

Shelter Tas welcomes the Affordable Housing Action Plan #2

Thursday 28th March 2019

Shelter Tas, the peak body for housing and homelessness services in Tasmania, has welcomed the announcement of the latest Affordable Housing Action Plan from the Department of Communities.

“The Affordable Housing Action Plan 2019-2023 contains welcome initiatives, such as a much needed boost to youth accommodation and supported housing for older Tasmanians,” Shelter Tas Executive Officer, Pattie Chugg said.

Action Plan 2 promises 607 new social housing dwellings and 88 units for people experiencing homelessness. New accommodation for men experiencing homelessness in the North West is particularly welcome, as this has been a long standing gap for people in the region.

“We are pleased to see initiatives that our members have been calling for in all three regions of the State, including a new Youth Foyer in Burnie, much needed new premises for Bethlehem House in the South, and a Youth at Risk Centre in the North,” Ms Chugg said.

Shelter Tas acknowledges that Communities Tasmania has undertaken extensive consultation with the housing and homelessness sector while developing the initiatives in Action Plan 2. Shelter Tas recognises that the Action Plan reflects a constrained budget, in the face of increased need for affordable housing across Tasmania.

“In this current market, we urgently need more housing that people can afford. Housing is essential infrastructure and without it, we cannot achieve positive outcomes for groups that need specialised support; such as people experiencing mental health challenges, Tasmanians with disability and those escaping family violence,” Ms Chugg said.

“With 8,000 Tasmanian households already in housing stress, and a dire shortage of affordable private rental housing, we still have much more to do. In our Budget Submission, we called on the State government to invest the Stamp Duty windfall in affordable housing. Imagine what \$100 million dollars of extra new investment could do for people who urgently need homes,” Ms Chugg said.

Every day housing and homelessness services work with people who face a very competitive and unaffordable rental market. The housing sector needs the support of the whole of the State government to respond to the housing crisis.

“Additional funds could be delivered if the government immediately reallocated the \$157 million housing debt to consolidated revenue. This would free up much needed funds - \$15 million per year - to extend Action Plan 2 and deliver much needed housing supply and support.

“We look forward to continuing to work constructively with the Tasmanian government as these actions are implemented. We will continue to advocate for better data collection to capture current and long-term housing need, as well as increased funding to deliver much needed homes to reduce housing stress and homelessness across the State,” Ms Chugg said.

For more information and comment, contact:

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