



CENTRAL COAST
COUNCIL

Minute No. 336.2023

HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY

2023-2025

CENTRAL COAST COUNCIL

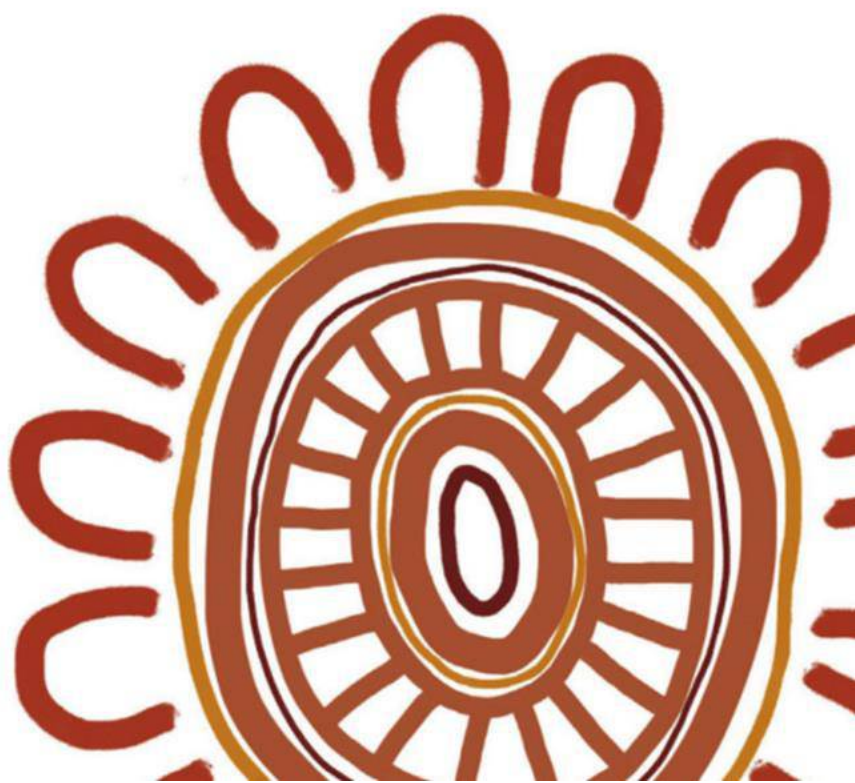
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ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

The Council acknowledges and pays respect to the traditional owners of lutruwita (Tasmania), the palawa/pakana people. We acknowledge the Punnilerpanner tribe of this Northern Country, and in doing so, we celebrate one of the world's oldest continuous cultures.

We would like to acknowledge First Nations artist, Annie Hay, for the use of her artwork.



1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This strategy (the Strategy) outlines how Central Coast Council (the Council) will achieve its vision of *“Everybody in Central Coast, every day, can access a safe, comfortable sleep, a hot shower, and a nutritious meal”*.

Built around two key focus areas – prevention and relief – the Strategy details 10 strategic actions categorised as either “Do”, “Facilitate” or “Advocate”, depending on the level of influence the Council has over the outcome.

2 BACKGROUND

Homelessness is increasing at the national, state, and local government area level here in Central Coast. Nationally, 116,427 people were experiencing homeless on Census night 2016, up 14% from 102,439 in 2011. A further 5.2% increase was recorded in the last Census, with 122,494 people estimated to be experiencing homelessness. In Tasmania, the homeless population grew from 1,615 people in 2016 to 2,346 people in 2021; a 45% increase and during the same period, the homeless population in Tasmania's Central Coast LGA rose from 59 people to 70 people, a 19% increase (Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS], 2023). Discussions with local service providers indicate that the actual figure is in the range of 100–150 people, and increasingly includes school-aged children, elderly people and many who are experiencing homelessness for the first time in their lives.

Over the past few months, we have directly assisted the following people:

- Seven adults and one child who were living in tents, vehicles and caravans at Midway Point reserve, whom the Council helped relocate to a more suitable (but not ideal) location on other council-owned land.
- A family of five, including two children with high needs, who have been living in a tent for seven months, and are now living in a bus.
- One adult and one child who were recently evicted and are now living in somebody's garage.
- A man who came into the Administration Centre in tears, because he has no idea where he and his sick wife are going to live when their lease expires.

