well-being. While the need for intensive levels of support waxes and wanes, the potential for assistance of this nature is ever present.

Without ongoing and flexible support, older people can bounce from crisis to crisis, using increasingly large amounts of resources but never finding a long-term solution. They live neglected in our communities, in situations that are untenable until a crisis brings them to the attention of one or another emergency service.

Wintringham initially provides support by:

- Locating people who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness
- Providing Assertive Outreach when appropriate to those sleeping rough
- Focusing on locating appropriate housing options and assisting people to complete applications
- Addressing the complex needs of the individual
- Supporting the individual to access essential services for their physical and mental health; and
- Arranging for immediate provision of any required basic home care services (Commonwealth Home Support Program or Home and Community Care).

Once the client starts receiving services and has begun to trust the worker:

- Assistance is provided to apply for long-term support through aged care or disability supports
- Once these above programs become available, assistance to activate services and retain service provision
- We then help to obtain and/or retain appropriate housing and support, training, and/or direct assistance needed in order to maintain tenancies

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<sup>4</sup> Australian Association of Gerontology: Older Women who are experiencing or at risk of Homelessness, 2018

- Encouragement and hands-on practical assistance is provided when needed to participate with the range of allied health or health care providers assessed as required to meet health care needs
- We also work to ensure that links and service coordination is established to ensure that the client is able to access those opportunities for support provided by a variety of services and programs.

When the client is settled and engaged with services we provide:

- Service coordination
- Solutions to any barriers to service provision, as and when needs arise.

The overall aim of Supportive Housing is to maintain the tenancy and improve the health and well-being of the client. As part of this process, the Housing Support Worker also aims to maintain harmony and build a sense of community for the client within their chosen housing. Some functions of the Housing Support Worker include service navigation and coordination of alternate support services (ie mental health, drug and alcohol, legal, financial and general health) in order to do this they may accompany a client to an appointment, facilitate transport or assist other service providers in their work with the client. Evidence supports the notion that support programs, alongside housing, are effective in sustaining tenancies.<sup>5</sup>

Case loads for our workers can vary according to the complexity and intensity of support required by each individual they are working with. We believe this flexibility is the key to providing good client outcomes. A funding environment which prescribes the amount of hours that can be spent on an individual would have failed many of our clients. While some clients require only a very light touch, others need many hours over a long period.

The interventions that maintain housing can be complex, or seemingly simple. The example below indicates how a simple problem can very quickly get out of control.

*When we were helping Phillipa establish herself in her new home, we found she had no idea how to budget. The greatest problem for her was the utility and phone bills which, although they come regularly, do not come each week. To help her manage this problem, we set her up with a Centre Pay account. This is an account which takes a specific amount of money out of the pension each week to meet bill repayments. Unbeknown to us, however, one evening, early in her tenancy, Phillipa received a phone call from a competing gas and electricity provider. Phillipa believed them when they told her they could offer a much better deal for her and agreed to take them up on their offer.*

*We first became aware of the problem when Phillipa showed us Final Notices and demands for payment. By this time the debt had grown to over \$800 – a sum Phillipa had no way of paying. We negotiated with the utility company to move Phillipa to a more appropriate scheme, to waiver some of the payment and accept a long term repayment for the rest. Phillipa had tried to solve this problem herself, however when she had phoned the utility company she could not figure out how to negotiate the phone system, which was an automated one – asking her to ‘press 1 for ‘X’; press 2 for ‘Y’ etc., and had given up in defeat.*

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<sup>5</sup> Zaretsky and Flatau, 2015, AHURI: The cost effectiveness of Australian tenancy support programs for formerly homeless people [link here](#)

Such a simple thing, but an example of how modern systems can present seemingly insurmountable barriers. Without ongoing, long-term access to a support worker who has the ability to provide support when required, Phillipa's tenancy would have ended, and she would have returned to homelessness.

Supporting older people in affordable housing is cost effective for community, as it prevents older people from reaching crisis points.<sup>6</sup> Without affordable housing, the cost of supporting the elderly becomes unnecessarily excessive. If someone cannot afford their medication, or good food, their health then suffers. Their chronic illnesses get worse, increasing the cost on overstretched health and medical systems.

The Lifecourse Institutional Costs of Homelessness for Vulnerable Groups study led by Professor Eileen Baldry followed the lives of eleven people and found that between them, they had cost State and Commonwealth Governments almost \$22 million in health, legal and custodial services. One of the research conclusions is that "the atomised and singular manner in which homeless persons with complex compounded needs are addressed by most agencies is extremely costly and counter productive."<sup>7</sup>

Provision of affordable housing is key in improving health and wellbeing outcomes for older people who are homeless and works to save the government money. It is an inefficient use of resources when a community only responds to the crises in a person's life.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 1**

##### **Fund flexible support periods for older people experiencing homelessness**

Funding must enable flexible periods of case management support. Intensity and duration of support must be based on the needs of the individual. This may be short term, high intensity support preventing people from entering homelessness, or long term ongoing support for those experiencing chronic homelessness.

