



# Homelessness Reforms - Tasmania

Issue 4, June 2011

**W**elcome to the fourth newsletter on Homelessness Reforms within Tasmania.

This newsletter highlights the enormous amount of work that has been undertaken since the Tasmanian Homelessness Implementation Plan was announced under the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness in July 2009.

It provides an update on each of the six initiatives within the Plan:

- Tasmanian Homelessness Plan 2010-2013: *Coming in from the cold*
- KEYS (previously the Same House Different Landlord program)
- STAY (previously the Specialist Intervention Tenancy Service)
- Supported Accommodation Facilities (previously Dedicated Homeless Facilities)
- Service Coordination and Improvement Program
- Workforce Capacity Audit and Development Plan.

## *Coming in from the cold*



The Tasmanian Homelessness Plan 2010-2013: *Coming in from the cold* was launched on 24 September 2010.

The Plan provides a whole-of-government and community approach to reduce and prevent homelessness in Tasmania.

The Plan is built on commitment to over 80 actions in the Plan by over 20 agencies.

In addition to the progress outlined in this newsletter, successes so far include:

- one Child and Family Centre has opened in Beaconsfield with capital works well underway in five more (Queenstown, East Devonport, St Helens, Clarence Plains and Ravenswood)
- 22 literacy support coordinators have been employed statewide through the Tasmanian Adult Literacy Action Plan
- two Saver Plus programs, to assist people to save for their children's or their own education, have been established (in Hobart and Launceston)
- many programs have been developed and implemented by the Department of Education for students at risk of disengaging with schools.

Further progress will be outlined in an interim report on the implementation of The Tasmanian Homelessness Plan 2010-2013: *Coming in from the cold* in July 2011.



## Innovative homelessness services launched

Two new homelessness services, KEYS (Keys to the future) and STAY were launched on 17 February 2011.



### At the launch of KEYS and STAY

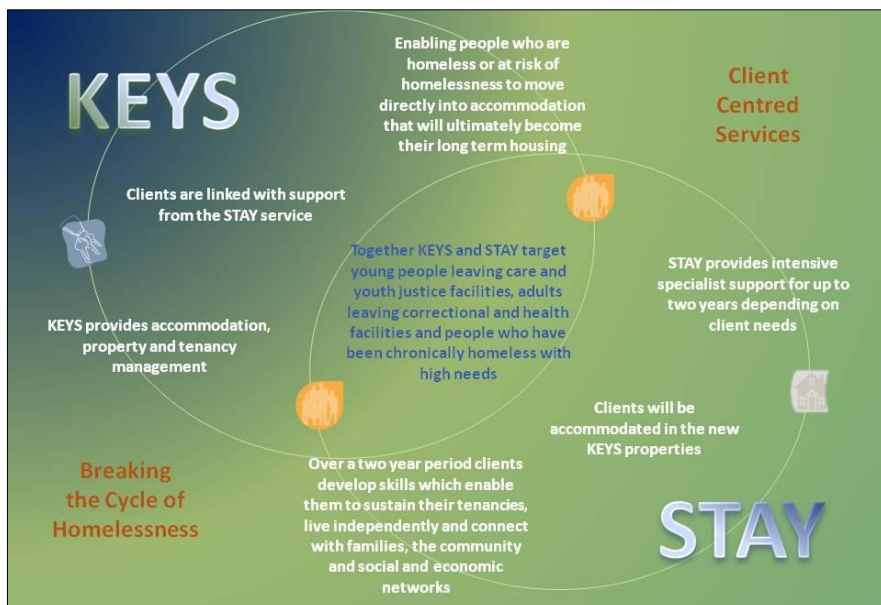
Above: Therese Taylor - Colony 47, Senator Carol Brown – Australian Government, Ian Burke – Australian Red Cross, Cassy O'Connor – Minister for Human Services, Andy Witt - Centacare Tasmania

As the Minister for Human Services, Cassy O'Connor said, "these services are for people who cycle through homelessness and need day to day support to get back on their feet. They are for people who may otherwise require repeat assistance from a range of mainstream and specialist homelessness services."

The program is helping up to 100 people across the state who may be leaving prison, Ashley or State care, people experiencing mental health issues and people who have been homeless over a long period of time.