The Council has provided varying degrees of support to these people and ensured they are known to Housing Connect. The system is failing them, and there are almost certainly many others in similar situations in Central Coast, who are not known to us. The nearest Safe Space, located at Burnie, has been unable to accommodate these people.

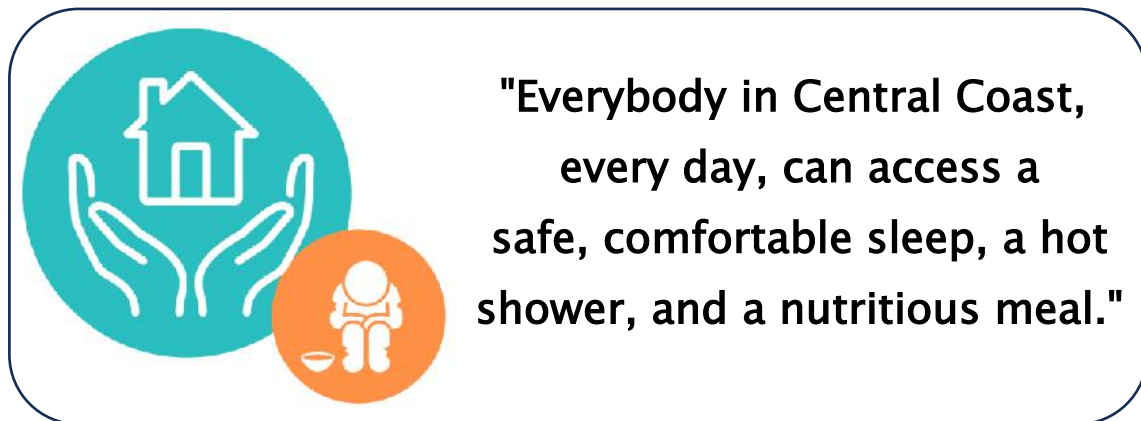
We are also aware of local women's shelters and providers of accommodation for at-risk youth having nowhere for people to transition to, which is undermining existing government investment and placing staff and volunteers under hazardous levels of stress.

The Council has also provided funding to Gran's Van to expand their shower and laundry van service to our municipality and has made a shower block available through a partnership with the Salvation Army.

While homelessness prevention and relief in Australia is technically the responsibility of the state and federal governments, the Council feels compelled to act. Development of this Strategy was informed by a review of the City of Yarra's Homelessness Strategy (City of Yarra, n.d) and Social and Affordable Housing Strategy (City of Yarra, 2019), as well as other research and consultation, including a Community Roundtable on Homelessness hosted by the Mayor in May 2023 (see Appendix 1). Key learnings from that work are reflected in the Strategy, in particular, the importance of focusing on both prevention and relief (despite much of the community and Councillor focus until now, being on relief) and the importance of the Housing First model (City of Yarra, n.d, pp. 27–28; Tasmanian Government, p. 10). Our thinking has also been shaped by our recent experience of working with people experiencing homelessness, discussions with staff from the City of Launceston, and our review of the Tasmanian Government's draft Housing Strategy. The Council made a submission in relation to this important document in July 2023 (see Appendix 2).

3 STRATEGIC APPROACH

Our vision



Two key focus areas



Three types of action



The Council has identified four strategic actions which will help prevent homelessness by tackling housing affordability, and six strategic actions which will relieve homelessness by helping those in need. All 10 actions will commence in the 2023–2024 financial year. A high-level SWOT and stakeholder analysis has been completed for each action, to provide important context and to identify actions that require more comprehensive risk assessment, stakeholder analysis and planning.

Related work

Much related work is already underway. While not duplicated in this document, the following initiatives have a close relationship to homelessness, its causes and impacts, and their implementation must be considered in this context:



Review of Land Use Planning Process Improvements, completed in 2022–2023 and being implemented from July 2023.



Update of the Cradle Coast Regional Land Use Strategy and the statewide planning reform agenda, currently in progress and continuing throughout the 2023–2024 financial year.



Strategic Review of Council's Residential and Commercial Property Portfolio, scheduled for the 2023–2024 financial year.



The Central Coast Community Health and Wellbeing Plan; currently in progress.



Central Coast Camping By-law, currently in development.

