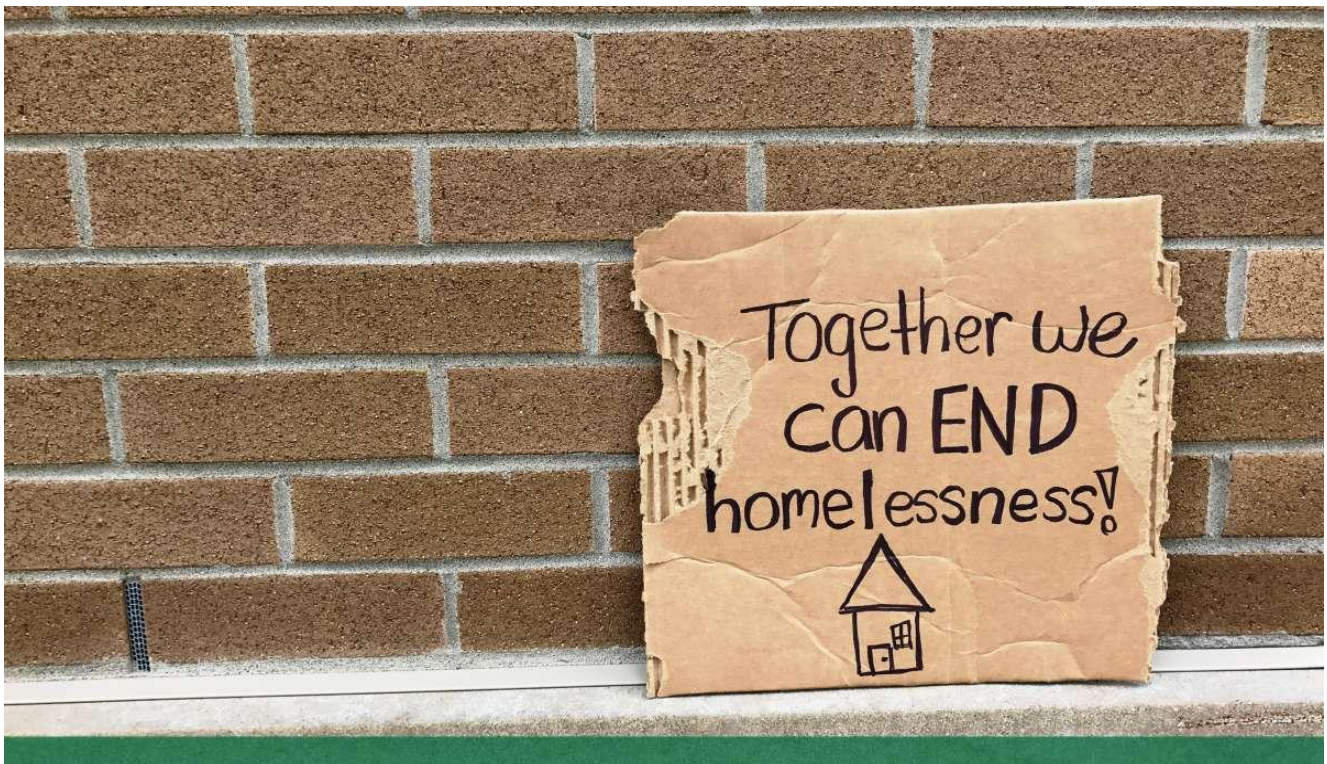# Quantum Support Services Submission

National Housing and Homelessness Plan Consultation 2023

Acknowledgment of Country

Quantum Support Services acknowledges the Gunai Kurnai and Bunurong peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work and live and pay our respects to Elders, past, present, and emerging.

Victim Survivor

Quantum acknowledges the people who have experienced family violence, those who are managing family violence every day, and those who have been killed. Their courage and bravery have enabled the changes Quantum sees in the sector today, and whose lives inform the evidence-based research our work speaks to.

Diversity and Inclusivity

Quantum believes the celebration of diversity makes us and the community stronger. We are committed to embracing everyone's individual differences so that we can help create a strong workplace and community that is empowered to reach its potential. We celebrate diversity of ability, gender, sexuality and spiritual or religious belief along with all cultural backgrounds including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Quantum recognises that we all have diverse life experiences that may be influenced by age, ability, social and financial status. Quantum supports everyone's right to feel respected, safe, welcome, and valued.