**KEYS** provides long term housing. This ensures that the person has a stable, affordable and supported place in which to live while they work on a range of long term goals. KEYS is managed by Colony 47.

**STAY** provides intensive support for clients. This involves almost daily contact with clients. Clients are offered support (such as budgeting and cooking skills) and therapeutic support (such as working through alcohol and drug issues). STAY is managed by Centacare Tasmania, in partnership with Australian Red Cross.



**KEYS and STAY were recent winners of the Innovations in Practice Awards for 2011 in the category of Client / Patient Centred Care.**



## **KEYS and STAY helping to turn lives around**

Centacare and Australian Red Cross report that they have already seen positive results for clients, as highlighted by the following case studies (names have been changed to ensure confidentiality):

Alan has previously experienced periods in detention and patterns of negative behaviours due to lack of hope and self confidence. Participation in STAY has prompted some turn around in this pattern.

Alan has recently enrolled in college and reports that he has ceased drug taking and offending behaviours. He has a more optimistic outlook for the future and has a sense of hope about achievement of goals. Despite some challenges relating to his peer group Alan has established and is maintaining a tenancy.

After a turbulent nine years with numerous stays in prison Darren is currently maintaining drug treatment and managing a household for the first time in his life.

Darren's case worker has observed a noticeable difference in mood and wellbeing. He is maintaining a high level of interest with the program and an ongoing willingness to stay engaged with support.

A particularly positive outcome for Darren has been strengthening relationships with his family. He has been successful in maintaining a six month lease.

Other examples of positive results include: improved management in day to day living such as creating shopping lists and making responsible choices, maintaining physical fitness, increased self-awareness of moods and behaviours, reunification with children, better management of mental and physical health issues, future planning and goal setting around employment and education, paying bills and having food in the cupboard.

## **Supported accommodation facilities launched**

Two new supported accommodation facilities were recently launched in Launceston and Ulverstone.

Grove Street, Ulverstone, launched on 28 April 2011, is the first of five new supported accommodation models to be opened in Tasmania over the next 12 months.



**At the launch of Grove Street**

Above: Brett Wake - CHL, Cassy O'Connor – Minister for Human Services, Sid Sidebottom – Federal Member for Braddon, and the Rt. Revd. Dr. Chris Jones - Anglicare



At the launch, Minister for Human Services, Cassy O'Connor announced that Anglicare Tasmania and Community Housing Limited (CHL) have been selected as the provider for three of the new supported accommodation models.

“In addition to Grove Street, Anglicare Tasmania and Community Housing Limited will manage two properties in Launceston – Thistle Street and York Street.

“These three new developments will provide safe, secure and affordable housing for almost 70 Tasmanians who need it,” Ms O'Connor said.

Residents will be a mix of people who are on low incomes and a small number of people who need support to maintain their tenancy. Tenants will start to move in from July 2011.

CHL will provide property and tenancy management and Anglicare Tasmania will provide intensive case management for those who need help to establish and maintain their tenancy. CHL has over 18 years experience providing long-term, affordable housing to people on low incomes both in Australia and overseas. Anglicare Tasmania is a well established local provider that has strong networks in the North and North West of the State.



Inside one of the Grove Street units

CHL and Anglicare Tasmania will work together to provide residents with opportunities to participate in the local community.



Inside one of the Thistle Street units

The constructions at Grove Street, Thistle Street and York Street have been made possible by \$13.6 million of funding through the Tasmanian Government's Housing Fund and the Australian Government's Nation Building Economic Stimulus Plan. Operational funding of around \$1.6 million for the developments is being provided by the Australian and Tasmanian Government's through the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness.

The remaining two supported accommodation facilities located in Hobart will be managed by Common Ground Tasmania (CGT). These two facilities will provide 97 units of accommodation for people who are homeless and low-income earners. CGT will appoint a support provider in the second half of 2011 and it is expected that tenants will start moving in from early 2012.



## Improving services for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness

The Service Coordination and Improvement Program (SCIP) is a service integration and improvement initiative. SCIP will play a big part in reforming the housing and homelessness system in Tasmania.

The SCIP team will work with stakeholders to improve the way homelessness and housing services are delivered to vulnerable Tasmanians. It is a great opportunity to build on the work that is already being done by bringing services together to tackle the increasing complexities of homelessness. There is also a focus on ensuring clients get assistance that does not increase their vulnerability and improves their circumstances sooner.