4 PREVENTING HOMELESSNESS

It is widely accepted that the most critical driver of Australia's homelessness problem is a lack of affordable housing (V&F Housing Enterprise Foundation, 2022). This in turn has its own drivers:

- High levels of investor participation in the housing market.
- A reduction in government funded housing stock.
- Rent and house price growth outstripping wages growth.
- Population growth.
- Smaller household sizes.
- The rise of short-term rental accommodation (e.g. Airbnb).

While this Strategy focusses its prevention efforts on housing affordability, the Council recognises that a range of social and economic issues can also lead to homelessness. These include unemployment, mental illness, domestic violence and drug abuse to name a few.

P 1: Seek commitments from the State and Commonwealth Governments, regarding affordable housing investment in Central Coast.			
Role	Advocate	2023–2024 budget	Staff costs only
Strengths	Weaknesses	Key steps	
Council has vacant land available which could be offered as an incentive.		OCT 2023 Ascertain the requirements of each government, in terms of lot size, location and other attributes JAN 2024 Identify sites and Council resolution FEB 2024 Begin advocacy and seek to enter negotiations	
Opportunities	Threats	Key stakeholders	
Would have a direct, positive impact.	Adjoining landowners and others may be opposed to any new social housing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media • Bureaucrats • Parliamentarians • General public 	

P 2: Consider additional or different direct investment in affordable housing as part of the Strategic Review of Residential Property Portfolio			
Role	Do	2023–2024 budget	Staff costs only
Strengths	Weaknesses	Key steps	
Council has vacant land available.	No coherent argument for market intervention.	OCT 2023 Commence review JAN 2024 Workshop draft report FEB 2024 Community consultation MAR 2024 Council resolution	
Council owns a number of units and houses.	Direct investment would be very resource intensive / significant opportunity cost.		
Opportunities	Threats	Key stakeholders	
Council can act as a socially responsible landlord.	Could lead to reduced State or Commonwealth investment in affordable housing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillors • Senior Leadership Team • General Public 	
Would have a direct positive impact.			

Note: Council owns 77 residential units throughout the municipality.

P 3: Lobby the State Government to undertake a review into the impact of short-stay visitor accommodation and under-occupied properties, including exploration of regulatory options.			
Role	Advocate	2023–2024 budget	Staff costs only
Strengths	Weaknesses	Key steps	
Council and others have already started making the case for this type of action.		OCT 2023 Research and report writing NOV 2023 Council resolution DEC 2023 (ongoing) Media and advocacy	
Opportunities	Threats	Key stakeholders	
A statewide approach provides greater certainty for Councils and the community.	May negatively impact or be perceived to negatively impact, the tourism industry.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism bodies • Media • Parliamentarians • Local Government Association of Tasmania (LGAT) • General public 	
	Opposition from landowners.		

P 4: Provide education, advocacy and thought leadership about homelessness causes, impacts and solutions, drawing on international best practices (refer to further details below).

Role	Advocate	2023–2024 budget	Staff costs only
Strengths	Weaknesses	Key steps	
	<p>Council already does a lot of external communication; it may be hard to get the message across.</p> <p>Council already had a lot of induction content for Councillors and staff; it may be hard to get the message across.</p>	<p>JAN 2024 Research and develop an education, advocacy and communications plan and content, including staff and Councillor induction material</p> <p>FEB 2024 (ongoing) Implement the plan</p>	
Opportunities	Threats	Key stakeholders	
These types of changes would position Council and the Central Coast community as a thought leaders in this space.	Opposition from landowners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media • Public sector decision makers • Property Council • Rental Property Owners Association • General public 	

Topics

- Incentivising and supporting property owners to converting houses to share houses, convert unused retail/commercial space to residential use, and enlarge existing dwellings, through granny flats and extensions.
- Pilot projects which de-risk emerging concepts in housing by demonstrating to the market, regulators and other stakeholders, what is possible (e.g. modular and rapid-build housing, tiny homes, sustainable housing, shared living arrangements, new ownership and development models).
- Incentivising new rental properties to the market; some existing schemes are flawed.
- Addressing legislative barriers to tiny homes and other solutions.
- Provide education for decision-makers, landlords and tenants.

