

18th July 2019

ALISON STANDEN MP
CHAIRPERSON
House of Assembly Select Committee on Housing Affordability

Dear Ms. Standen,

Thank you for the opportunity of providing the following submission.

Re:- Submission to The House of Assembly Select Committee on Housing Affordability

This submission focuses on the following terms:-

- (k) successful strategies in other jurisdictions that could be effective in improving affordability in Tasmania; and
- (l) any other matters incidental thereto.

The following proposed strategy is designed to empower people, build skills whilst addressing homelessness that will improve affordability in Tasmania.

To replicate the initiative cited in the links below. We propose using containers to convert into dwellings as this will enhance the success of the project. Converting containers to dwellings provide an 'easier' option to individuals in comparison to the daunting prospect of building a home from scratch with little or no previous skills in the building trade. Our organisation has successfully engaged local people to volunteer their time and skills over the past 2 years resulting in the successful conversion of 2 containers into well designed and sturdy one bedroom dwellings. Volunteers came from a diverse background ages and genders. This work was carried out in through our THRIVE Build Project (https://www.sthelensnhh.org.au/?page_id=3042). During the process participants built their skills (none of them had previous experience in building work or in doing basic maintenance handyman work) increased their self confidence and gained certificates from Cert 11 in Building. One of these homes recently sold and is being used as emergency accommodation and the second one is in the process of being sold for the same purpose.

Our strategy proposes selection of candidates from the current Housing List who demonstrate a willingness to commit to a desire to self-build; work a minimum number set hours per week on the site to convert their home. We have lessons learnt from our first conversion which include provision of wrap around support services being an essential part of the process. Services such as personal

development coaching, lifestyle choice support, counselling support and provision of a literacy mentor for participants.

The construction / conversion work would be carried out under supervision of a qualified builder or carpenter. It is recommended that a minimum of 5 homes are built at one time with participants working on each other's houses so that each house is progressed at an even pace. Facilities for sharing of child minding on site would be encouraged in a safe manner so as to ensure every participant provided their fair share of labour to the project. The successful candidates would be offered a discount on rent and would be entitled to remain in the dwelling for their lifetime should they choose to do so. This approach ensures that candidates have 'skin in the game' and a sense of personal empowerment and pride is fostered throughout the process. During the build stage the candidates will form a community that has a strong bond built on a foundation of a shared journey.

The Hedgehog Housing Cooperative project referred to in the excerpt below from SUCCESSFUL SCHEMES - collective custom builds is a model that we are seeking to replicate in Break O'Day. The following are links to the Hedgehog Housing Coop project that demonstrate the efficacy of this strategy.

<https://www.dailymotion.com/video/xxrtid>

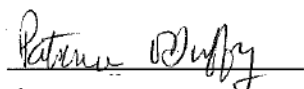
<https://www.selfbuild-central.co.uk/first-ideas/examples/hedgehog-co-op/>

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/1999/may/19/guardiansocietysupplement2>

https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/kevin-mcccloud-houses-building-self_uk_59df90c9e4b0eb18af06e118?guccounter=1&guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ29vZ2x1LmNvbS8&guce_referrer_sig=AQAAANOJ4U3SQpj71KdbpymMKQB-o-4vE7c0DrTEWfnzoqkBpAW_DbPhHzqFOpcsNOIKNjbP4aG0j0DZumk1-rKcdDwcYLTgnKI2nFd0gbcPrifaJOP2cqGuH6ME43L42-lmP91IXOdcPNtdYE8PKSJ-NBT7pSYpB8Fqvqgf5DwarV

NOTE:- Below are notes from a local Homeless Action Group. They document various ideas and suggestions that local community members have developed as possible solutions to the current Housing Crisis.

Kind Regards



Trish O'Duffy and the Team

Manager

St Helens Neighbourhood House Association Inc.