A hectic schedule of consultation and engagement with key stakeholders has already started.

SCIP will focus on developing new and improved ways of working, through:

- Building strong collaborative networks, relationships and partnerships between housing, homelessness and mainstream services.
- Developing new and improved business processes, practices and tools to support the service workforce with the tools they need to be able to deliver professional, consistent, equitable and reliable services to those in need.
- In conjunction with the Support and Accommodation Assistance Review (SAAR), designing a connected and coordinated service system with prevention, early identification and reduction of homelessness as key tenets.

Most importantly, these changes will bring benefits to clients through more coordinated, collaborative and engaging ways of working.



Outside view of Thistle Street facility

## Review of support and accommodation assistance

The Support and Accommodation Assistance Review (SAAR) will complement the SCIP initiative and contribute to service integration and improvement across the social housing and homelessness system.

The primary aim of the SAAR is to review, and redesign or further improve aspects of the support and accommodation assistance service systems so that they are:

- easier for people to access and use
- more responsive to a broader range of people's needs
- better able to match support and accommodation assistance to people's needs
- aligned to the national and state reform objectives
- more efficient in their operations.



In January this year Housing Tasmania released a Request for Tender (RFT) to engage a team or consortium of consultants to work with Housing Tasmania on the SAAR.

The RFT process has now been finalised and Housing Tasmania has announced that KPMG have been selected as the successful consultants to conduct the SAAR.

Services will be contacted by KPMG representatives in coming weeks to arrange meetings with service and discuss how services are provided to people, key strengths, areas for improvement and any issues services wish to raise. There will be other opportunities for input into the review at later stages including forums and sector workshops.

We ask for your involvement, assistance and support with this review during 2011.

For further information contact Suzanne Willis on 62332916 or [Suzanne.Willis@dhhs.tas.gov.au](mailto:Suzanne.Willis@dhhs.tas.gov.au).



**Napier Units at the Thistle Street facility**

## Workforce development

The workforce development and capacity initiative will look at the training and development needs of people who work in the homelessness sector and will develop strategies to address these needs.

The project will be managed and delivered by Shelter Tasmania with oversight by Housing Tasmania. This partnership will encourage sector involvement and ownership of the Plan.

Shelter is currently drafting a consultancy brief in collaboration with Housing Tasmania. A consultant will be engaged to undertake the work in the first quarter of 2011-2012 with completion expected by December 2011.

The outcome of all this will be a Workforce Capacity Audit and Development Plan.

## Engaging with people who are homeless

Housing Tasmania is working on better ways to involve people who are homeless or who have been homeless in planning for services. The aim is to ensure that the services people receive are responsive to their needs.

Housing Tasmania has engaged consultants Youth Development Australia to develop:

- a rights-based Homelessness Charter to establish a set of service delivery principles and to raise community awareness about the circumstances of people who are homeless
- a Homelessness Consumer Engagement Strategy. This will include options for ongoing strategies and activities for people who are homeless to express their views.



Youth Development Australia includes consultants who are well known nationally in the homelessness field including David Eldridge, David Mackenzie and Keith Waters.

They will conduct state-wide consultations including:

- regional public discussion forums in Hobart, Launceston and Ulverstone, as well as discussion forums specifically for Aboriginal people
- stakeholder meetings (with Government and non-government organisations, including specialist and mainstream services)
- individual interviews (including with people who are or have been homeless)
- written submissions.

A Discussion Paper has been developed to inform the first round of consultations on the Homelessness Charter, which is available from:

- the Youth Development Australia website at <http://yda.org.au/>
- the Department of Health and Human Services website at [http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/news\\_and\\_media/?a=74983](http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/news_and_media/?a=74983)
- Marcus Richards on 6236 5787.

Youth Development Australian will be conducting a second round of consultations on the broader Homelessness Consumer Engagement Strategy later in the year. Information about this consultation process, including dates and venues for the regional forums as well as a Discussion Paper will be available at the above websites.

## More Information

More information can be found at the National Housing Reforms web page

[http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/housing/about\\_housing\\_innovations\\_unit/national\\_housing\\_reforms](http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/housing/about_housing_innovations_unit/national_housing_reforms)

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