5 Relieving homelessness

The needs of homeless people are many and varied. Consultation undertaken by the Council indicates the following areas of greatest need:

- Crisis accommodation in Central Coast (currently none).
- Dedicated homelessness outreach services based in Central Coast (currently none).
- Greater awareness of how to assist people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

R 1: Coordinate the local roll-out of the Stable One initiative, whereby local churches provide emergency shelter.			
Role	Facilitate	2023–2024 budget	Funds for independent planning consultancy
Strengths	Weaknesses	Key steps	
Council has already built political support for providing an easier planning pathway for churches and related proponents wishing to pursue this kind of option.	There is ambiguity around how this should be treated under the Tasmanian Planning Scheme.	DEC 2023 Facilitate Stable One working with local churches JAN 2024 (ongoing) Facilitate planning approvals/exemptions	
Opportunities	Threats	Key stakeholders	
Able to have a direct positive impact.	Opposition from adjoining landowners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community groups • Statewide Planning Office 	

See also: <https://stableone.org/>

R2: Facilitate a forum (or support existing forums) where service providers and other key stakeholders can exchange information with Council, with a view towards: Improving Council's understanding of the issues; adding value to the efforts of service providers; and advocating for areas of additional need.			
Role	Facilitate	2023–2024 budget	Staff costs only
Strengths	Weaknesses	Key steps	
Council is well placed to provide this kind of coordination role.		NOV 2023 Draft terms of reference DEC 2023 Seek EOIs for membership JAN 2024 (ongoing) Quarterly meetings	
Opportunities	Threats	Key stakeholders	
	Could quickly become another “talk fest” if not managed effectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welfare service providers • Community groups 	

R 3: Continue to assist Gran's Van to extend their mobile shower and laundry service to Central Coast.			
Role	Facilitate	2023–2024 budget	\$10,000
Strengths	Weaknesses	Key steps	
Proven to work well in neighbouring LGAs.		COMPLETED Work with Gran's Van to identify suitable site(s) and recruit volunteers NOV 2023–JUN 2024 Gran's Van to provide service	
Opportunities	Threats	Key stakeholders	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gran's Van Potential volunteers throughout the community 	

See also: <https://www.gransvan.org.au/>

Note: Gran's Van has decided that offering their shower and laundry van service in Central Coast is not the best use of resources, following recent changes at Midway Point. Alternative arrangements are being considered.

R 4: Work with the Salvation Army to provide a free, hot shower facility at the Ulverstone Showground.			
Role	Facilitate	2023–2024 budget	\$1,000 for minor maintenance
Strengths	Weaknesses	Key steps	
This emerged as a clear need from the Community Roundtable on Homelessness.		COMPLETED Site improvements COMPLETED Sign MoU JUL 2023 – JUN 2024 The Salvation Army and other groups to provide service	
Opportunities	Threats	Key stakeholders	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Salvation Army Potential volunteers throughout the community 	

R 5: Explore partnership opportunities with real estate/property managers			
Role	Do	2023–2024 budget	Staff costs only
Strengths	Weaknesses	Key steps	
		JAN 2024 Research and report writing FEB 2024 Further consideration by Senior Leadership Team and Councillors	
Opportunities	Threats	Key stakeholders	
There may be an opportunity to work with our existing provider of property management services or other local firms, to deliver property management in new and different ways.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council's current tenants • Media • Home Ground • Local real estate/property management firms 	

See also: <https://www.homegroundrealestate.com.au/>

R 6: Seek commitments from the State and Commonwealth Governments regarding crisis accommodation and wrap-around support in Central Coast.			
Role	Do	2023–2024 budget	Staff costs only
Strengths	Weaknesses	Key steps	
Council and others have already started making the case for this type of action.		OCT 2023 Research and report writing NOV 2023 Council resolution DEC 2023 (ongoing) Media and advocacy	
Opportunities	Threats	Key stakeholders	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media • Bureaucrats • Parliamentarians • General public 	

6 COST–BENEFIT ANALYSIS

Any related actions involving significant investment will be subject to an individual cost benefit analysis. Even tangible work such as constructing additional social housing, is difficult to quantify, and many of the benefits (e.g a reduction in health-related expenditure) are primarily being realised by other tiers of government.

However, several recent studies have looked at the costs and benefits of social and affordable housing. SGS Economics (2022, p.3) found that *“Every one dollar the Australian community invests in social and affordable housing will deliver two dollars in benefits”*. The same report identified the following benefits (p.25):

- *“improved health outcomes,*
- *reduced incidence of anti-social and criminal behaviours,*
- *enhanced human capital and educational outcomes,*
- *increased productivity due to less efficient labour markets, and*
- *increased community diversity, inclusion and equity”.*

7 CONCLUSION

If adopted by the Council, this Strategy can effectively guide our efforts as we address homelessness for the first time. The Strategy strikes an appropriate balance between responding to a new need that is important but has not traditionally been seen as the responsibility of local government, and not jeopardising the delivery of our legislated responsibilities or the service levels expected by our ratepayers.