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## **STATE AND COMMONWEALTH WORKING TOGETHER**

Wintringham's experience demonstrates that Aged Care support is essential in the maintenance of affordable housing tenancies for older Australians and results in savings for the housing provider, and more broadly for the community. In the reverse, suitable and affordable housing is required to enable provision of Aged Care services. Integration of Aged Care and affordable housing is essential: if separated, the result is poorer service delivery and less than adequate outcomes for our clients. The Home Care Packages (HCP), currently funded by Commonwealth Aged Care support are an excellent example of how Commonwealth funding can be utilized to support tenants and save the State Government money on housing support programs.

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<sup>6</sup> Witte et. Al., 2017, The case for last resort housing: Providing housing for homeless is cheaper and better for society <https://www.sgsep.com.au/publications/insights/the-case-for-last-resort-housing-providing-housing>

<sup>7</sup> Baldry et. al., 2012, Lifecourse institutional costs of homelessness for vulnerable groups <https://www.mhdcd.unsw.edu.au/sites/www.mhdcd.unsw.edu.au/files/u18/Lifecourse-Institutional-Costs-of-Homelessness-final-report.pdf>

The State must work with the Commonwealth to ensure that there is a specialised response for older people who have experienced chronic homelessness. This response should be built on the principles of providing safe and affordable housing that is strongly connected to the Commonwealth Aged Care System.

The existing partnership between Wintringham and the Tasmanian Government provides an exceptional example of how well the two systems can integrate. With the generous capital support of the Tasmanian government, and the ongoing care funded by Commonwealth Aged Care services, Wintringham is now operating a 40 bed Residential Aged Care service in Southern Tasmania, focused on housing older Tasmanians who have experienced social and financial disadvantage, as well as homelessness. This service would not exist without the partnership between the Tasmanian government, the Commonwealth and a specialist aged care provider, such as Wintringham.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 2**

##### **Strengthen the linkages between Aged Care support programs and affordable housing.**

Effective support programs work with older people to ensure tenancies are long term, properties are maintained, and stops people returning to homelessness.

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### **FLEXIBLE BROKERAGE FUNDING**

Flexible pools of brokerage funds are an essential component of ending homelessness.

For people who are accessing the homelessness system for the first-time flexible funds can be used to prevent eviction or assist people to maintain their existing housing. This may be in the form of rent in advance, or funds to provide cleaning services while waiting on services to commence. Brokerage funds which can be used to overcome the barriers for that individual are required. The amount of funding spent on any one individual will vary significantly.

Brokerage funds are also critical in ensuring that a new tenancy can succeed. For someone who has been experiencing homelessness for many years, this may be purchasing the items they need to set up a new home. A warm bed to sleep in, a fridge, a couch.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 3**

##### **Provide brokerage funding to support the establishment of new tenancies and to assist tenants to maintain existing housing if at risk of eviction**

Flexible brokerage funds are available for service providers to support people to maintain existing tenancies, prevent evictions, and ensure new tenancies are set up to succeed.

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## WINTRINGHAM HOUSING – SUPPORTED TENANCIES

For clients who have histories of failed tenancies and who have complex support needs, a supportive approach to tenancy management is required. Tenancy management workers play a key role in helping vulnerable people to maintain their housing. These tenancy workers recognize the benefit of case management support and understand that when the two systems work together it can achieve the best outcomes for individuals.

The components of our supportive approach to tenancy management are:

- Time for tenancy management workers to spend with residents (explaining rights and responsibilities and relationship building)
- Use of plain English for tenancy agreements, documented rules and expectations
- Non-punitive approaches to breaches in the Residential Tenancies Act (RTA)
- Utilising the RTA as a tool to support residents, and encourage appropriate behaviours from residents and their visitors
- Responsive maintenance which quickly and effectively deals with any issues raised

A supportive approach to tenancy management results in reduced evictions. Although tenancy management workers have a different function to housing support workers, both work collaboratively to highlight issues and barriers that may put a tenancy at risk. While supportive tenancy appears more expensive at an initial glance, there are economic savings for sustained tenancies, and reduced evictions.<sup>8</sup>

### **RECOMMENDATION 4**

**Supportive tenancy management is required in housing where residents have experienced chronic homelessness.**

Capital funds should be allocated to specialist housing provider who can provide supportive tenancy management to those most at risk of homelessness.

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<sup>8</sup> Zaretsky and Flatau, 2015, AHURI: The cost effectiveness of Australian tenancy support programs for formerly homeless people [link here](#)

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## TRANSITION RESIDENTIAL TENANCY MATTERS TO TASCAT

The Tasmanian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (TASCAT) already plays a critical role in resolving disputes across several legal areas. There have been discussions about a Stage 3 transition for TASCAT, aimed at transferring additional powers and functions, such as Residential Tenancy Matters, to TASCAT.<sup>9</sup>

Wintringham's experience as a provider of housing in states where Residential Tenancy Matters are heard through a civil and administrative tribunal, compared with the Magistrate's Court, has highlighted the following challenges of the existing system in Tasmania:

- It is expensive for social housing providers (mostly not for profit) and clients to obtain legal representation for the magistrate's court.
- Minor matters are being heard in a busy Magistrate's Court that do not always require the expertise of this level of judicial system, costing the justice system more.
- A Civil and Administrative Tribunal is easier for residents to represent themselves in tenancy matters.
- Many people who wish to attend to present evidence (eg: neighbours) in Residential Tenancy matters find the Magistrate's Court intimidating and therefore often refuse to attend. This is disempowering to residents, and the broader Tasmanian community. It also reduces the effectiveness of rulings that the magistrate makes.
- Tenancy matters can run for many months due to the demand on the Magistrate's Court, with the risk that dangerous behaviour can continue unchecked despite breaches of the Residential Tenancy's Act.