T :: 03 6376 1134 | E :: toduffy@sthelensnhh.org.au

NOTES FROM MEETINGS FROM HOMELESSNESS ACTION GROUP

On 11 Jul 2019, at 4:35 PM, Trish O'Duffy <toduffy@sthelensnhh.org.au> wrote:

Dear All,

Thank you all to those of you who attended last week's meeting. It was a really great discussion. For those of you new to the group please see email trail below for previous discussions.

Some notes from last week's meeting:-

- Thom provided an overview of current status in our region. Group discussed what strategies we could do locally to support those without a home. Small discussion around strategies previously discussed and it was agreed to lobby our elected reps in Parliament to pursue this course of action.*
- Nathan provided an update in relation to upcoming walk during Homeless week. He will leave Hobart on 5th August following official launch of homeless week. He will arrive back to St Helens on Monday 12th August at 1pm. Some community members are accompany Nathan on the Walk. Adrian Astley will bring the St Helens Neighbourhood House Community Van to Hobart and accompany Nathan to be his support person. Adrian has recently undertaken first aid training and will have supplies such as water and snacks for Nathan along the way – he will also drop him to his accommodation at the end of the day and back to appropriate point to resume the following day. Some participants at the meeting are planning to walk on the last day with Nathan to accompany him into St Helens.
- BBQ at the Bungalow on 12th August at 1pm will be a gold coin donation with all proceeds going towards Homeless Fund.
- Group agreed to host a weekly information session about supports and services available for people without homes so that they could call in and have a chat and a cuppa. Thom Ryan will be present at the session and is happy to share information to community members who wish to help out also. Jackie is going to bake a cake for each week to encourage people to drop in (so come along and have a cuppa and slice of cake with Thom). Every Wednesday morning 10 am til 11am.
- Janet Drummond advised that Council were discussing the whole issue around homelessness and a lot of the Councillors were keen for an update.

*For those present at the meeting I can't recall if we agreed that we would lobby our elected representatives in parliament or we would await to hear back from Janet (i.e. Council). Perhaps we can discuss at the BBQ please and set a date for the next Action group meeting.

I hope to see you all at the BBQ on the 12th August here at the Bungalow at 1pm. Or at the weekly information session.

Have a lovely weekend.

Kind Regards,

Trish

Patricia O'Duffy and the Team

Manager

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information in this message that do not relate to the official business of St Helens Neighbourhood House shall be understood as neither given nor endorsed by it.

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From: Trish O'Duffy

Sent: Tuesday, 25 June 2019 10:53 AM

To: Admin Officer <adminofficer@sthelensnhh.org.au>

Subject: Homelessness Action Group Meeting Invitation - Wednesday 3rd July at 11am at St Helens Neighbourhood House Room 4.

Dear All,

Thank you so much for attending last week's information meeting. Below are notes from meetings. It was agreed at the close of the meeting that we would meet as a group to consider actions we could do to support those without a home in our community. Therefore I am writing to invite you to a meeting on Wednesday 3rd July at 11am at ST Helens Neighbourhood House – Room 4. There is no agenda as yet – if you have ideas please email them through prior to meeting. We are an action group as you will note from notes of previous meeting below so come along with your ideas and enthusiasm 😊 I look forward to seeing you on the day.

The following are notes from a community information meeting held Monday 17th June 2019 at St Helens Neighbourhood House (the bungalow) – 1pm til 4pm

Background:-

St Helens Neighbourhood House, Thom Ryan and some community members have been meeting for the past several months and carrying out small activities to support those homeless in our community such as providing SWAGS, food vouchers; access to hot meals and linkages to support services such as Mental Health, Housing Connect as well as support with completing paperwork. Nathan a member of our group decided he would walk from Hobart to ST Helens during Homelessness week to highlight the issue and any sponsorship received would go towards projects to help those without a home. We also were in the process of setting up a weekly support session that we planned on promoting widely so that people who found themselves without a home could call in and have a cuppa, chat and yarn with a caring individual who would have knowledge around what support services were available etc. As a small group we also had discussions with members of parliament and elected reps and Council about some long term strategies that would provide housing whilst also empowering people by including wrap around support and capacity building.