REFERENCES

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CENTRAL COAST
COUNCIL



COMMUNITY ROUNDTABLE

HOMELESSNESS IN CENTRAL COAST

11 MAY 2023

Acknowledgement of Country

The Council acknowledges and pays respect to the traditional owners of lutruwita (Tasmania), the palawa/pakana people. We acknowledge the Punnilerpannertribe of this Northern Country, and in doing so, we celebrate one of the world's oldest continuous cultures.

We would like to acknowledge First Nations artist, Annie Hay, for the use of her artwork.



Guests

Representative

Andrew Webb

Rev. Barb Totterdell

Carol O'Neil

Cathryn Faulkner

Christian Benton

Helen Robertson

Jen Rowden

Rev. Josh Skeat

Justine Brooks

Kent Stone

Leanne Jopson

Nathan Hughes

Shane Leonard

Wanda Komorn

Warrawee Women's Shelter

Salvation Army Ulverstone

Cup of Kindness / Ulverstone Anglican Church

ADRA Op Shop Ulverstone

Anglicare Tasmania

Eveline House

Penguin Community Op Shop & The Rookery

Penguin Community Op Shop & The Rookery

Cup of Kindness / Ulverstone Anglican Church

Homes Tasmania

Burnie Safe Space 24/7

Child & Family Learning Centres

Burnie Safe Space 24/7

Youth, Family & Community Connections (Burnie)

Penguin Community Op Shop & The Rookery

Cr Cheryl Fuller

Cr John Beswick

Cr Amanda Diprose

Cr Garry Carpenter

Cr Kate Wylie

Cr Michael Smith

Cr Philip Viney

Cr Sophie Lehmann

Mayor - Central Coast Council

Deputy Mayor - Central Coast Council

Councillor - Central Coast Council

Councillor - Central Coast Council

Councillor - Central Coast Council

Councillor - Central Coast Council

Councillor - Central Coast Council

Councillor - Central Coast Council

Sandra Ayton

Daryl Connelly

Paul Breden

Sam Searle

General Manager - Central Coast Council

Director Community Services - Central Coast Council

Director Infrastructure Services - Central Coast Council

Director Organisational Services - Central Coast Council

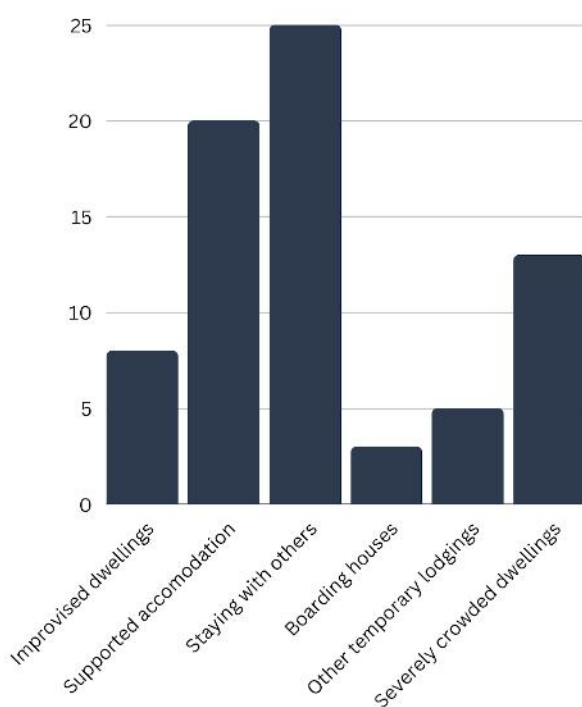


Statistics

Number of homeless people according to Census data:

	2016	2021	Increase #	Increase %
Tasmania	1,615	2,346	731	45%
Central Coast	59	70	11	19%

Where are they living? (2021 Census):



Employment status:



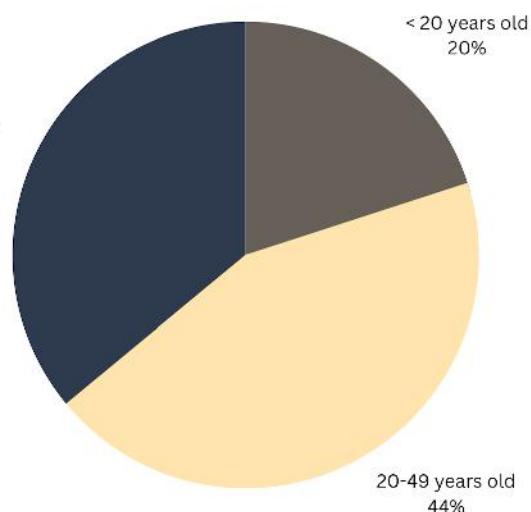
Gender:



Approximately equal
male and female
representation

Age:

50 years and older
36%



This data doesn't include a further 58 people who reported living in other crowded dwellings or were marginally housed in caravan parks, and relies on people self-reporting on Census night.

What Council knows



The real impact is much worse than what is officially reported.



There are lots of great people and organisations doing lots of great work.



There is a need for both homelessness relief and prevention; the latter requiring significant legislative and policy change.



Homes Tasmania aims to deliver 10,000 additional affordable homes by 2032.



Housing Connect is the State Government's one-stop-shop for homelessness support.



Find Help Tas is the largest online directory of community services for all Tasmanians: www.findhelptas.org.au



Assistance Tas is a simple online request form for emergency assistance, connected to several large charities - www.assistancetas.com.au



The nearest Safe Space crisis accommodation is in Burnie.



Serenity House - the former live-in rehabilitation centre at Sulphur Creek - is owned by the State Government and is currently vacant.

Recap: What's happening on the ground?

The real number of people experiencing homelessness in Central Coast is likely at least double the 2021 Census data.

Outreach in regional areas requires a different response to urban areas, where those in need are more concentrated.

Lots of "new to homelessness" including people trying to hold down jobs or attend school.

Some of the people compelled to provide assistance don't have experience in this space or the resources required.

Big increase in the number of families with children who are living in tents.

Cost of living pressures have eliminated people's ability to cope with unexpected expenses.

Increase in the number of young people who are experiencing homelessness as well as people in their 70s, 80s and 90s presenting to crisis centres.

Lack of adequate exit strategies for those who are already receiving assistance means once their program runs out they are back to square one.

People need social connection with others going through the same thing.

Real estate agents have different systems and requirements, which is a barrier to people who may have the financial means to secure a rental.

There is confusion around what resources are available and who does what.

Sharing homes needs to be normalised; it's no longer practical to rely on single dwellings as the key affordable housing solution.

What is the Council doing right now?

Council understands there is no easy fix for these problems, but is working behind the scenes to make improvements. Some of the things we are doing include:



Increasing staff and Councillor understanding of the issues.



Working with Gran's Van to expand their service with the Laundry and Shower Trailer available at the Sulphur Creek hall on Wednesdays in the coming weeks.



Building relationships with government agencies and service providers, so we can support their efforts and prevent duplication.



Preparing an awareness campaign regarding the issues, how people can help, and where people can find assistance.



Advocating for simpler planning pathways for relief efforts.



Where appropriate or necessary, visiting rough sleepers with service providers, to find them a safe alternative.

Recap: Where are the gaps?

Caravan parks (rates and length of stay)

Hot showers and access to laundry services

Getting people out of tents

Providing essentials (medicine, petrol, money, nutritious and healthy food)

Spaces to be; somewhere to relax and connect with others, outside of their existing service provider relationships

Exit points for people leaving services

Rental market regulation

Assistance for young people with no family support

Getting empty houses onto the rental market

Overcoming stigma attached with participating in initiatives like the Private Rental Incentives Program

Council leadership and advocacy, even in relation to issues which have traditionally been seen as the domain of state or federal governments

Mental health support for homeless people

Private Rental Incentives Program: Can it help?

The Private Rental Incentives Program (PRI) by Homes Tasmania encourages property owners to make their homes available for affordable rent to low-income households with low or no support needs. Tenancy and property management is provided on behalf of the property owner by Centacare Evolve Housing (CEH).

The program assists low-income households into secure private rental accommodation at an affordable rent. Key features include:

- CEH, an experienced community housing provider, provides fee-free tenancy management services (statewide)
- lease terms of two years and guaranteed rent to the property owner
- properties are managed in accordance with the Residential Tenancy Act 1997
- rents are capped at between 25 to 30 per cent below region median rates
- incentive payment to owners is between \$6,600 and \$9,900 per annum, with payment commencing at the start of the sub-lease term
- preference for one- and two-bedroom properties close to major urban centres.