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About Quantum Support Services

Quantum Support Services (Quantum) is a leading community service organisation run by Gippslanders for Gippslanders. Quantum has been operating across the Gippsland region in Victoria since 1987 and has built a strong reputation in improving outcomes for people experiencing crisis and/or in need of supports in our community.

We support our community by providing access to specialist response and intervention programs in the areas of Homelessness, Family Violence, Out of Home Care and Youth Services.

We are a Gippsland agency that focuses on achieving evidence-informed outcomes for our community members. Quantum has deeply rooted relationships with the community and place-based agencies across Gippsland. We work with many local organisations to support our clients to access a broad range of services.

Quantum has an annual revenue of $27.7 and employs 230 experienced full and part-time staff and delivers over 40 programs across Gippsland for people of all ages.

We have a long history in the Gippsland community providing housing and homelessness supports that stretches back to the 1980's within one of our predecessor organisations Central Gippsland Accommodation & Support Services (CGASS) and we proudly take a leadership position in the Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS) sector in Gippsland.

For this submission, Quantum identifies itself as a homelessness support expert in regional and rural areas and will utilise the community of Gippsland as it's basis of advocacy and recommendations.

Submission Overview

This submission will use technical language and housing and homelessness jargon as it assumes the reader has knowledge of these areas, particularly with the accompanying discussion paper that the Department of Social Services provided and allows the submission to focus on its key points rather than explanatory content.

At Quantum Support Services (Quantum) we undeniably advocate that the national plan on housing and homelessness must:

- Be one that sets ambitious goals with targets to reduce homelessness and ultimately **end** homelessness in the community.
- Include full scale reform and system change that increases supply and access to private and social housing stock and
- Have sophisticated, modern homelessness support system that prevents homelessness and effectively responds to it.

There are two major prongs to our submission. We firstly focus on the physical asset of housing itself both in the private and social settings and call for recommendations that both improve availability and affordability but also some specific legislative focused suggestions that can balance rights of renter and rights of rental provider in the private market.

Secondly, we focus heavily on the Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS), and the call for significant investment and reform in this space. There are specific cohorts that require specialist responses that will also be included within this section.

Finally, whilst we don't identify as specialists in state and local land use planning, we acknowledge the planning environment plays a crucial role in addressing homelessness and we reinforce opinions of colleagues of ours that have the expertise around inclusionary zoning.

Quantum proudly support the Gippsland Homelessness Network, Council to Homeless Persons, Homelessness Australia and Safe and Equal in their submissions for the national plan on housing and homelessness and our submission purposely closely aligns with the submissions of these aforementioned organisations.

Gippsland

Gippsland

Gippsland, located in Southeast Victoria, is a 41, 556 square kilometre rural area ranging from Phillip Island bordering Melbourne's outer south-eastern suburbs right through to the New South Wales border near Mallacoota. Geographically it spans 18% of Victoria, with East Gippsland being the largest geographical local government area in Victoria.

While Gippsland has many strengths and capabilities it has all of the expected difficulties and struggles of a rural community including the lack of infrastructure and less than adequate healthcare. Gippsland is a unique area with a low socio-economic status crippled by the privatisation of the state electricity commission, the closure and planned closure of key industries as well as the experience of repeated natural disaster such as bushfire, flood and drought. (Steven, 2017; One Gippsland, 2021).