As a small group we were aware that there were more community members that might be interested in helping us and by joining together we could strengthen our approach and achieve more success.

We St Helens Neighbourhood House invited Don McCrae who oversees the Street to Home project in Hobart to share information about his program and how it is auspiced.

Don McCrae

Team Leader

SASH Salvation Army Supported Housing

Street to Home

Beyond The Wire (Throughcare For Returning Citizens)

The Salvation Army | Tasmania Division

117 New Town Road, New Town 7008

T 62782817 | **M** 0409588042 | **F** 62781542

Don.mccrae@aus.salvationarmy.org

Don provided the following information (I have made it in dot points as the talk was for 2 hours and a lot of detail. For those of you receiving this email that were not present I have included links below to data sheets that provide all of the information Don shared)

- 1,579 people are experiencing homelessness in Tasmania. The rate of 31.9 per 10,000 is the lowest in Australia. Primary homelessness represents 8% (those living on the streets) the remainder are secondary and comprise those that are couch surfing, living in shelters etc.
- Issues behind homelessness include Inaffordability; lack of sufficient housing and reduction of availability since Air B n B; Increase in Rents; lifestyle choices (Drug and Alcohol) – self medicating means it can be difficult to hold down a tenancy; Newstart allowance too low to afford rent; not enough new housing being built;
- Don's current caseload is 53 people! Should be s
- Providing Housing is only the first step – the greater need is to support people maintain their tenancy

<https://www.shelertas.org.au/housing-in-tasmania/homelessness/some-facts/>

https://www.shelertas.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/ST_FACT-SHEET_Homelessness-v3.pdf

https://www.homelessnessaustralia.org.au/sites/homelessnessaus/files/2017-07/TAS_-_updated_Jan_2014.pdf

Below are notes from a previous meeting held on 24.5.2019

From: Trish O'Duffy

Sent: Tuesday, 28 May 2019 6:43 PM

Subject: Discussion Notes from Meeting re Homeless in BOD - Friday 24.5.2019

Hi Everyone,

Thank you Jon, Nathan and Thom for the positive meeting last Friday. It is so encouraging to know that there are so many community members willing to get in and roll up their sleeves to help out.

Janet and Kylie – I've included you both in this email as I understand from Jon that you are keen to help in this space.

Below are some notes about strategies we discussed last week and updates we provided to Jon.

- Currently Thom and Trish auspice a SWAG bag for homeless program. Funds have been collected by local community members (\$1000 to date) and donated to the House for purchase of SWAG Bags to distribute to those in need - this has been ongoing for the past 18-24 months and so far we have distributed 21 bags (not sure if I have the timeframe right Thom or the about bags distributed). A lesson learnt from the bags is that we need to purchase the kind that are set up with poles rather than tied to a tree or frame. Its important to know that Thom and Trish do not simply hand out a swag but take opportunity to ensure clients are linked in with appropriate services and supports.
- Nathan Thom and Trish have planned a regular drop in session at the House for people that are homeless, including those that are couch surfing. Nathan is providing volunteer support and is in the process of receiving community champion training to support community members he comes across on his travels, providing information and linkages to support services. The idea behind holding a regular session at the House is so that we can advertise it and have people know that they can call into a spot regularly where they will be supported.
- Housing Connect is on the services provided by Thom and the House currently to support people with bond deposit and all housing support whether its private rental or to get on the social housing list.
- Nathan is doing a sponsored walk from Hobart to ST Helens during National Homelessness Week 5-11 August. The walk will take approx.. 5 days and Nathan has begun training for the event. Nathan has done a significant amount of foot work (pardon the pun) insofar as getting in touch with homeless shelter in Hobart highlighting the walk. Funds raised will be held by Neighbourhood House and added to the current homeless funding we have (currently we have \$300 towards another set of SWAGs collected by local community group). It was agreed that collectively decisions would be made as to what projects and

programs funds would be used to support homeless. Trish has contacted ABC who are interested in doing a story on Nathan and what the group is trying to achieve. Also The Examiner will do a piece.