The program has already doubled the number of homes to be made available, providing a total of 400 affordable rental properties for the next two years.

Property owners (or their agents) with approved properties will enter into a head lease and payment agreement with CEH who will source and sign a sub-lease directly with a suitable eligible tenant. CEH will disburse all rental and incentive payments to property owners. Maximum rent and incentive amounts vary according to the property type and location. Rent may be negotiated with the owner but must not be higher than the maximum capped rents and will not change during the lease term.

**More information about the program can be found
at [https://www.homestasia.com.au/Private-
Rental/Private-rental-incentives](https://www.homestasia.com.au/Private-Rental/Private-rental-incentives)**

Where to next?

Council staff and Councillors will take what we have learned through the valuable contributions of everyone who attended the Community Roundtable to work out how we can best add value.

We will keep you up to date, and check in with our thoughts and ideas along the way.

Please reach out with further ideas, or if you need our help.

Central Coast Council would like to thank all of the groups who participated in the Community Roundtable and who continue to provide valuable services to those in our community who need them the most.

Contact

Daryl Connelly
Director Community Services
Central Coast Council

6429 8900

admin@centralcoast.tas.gov.au

30 June 2023

Our ref.: Community Services/
Service Provision/Housing;
dc:tic
Doc. ID: 457755

Homes Tasmania
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HOBART TAS 7001

Via email: tasmanianhousingstrategy@homes.tas.gov.au

Dear Sir/Madam

DRAFT TASMANIAN HOUSING STRATEGY – SUBMISSION

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft Tasmanian Housing Strategy.

Question 1: ‘Our way forward’ identifies several levers for achieving a more equitable housing system for all Tasmanians. Are there additional or alternative more important levers that you believe should be addressed?

- 1 The sustainable distribution of population growth must also be considered. Southern Tasmania is experiencing significant population related pressure such as traffic congestion and the state’s highest levels of homelessness, at the same time that many regional areas are facing ageing, plateauing and even declining population. The State Government (‘the Government’) must address this through initiatives such as:
 - Reforming Tasmania’s land use planning system, so that local communities, through their council, can plan their own future. Under the current system and proposed changes, it can be very difficult to progress developments which aim to leverage location and lifestyle factors to attract and retain population, and increase housing supply. Please refer to our recent submission on the draft Tasmanian Planning Policies for further details.
 - Decentralising the public sector; too many lucrative public service jobs are advertised as being Hobart or Launceston based, despite the normalisation of remote working.
 - Ensuring that communities outside of Hobart and Launceston have affordable and convenient aviation connections to mainland Australia and the world.

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Question 2: Theme one identifies the need for 'more homes, built faster'. Are there additional or alternative objectives you recommend for consideration?

- 1 The Government should incentivise and support property owners to take-up the following kinds of initiatives:
 - Converting houses to share houses.
 - Converting unused retail / commercial space to residential use.
 - Enlarging existing dwellings, through granny flats and extensions.
- 2 The Government should run pilot projects which de-risk emerging concepts in housing by demonstrating to the market, regulators and other stakeholders, what is possible. This should occur in the following areas:
 - Modular and rapid-build housing.
 - Tiny homes.
 - Sustainable housing.
 - Shared living arrangements.
 - New ownership and development models.
- 3 Support for tiny homes, which also requires a review of Planning and Building regulation. The Council is aware of some instances of Australian made tiny homes being purchased only for the owner to find that they cannot obtain the necessary approvals. In one instance we recently became aware of, a Planning permit was issued, however a Building Permit cannot be issued due to the home not meeting Building Code of Australia requirements.
- 4 The Government must articulate what it believes are the barriers within the Tasmanian land use planning system, so that councils, developers and others can engage in a meaningful conversation about practical solutions. It must be acknowledged that while councils are responsible for administering many land use planning processes, it is the Government that determines what those processes look like and the way they impact development through the *Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993* and the Tasmanian Planning Scheme. It must also be acknowledged that Tasmania has among the fastest statutory assessment timeframes in the country.
- 5 Clarity is required about how the strategy will align with the Government's current land use planning reform agenda.