Housing and Homelessness in Gippsland

Housing and homelessness in the Gippsland region is a complex, nuanced subject and it is vastly different depending on which areas of our approximately 41,556 square kilometre landscape are being focused on (KPMG, 2023). Homelessness is a widespread and growing issue in Gippsland with over 6500 known *households* (not individuals) experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness in 2022 (KPMG, 2023). This does not account for those who may not have been counted in the census or have not been to homelessness services for support. This figure is up from 2500 in 2019, a 150% increase in just a 3-year period.
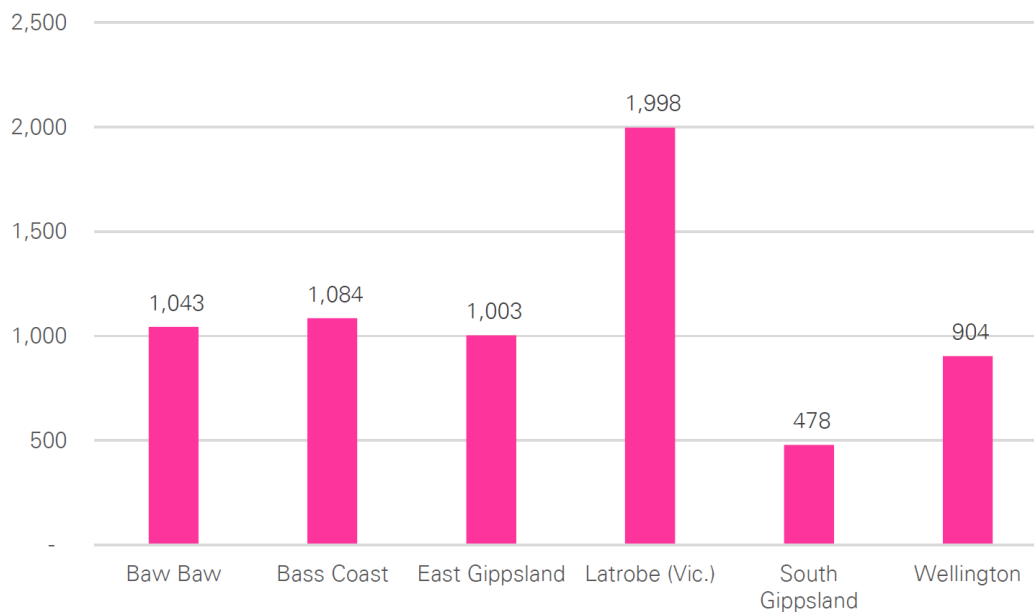
Figure 1- Potential households homeless or at risk of homelessness in Gippsland (KPMG, 2023)
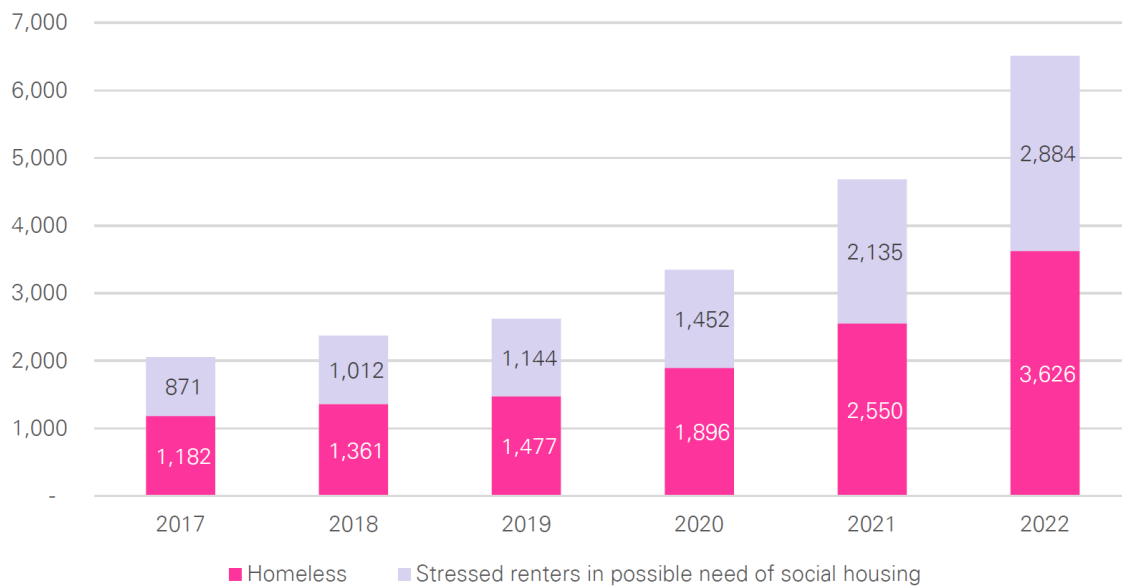
Sources: ABS Census, Landlord type (2021), Rent Affordability Indicator (2021), Mortgage Affordability Indicator (2021), Estimated Homelessness (2016), Affordable rental dwellings (2000 – 2022), Victorian housing register (2022).