- Discussions around an initiative such as the sleepbus that operates currently in Sydney were held. Recognised that there is a huge amount of pros and cons for this type of solution - to be discussed further e.g. Volunteer support to ensure it remains sustainable, how to get word out to people in need, who would drive it, what safeguards would need to be in place for both clients and volunteers, who would ensure it etc. etc.
- See below link to provide overview to proposal put forward to Rebecca White MP when she visited the House two weeks ago by Nathan, Thom and Trish. The idea is to empower people, build skills whilst addressing homelessness. The Hedgehog Housing Cooperative project referred to in the excerpt below from SUCCESSFUL SCHEMES - collective custom builds is the model that we are seeking to replicate here on the Coast – St Helens. Trish has had discussions with Gary from Fingal Neighbourhood House (there are land banks that may be accessible in Fingal) and also liaising with THRIVE Build Project partners. During the course of the project we have built strong connections and linkages with Housing and Skills that may come to fruition – our aim now is to develop a scope/business case to present.
- It was discussed and agreed that providing a community awareness workshop would help towards gathering community support to assist with developing strategies that will help. Trish contacted Don McCrae from Homeless Shelter in Hobart. Don is going to provide a talk on 17th June for the community (he provides talks to Parks and Wildlife to increase awareness and understanding about homelessness). It is hoped that community will attend and there will be opportunities for everyone to work together (because together we achieve more).

I suggest we keep in touch via email. What is everyone's thoughts? I'll send around the poster promoting the community session on 17th tomorrow or Thursday.

Link to Grand Designs program that showcases the Hedgehog Housing Coop – very inspiring.

<https://www.dailymotion.com/video/xxrtid>

The following are links that will be useful for our group to use for resources.

<https://www.selfbuild-central.co.uk/first-ideas/examples/hedgehog-co-op/>

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/1999/may/19/guardiansocietysupplement2>

https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/kevin-mcccloud-houses-building-self_uk_59df90c9e4b0eb18af06e118?guccounter=1&guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ29vZ2xLmNvbS8&guce_referrer_sig=AQAAANOJ4U3SQpj71KdbpymMKQB-o-4vE7c0DrTEWfnzoqkBPaw_DbPhHzqFOpCSNOIKNjbP4aG0j0DZUmK1-rKcdDwcYLTgnKI2nFd0gbcPrifaJOP2cqGuH6ME43L42-lmP91IXOdcPNtdYE8PKSJ-NBT7pSYpB8Fqvqgf5DwarV

www.collectivecustombuild.org/site/media/PDF_Downloads/4_Successful_Examples_-_PDFSummary.pdf

Page 10:- Historically - and along with Walter's Way in Lewisham - the Diggers Self Build¹³ and Hedgehog Housing Cooperative¹⁴ projects represent the most widely-known 'supported community self-build' group projects. Both relied heavily on the involvement of the CHISEL and South London Family Housing Associations, a self-build enabling role played by architects Architype, and a Self-Build-To-Rent model of tenure. The Diggers Self Build project represents a self-provided-for-rent neighbourhood procured by a Housing Association but with strong involvement of users (members of a residents' co-op) in design, planning and construction, using the Segal construction method (Parvin

et al., 2011a, p. 56). The Hedgehog Housing Co-Op project began 1996 when a group of ten local families (who were all without permanent housing) worked with the council and the CBSA to construct some simple timber framed properties. All the homes are for rent, at a discounted level to reflect the work the self builders put in (NaSBA, 2013b, p. 10). The project has been featured on Grand Designs.	
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Kind Regards,
Trish

Patricia O'Duffy and the Team

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