

Friday 29th August 2014

Shelter Tasmania Welcomes Youth Budget Promises

Tasmania's peak body for affordable housing and homelessness welcomes the State Government's commitment to young people, following yesterday's budget announcement of funding towards a supported accommodation facility for youth and continued support of the Trinity Hill development.

Trinity Hill Youth Accommodation and Training Facility began construction in July this year and is set to receive \$10.4 million to continue development. It is due for completion in November 2015. The facility will include 46 independent and supported living units for young people who would otherwise be homeless.

Chair of Shelter Tas, Andy Witt said "long-term, safe, affordable and secure housing has been an ongoing issue for young people in our State, we know that when young people have access to the right accommodation and support they are more likely to achieve successful outcomes".

Yesterday's budget announcement also included a commitment of \$511,000 to purchase an appropriate location for a youth supported accommodation facility on the North West Coast. "There is dire need for a youth facility in the North West, Shelter Tas and our members have been calling for this outcome for some time and are pleased to see our concerns in that region will be met", Ms Witt said.

The budget also revealed that the State Government has agreed to an extension of the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness (NPAH), matching the Federal Government's contribution and providing a total of \$5.4 million towards addressing homelessness during 2014-15. Ms Witt said that the continued funding of the NPAH was great news, but a commitment beyond the next 12 months is also vital.

"The extension of NPAH funding allows for the continued accommodation of over 150 individuals and increased capacity for support to be provided to the most marginalised in an already stretched homelessness service system", Ms Witt said.

Shelter Tas is concerned that the State Government's policy to address anti-social behaviour by Housing Tasmania tenants under the 'three strikes' rule will be detrimental to the most vulnerable recipients of housing services. In other states where 'three strikes' has been introduced, people living with mental health issues, experiencing domestic violence or those with young children have been particularly disadvantaged.

'We look forward to working with Government to ensure that the 'three strikes' rule is adequately resourced and fairly administered, and those cohorts are well supported to ensure successful tenancy outcomes,' said Ms Witt.

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