When broken down to each Local Government Area (LGA) Latrobe has the highest cohort of homeless community members at just under 2000 households (30% of the total) with Baw Baw, Bass Coast and East Gippsland all equally sitting at approximately 1000 households. Wellington and South Gippsland then trail behind at 904 and 478, respectively. See Figure 2 below.

Figure 2- Potential households homeless or at risk of homelessness by LGA in 2022 (KPMG, 2023)

Sources: ABS Census, Landlord type (2021), Rent Affordability Indicator (2021), Mortgage Affordability Indicator (2021), Estimated Homelessness (2016), Affordable rental dwellings (2000 – 2022), Victorian housing register (2022).

Key Drivers of Homelessness in Gippsland

Whilst the drivers of homelessness in Gippsland match well with international evidence of poverty, weak labour markets, and lack of affordable housing supply being the three major systemic causes of homelessness (Chamberlain, Johnson & Robinson, 2014) we also have some unique regional and geographic factors of note. Our key drivers of homelessness are:

- Lack of housing supply
- Family Violence
- Rising rent (affordability) and cost of living
- Decline in our major industries (unemployment)

The Current Social Housing and Homelessness Support Sectors in Gippsland

With a few exceptions, there has not been major change or reform in the Social Housing and Specialist Homelessness Support (SHS) sector since the release of the 'Opening Doors Framework' in 2008. This landmark piece of reform brought an overarching systematic response to housing and homelessness in Victoria and still provides the skeleton framework for the sector today. Whilst the base of this framework is strong, it is now heavily outdated and does not reflect the Victoria of 2023. Our SHS system within Victoria is what is known internationally as a 'staircase' or 'continuum' model. This is where we have various levels of support and housing types that flow from prevention programs, Initial Assessment and Planning (IAP) at entry points, rough sleeper supports, emergency accommodation, refuges, and congregate crisis facilities through to transitional housing arrangements and then on to long term properties (see below picture as a visual example).

Picture 1- Stair Case Model Example

Whilst a staircase model may initially seem like a good approach as it offers many diverse types of supports, the evidence actually shows many of its interventions aren't highly effective for housing stability and other determinants of health and some of these interventions can in fact be harmful (Keenan et al., 2021). The reasons for this are varying but often there are many extra pre-conditions placed upon individuals and families as they move through the various steps of the staircase to eventually get to safe, stable, and secure housing and this leads to people cycling through the various stages of homelessness repetitively and often not ever getting to those long-term solutions and being blocked at various stairs on the staircase. People often report the feeling that they are still in crisis mode throughout their tenures in these various steps along the continuum. Evidence shows they struggle to work on other goals and compounding issues which can then see them refused for further housing or failing in certain housing programs due to complex needs, then falling back to experiencing homelessness (Taihio & Fredriksson, 2009).

Within Gippsland specifically, we have little stock across all areas of the 'staircase' model relative to our population and housing need, so bottlenecking is a consistent issue across all areas. For example, crisis-focused facilities such as Quantum's Youth Residential Building (YRB) end up accommodating clients for much longer than intended as there aren't enough options for them to progress to and it loses its specialist operational setup to be a short-term intervention, therefore it is less effective (or worse it exits them to homelessness once they reach their end of the short-term support period). Gippsland as a whole only has 32 crisis beds, 182 transitional housing properties, 651 long-term community housing properties, 3,572 public housing properties and a further 338 Indigenous community housing properties (KPMG, 2023). Figure 4 below displays a visual representation of these social housing properties available in Gippsland.