Question 3: Theme two centres on ‘affordability in the private market’. Are there additional or alternative objectives you recommend for consideration?

- 1 Page 29 says the Government “... *will continue to work with property owners to bring new dwellings into the rental market and encourage local governments to play their important role in increasing rental housing supply.*”. The Council reiterates its request for those discussions to occur; while constant references are made to the role of local government in addressing issues related to housing affordability, the Government has not articulated this in any detail.
- 2 The Government needs to consider incentives which will attract new rental properties to the market, such as properties that are currently being utilised as holiday homes or visitor accommodation. This will require an incentive that is greater than the financial return that could be achieved in the normal market. Anecdotally, one of the factors behind the existing Private Rental Incentives Program being undersubscribed is that the incentives offered (at least in some cases), are less than the financial return that could be achieved in the market.

Question 4: Theme three places ‘people at the centre’ of the draft Strategy. Are there additional or alternative objectives you recommend for consideration?

- 1 The Council welcomes the references to a Housing First approach. Because the model has been applied in different ways across different jurisdictions, it is vitally important that Tasmanian decision makers quickly develop a shared understanding of what this means in our context. This will require consideration of the regulatory regimes, business models and other factors at play in countries which have successfully applied the model to reduce homelessness, such as Finland.

Question 5: Theme four highlights ‘local prosperity’ as a priority. Are there additional or alternative objectives you recommend for consideration?

- 1 Page 36 refers to “*The provision of diverse and affordable housing, increased pace of rezoning and joined up planning and policy prioritisation in our rural and regional communities will support these social and economic endeavours.*”. This requires a review of the *State Policy on the Protection of Agricultural Land 2009* and associated instruments, to ensure they do not constrain development beyond what is reasonable and appropriate in the current context.
- 2 The Council calls on the Government to lead a review of short-term rental accommodation, aimed at identifying its impact on housing affordability and availability within each LGA and achieving a consistent, balanced and effective approach to regulation if and when it should be applied.

Question 6: Are there other ways the government could make its actions and progress to meet the proposed objectives more transparent and accessible?

- 1 The Council is concerned that local government is often portrayed as not doing enough and as a source of inefficiencies in Tasmania's land use planning system. If the Government is committed to transparency, then it must also commit to identifying and articulating what it thinks councils should stop doing, start doing and keep doing, so that councils can consider those issues and work constructively with the Government to try and improve the situation.

Question 7: Do you have any comment on what this draft Strategy does well?

- 1 While the strategy is very high-level, it addresses most of the key areas where action is required. We appreciate the work of the Government and the team at Homes Tasmania.

Question 8: Is there anything you think the draft Strategy does not cover but should, or that it mentions but could be highlighted more?

- 1 While the strategy should improve outcomes for Tasmanians over the long term, other solutions – including crisis accommodation in Central Coast – are required *right now*. Over the past few weeks, the Council has directly assisted the following people:

- Seven adults and one child who were living in tents, vehicles and caravans at Midway Point reserve, who the Council helped relocate to a more suitable (but not ideal) location on other council-owned land.
- A family of five, including two children with high needs, who have been living in a tent for seven months, and are now living in a bus.
- One adult and one child who were recently evicted and are now living in somebody's garage.

The Council has provided varying degrees of support to these people and ensured they are known to Housing Connect. The system is failing them, and there are almost certainly many others in similar situations in Central Coast, who are not known to us. The Government must prioritise the provision of safe and comfortable accommodation for these people. The nearest Safe Space, located at Burnie, was unable to accommodate them. The Council is also aware of local women's shelters and providers of accommodation for at-risk youth having nowhere for people to transition to, which is undermining existing government investment and placing staff and volunteers under hazardous levels of psychological and physical stress.

The Council has also provided funding to Gran's Van to expand their shower and laundry van service to our municipality, and from mid-July we will be

making a shower block available through a partnership with the Salvation Army.

The Government must recognise the strain that homelessness is placing on communities and councils and must urgently provide funding or other appropriate interventions.

- 2 The Government should consider whether inclusionary zoning should be incorporated into the planning system so that a certain portion of any large housing development or proceeds from it, are allocated to social housing, and / or where developers are provided with relief from certain restrictions or other incentives to provide affordable housing.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide comment. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'Daryl Connelly', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Daryl Connelly MBus, PIA (Assoc.)
DIRECTOR COMMUNITY SERVICES