A Civil and Administrative Tribunal is a fairer and more affordable option and can support residents and housing providers to find quicker outcomes which focus on sustaining housing for all tenants. As a more formal court and legal process, the Magistrate's Court does not provide effective support to vulnerable tenants who are seeking to resolve issues with their housing provider, or with their neighbours.

### **RECOMMENDATION 5**

**Work alongside the Department of Justice to progress transitioning residential Tenancy matters from the magistrate's court to the Tasmanian Civil & Administrative Tribunal.**

This will support the resolution of Residential Tenancy matters in a faster and more accessible format, aiming to keep people housed.

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<sup>9</sup> Hon Elise Archer MP, 2021, [https://www.parliament.tas.gov.au/Bills/Bills2021/pdf/notes/46\\_of\\_2021-SRS.pdf](https://www.parliament.tas.gov.au/Bills/Bills2021/pdf/notes/46_of_2021-SRS.pdf)

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## CAPITAL FUNDING POOL

One of the most common funding models for Housing Associations, or social housing providers, is a model which relies upon these organisations to be able to repay debts. This occurs through a range of models where housing is provided to people in high, middle and low-income brackets. The high and middle income housing is rented or sold to assist the housing provider to fund new buildings or repay debts.

This model is not suited to those organisations, such as ours, who work exclusively with elderly people who have experienced homelessness and are financially and socially disadvantaged. When 100% of our residents are supported by Centrelink, we have no high or middle income earners who can pay a higher rental, which would enable us to repay loans. Therefore, Social Housing providers, such as Wintringham, can only build new properties with access to capital funding, or philanthropic grants. Wintringham Housing has many successful examples where the contribution of funding from a variety of sources has built housing which had ended homelessness. The downside is that these funding opportunities are few and far between.

To enable more older people to end homelessness, a dedicated capital funding pool is required to support social housing providers who only house people who are financially disadvantaged.

### **RECOMMENDATION 6**

#### **Development of a discrete capital funding pool**

It must be independent of the requirement to leverage external debt. This supports housing providers, such as Wintringham, who work exclusively with people who are financially disadvantaged.

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## FAST TRACKED PLANNING AND BUILDING APPROVALS

As part of the roll out of the Tasmanian Planning Scheme, Wintringham recommends that consideration be given to the fast tracking of planning and building approvals in certain instances.

Social housing is essential social infrastructure; it supports local economies, reduces poverty and disadvantage, and reduces the cost burden of homelessness on other government services. The Land Use Planning and Approvals Act should be amended to give councils the ability to meet their local and specific community housing needs in the most efficient way possible.

A criterion, including economic value, policy alignment and public benefit, or similar, could be developed to support local councils to assess planning applications that align with their local need. The current methods are costly, and result in significant time delays. They enable NIMBYism and can lead to divisive confrontation between neighbours who are for and against a proposal.

With the need for affordable housing already desperate, we need mechanisms to support appropriate development within all Tasmanian communities that will result in high quality housing being built as quickly as possible.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 7**

##### **Develop a mechanism for fast tracking town planning and building approvals.**

An accelerated assessment process with transparent and clear criterion, such as economic value, policy alignment and public benefit can promote the faster development of appropriate housing.

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### **PROPERTY DEVELOPER LEVY**

To support the growth of affordable housing in Tasmania, we know that not-for-profit housing providers cannot fund these projects without the support of government and support from the private sector.

A levy on property developments to bolster funding for social and affordable housing supports the notion that this type of housing is essential infrastructure for successful communities. It also emphasises that developers have a responsibility to support social housing, just as much as they do roads, parks, and other public infrastructure. SGS Economics and Planning assert that,

*“To set social housing aside as a problem for the wider community is to ignore the developer’s obligation to produce neighbourhoods that are up to reasonable standards of social, environmental and economic functionality.”*<sup>10</sup>

There are longstanding examples of integrated housing and economic development policy across Australia, that have demonstrated success in this type of funding model.<sup>11</sup>

#### **RECOMMENDATION 8**

##### **Consider a property developer levy to generate funds which can support growth and development of social housing.**

For developments over a certain size, a percentage of the project value is contributed to a fund supporting the growth of social and affordable housing across Tasmania.

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<sup>10</sup> <https://www.sgsep.com.au/publications/insights/developers-must-play-their-part-in-social-housing>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.sgsep.com.au/publications/insights/developers-must-play-their-part-in-social-housing>