Figure 3- Potential housing dwelling by housing program
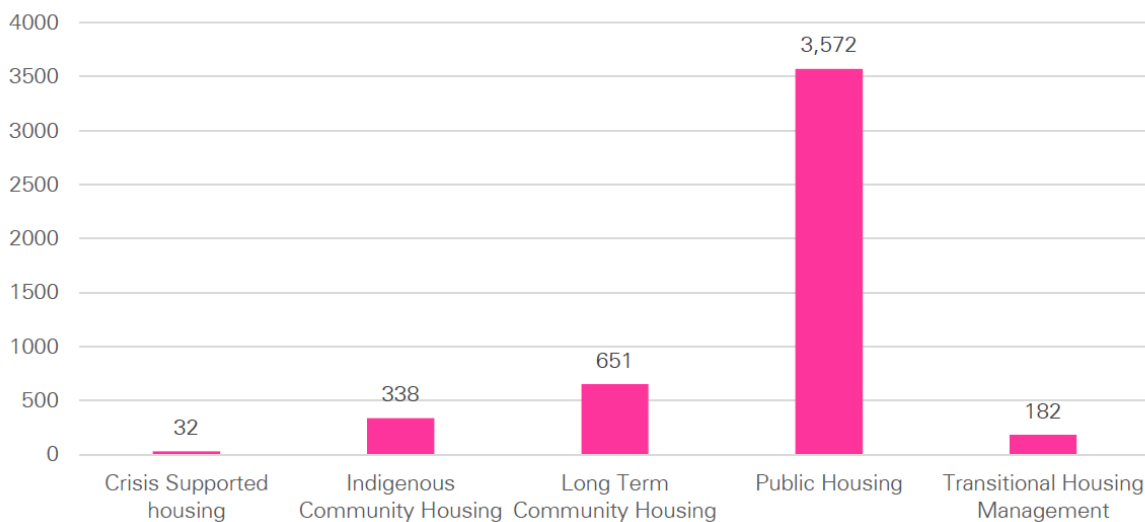
The private rental market is also extremely unaffordable in Gippsland, particularly for the very low- and low-income individuals and families Quantum often supports, and the market has hit record lows of vacancy rates, getting as low as 0.7% of market availability in periods of 2022 (DFFH, 2022). We simply do not have enough housing supply. This is particularly important because our current housing and homelessness support system within Victoria which was released in 2008 (opening doors framework) still operates with the assumption that private rental is a viable and available option for a housing outcome for our clients. It was a much more realistic option in terms of both affordability and availability in 2008 (KPMG, 2023) for Quantum clients to be successful in establishing a private rental and whilst the reality of that being successful has vastly changed, our support services for our community members have not. Whilst this data does not go back to 2008, the below figure outlines the fact that between 2013-2022 affordable private rentals in Gippsland plummeted from 1500 in Dec 2013 to just 300 at the beginning of 2022.

Figure 4- Number of affordable dwellings in Gippsland
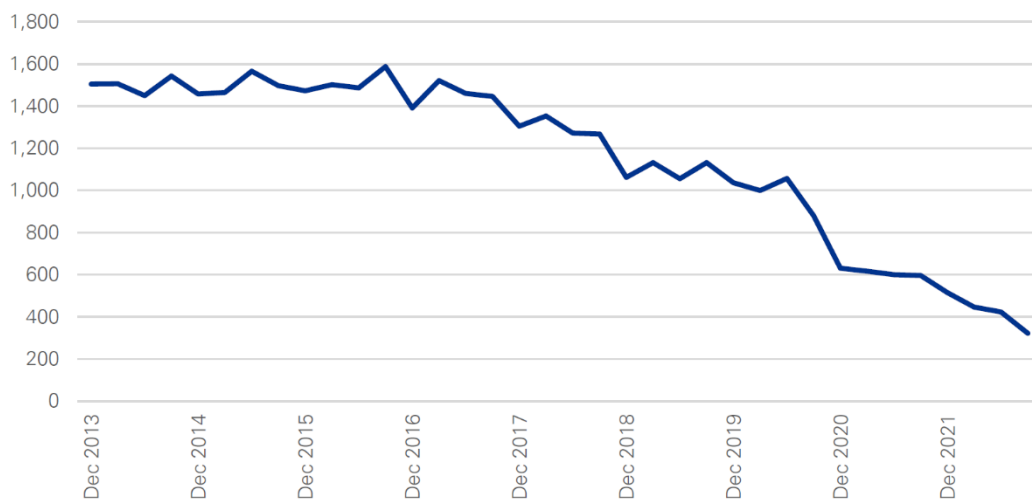
Source: ABS Census, Affordable rental dwellings, (2013 - 2022).

