

Shelter Tas welcomes investment to boost housing supply State Budget 2019-20

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Shelter Tas, Tasmania's peak body for housing and homelessness services, welcomes the State Government's recognition of the housing crisis in Tasmania by bringing forward \$10m this year from the Affordable Housing Action Plan's future commitments.

"Tasmania is confronting a housing crisis. To solve the problem, we urgently need greater investment in social and affordable rental housing and this fast-tracked investment in capital is very welcome," Shelter Tas Chair, Andrea Witt said.

"Housing is essential infrastructure for all Tasmanians. Achieving positive outcomes in areas such as health and education depends on people having safe and secure homes.

"The most recent Rental Affordability Index showed escalating levels of unaffordable rents across Tasmania, with Hobart topping the list as the least affordable capital in the nation. Over 8,000 low income households are experiencing rental stress, and over 3,200 households are still on the social housing waiting list. The lack of affordable and safe housing is the biggest cause of homelessness, and we know that homelessness is increasing. On any given night over 1,600 Tasmanians have no place to call home," Ms Witt said.

Shelter Tas has called for a medium to long term target for Tasmania of up to 10% of dwellings to be affordable and social rental housing.

Shelter Tas' budget submission called for priority investment in housing and support for young people. Young people are the fastest growing group experiencing homelessness. Over half of all people seeking assistance from homelessness services last year were under 25. One in five requests for assistance involve children under 10 years old.

Repayment of the historic housing debt to the Commonwealth continues to stifle the State's capacity to deliver much needed affordable housing. This year, repayments to the Federal Government have taken over \$15 million out of the State's resources for housing.

"Shelter Tas calls for the burden of Tasmania's historic housing debt to be shared across all of government, not just the housing portfolio. Retirement of this historic housing debt would enable much needed capital investment in affordable housing, which we need now more than ever," Ms Witt said.

About Shelter Tasmania:

Shelter Tasmania is the state housing and homelessness peak body, working to ensure that low-income and disadvantaged Tasmanians have affordable, safe, secure and appropriate homes. For more information, please see Shelter Tas' State Budget Submission 2019-20, available on the Shelter Tas website: sheltertass.org.au.

Andy Witt, Shelter Tas Chair

E: eo@sheltertass.org.au

Ph: 6224 5488