In addition to the fact that the lack of both social and affordable private housing options creates throughput and functionality issues in Victoria's staircase model. The SHS sector also has mostly outdated support programs that accompany or assist the bricks-and-mortar (with some exceptions) that are short-term (and short-sighted), crisis-focused interventions not appropriate for 2023. In terms of funding for these programs, the unit price per target is also much lower than in areas of the sector such as Children, Youth, and Families and Family Violence therefore staff to client ratio is often much higher and focused intensive work cannot be done with these community members seeking much needed supports. This promotes a 'managing homelessness' approach where clients are given short support periods and temporarily supported but a strategic view of ending their cycle of homelessness is not taken. The current staircase model is antiquated and ill-equipped to deal with this housing and homelessness crisis effectively.

More on this later in the submission

Housing

Overview

Housing, a basic human right according to the United Nations' International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (United Nations, 2023), is clearly inadequate in modern Australia to sufficiently house our population and keep them safe. We simply do not have the appropriate amount of stock to ensure our nation are housed, let alone offer diversity in choice, affordability, and location.

In our view there are many complex reasons behind this but fundamentally the Australian housing policy setting idealises housing as a wealth generating commodity rather than shelter to meet a basic human right. This is not something that is easily shifted and will take multi-generational cultural and political changes but ultimately, we must grow supply of social housing to a reasonable market percentage and ensure our private market is a fair, affordable and balanced one for both renters and rental providers.

Social Housing

Social housing options such as community and public housing are undeniably the single most important factor to this plan in terms of effectively ending homelessness. A significant increase in the supply of social housing is of the utmost importance to bring Australia's social housing market percentage up to a more appropriate standard for a country of our calibre. Focusing on Victoria, the state in which Quantum operate, we advocate for a minimum investment of 6,000 new social housing properties to be built per year every year to match need and growing population (CHP, 2023).

Recommendation 1

The plan should set targets to build 6000 new social housing properties in Victoria every year

With this said, regional/rural areas often miss out when single large buckets of funding are made available or small minimum investment guarantees are made based on populations and not needs. The plan should direct that each region is looked at from an equitable place-based perspective.

Recommendation 2

Ensure that new housing targets in regions are needs-based and not just population-based so that regional/rural areas get a fair allocation compared to Metropolitan spaces.

On the frontline, we see the small public housing stock we do have is not being utilised to its fullest potential in Victoria. The plan should set out strategy to review utilisation of stock and build new policy

and procedure that has government ensure they are periodically testing renters against the appropriateness of that property e.g. a single person in a large 4-bedroom home because 20 years earlier they had raised their children in that property. Whilst connection to that property as their home must not be underestimated, we feel that public housing processes could ensure that person is appropriately rehomed to a property that suits their needs and opens up that property for a family.

Recommendation 3

Set strategy to review better stock utilisation policy and procedure within public housing.

Private Market

The private market is of considerable concern with median market rent skyrocketing in Gippsland (similar to many areas of our country) and our vacancy rates plummeting. No matter how much social housing we build our private market will always be the majority of our housing market. Many of our local residents have a higher-than-average risk, and in theory, would be eligible or benefit from social housing however, we understand this is unrealistic and we must also focus on how to make private rental work for all in Australia.

Private rental affordability is a major concern in Gippsland and from June 2020 to June 2023 we saw a 33.3% increase in median rent (DFFH, 2023). We know there are many elements to housing affordability particularly around the economics of supply and demand but rent regulation is an option we see as a valuable tool that the national plan should include. Quantum does not advocate for rent 'freezes' or 'caps' as we think this will drive more rental providers out of the private market, but we advocate for reasonable rent increases to be based on circumstances such as CPI and/or inflation not just by looking at the local market medians.

Recommendation 4

Legislate rental regulations based on reasonable rent increases from CPI/Inflation rather than basing it off of current market trends.

The promotion and incentivisation of long-term rental agreements in the private market is something Quantum believes could instil a lot more security and safety in housing for people if done correctly. In

Victoria, the legislation is already there for long term rental agreements, but it is much underutilised or requested both from a rental provider and renter perspective.

Quantum advocates that the national plan should include incentivisation strategies for rental providers to utilise long term leases such as rebate/discount on taxes.

Recommendation 5

Incentivise rental providers to provide long term leases in the private market.

In Victoria particularly, media portrayal and misinformation about recent Residential Tenancies Act (RTA) amendments have given the public and the market of rental providers a negative view on rights that a rental provider has. Strategy for community education and promotion of people utilising their investment properties (or other owned properties) as a private rental are much needed to ensure the correct information is out in community

Recommendation 6

Include communication and education strategy about being a rental provider in the national plan with aims to promote the balance of the residential tenancies act to the wider public.

The Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT), where renter and rental provider related matters are heard, needs an overall review. There are gaps in processes, issues of functionality and since the Covid-19 pandemic it has been primarily phone-based which does not suit some of our community members. Quantum understands that VCAT works within many jurisdictions outside of just housing but it can have a significant impact on both renters and rental providers so must be looked at.

Note: This recommendation is written under the private housing market section but applies to all housing.

Recommendation 7

A review and improvements made to VCAT to improve functionality.

Homelessness

Overview & General Supports

Quantum has extensive experience operating in the Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS) sector and working with community members who are experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness across many different cohorts.

In our view with access to safe, stable, and secure housing along with the right support we can end homelessness. But what we feel gets underestimated is that even if we got the supply of housing correct in this country, we would definitely still not solve homelessness. The support element is just as crucial to this equation. Unprecedented investment and modernisation of the SHS is a non-negotiable to be included in the national plan.

Recommendation 8

The plan must emphasise the importance of the SHS in ending homelessness and allocate significant new investment to this sector.

In our experience, the overall philosophy of our current SHS system in Victoria (and in other states and territories) is an antiquated model known colloquially internationally as the 'staircase' model (as explained in previous sections of the submission). This system focuses on various steps of a continuum ranging from preventative measures, crisis response, housing with support, etc.

Ostensibly, this looks like the obvious choice for a system, but the resources are primarily pooled in emergency response and the focus is on finding temporary shelter and meeting crisis needs for those in need of housing and homelessness support. This shifts our system to a mindset of managing homelessness in a seemingly never-ending response system focused on crisis and short-term shelter rather than one that prevents and ends cycles of homelessness. We tend to react rather than a strategic proactive view.

A fundamental shift is needed in our homelessness system that focuses on a 'housing-led' response where housing provision is a foundation part of a homelessness support service accompanied by support. There are a plethora of evidence-based programs for diverse levels of 'complexity' that have proven effectiveness.

Recommendation 9

The SHS must be fully reformed to focus on housing first and housing led responses with support programs that have longer form support periods and focus on quality of outcome more so than quantitative numbers through the program. Housing led responses and housing with support should be the norm as opposed to short form support period type case management supports.

Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, Victoria utilised an innovative housing with support program by the name of 'Homelessness to a Home (H2H)' that provided people in crisis accommodation longer form packages of 18-24 months of support accompanied by a guaranteed safe and secure home. Overall this was very well received and is the first of its kind at this scale in Victoria. In Gippsland, Quantum provided 43 people with these packages of support accompanied with the provision of housing and 42 of the 43 clients sustained their housing throughout the entire period of support (and beyond). For Quantum this housing led response showed far greater efficacy than our 'normal' SHS funded case managements due the provision of guaranteed housing and flexible and tailored support to not only help the person/people establish their tenancy but also for them to sustain it and work on other needs, goals, and aspirations with Quantum staff. H2H should be an ongoing funded program throughout Victoria and is a notable example of the type of housing led response that should be focused on in the national plan.

Recommendation 10

Expand H2H, give it ongoing funding and make this housing led program the 'norm' in SHS case management.

Emergency/Crisis Response

Whilst Quantum is advocating that the plan sets Australia into a preventative and housing with support focused system, the emergency/crisis response element to the SHS will always be a necessity and it is currently one of the areas of the SHS that is most under pressure and under-resourced.

The funding used in Victoria by the homelessness entry points that are the first point of call for an individual experiencing homelessness is called Housing Establishment Funding (HEF). This can be used for a plethora of things, but it is the sector's main source of funding for crisis accommodation funding. It is currently set a woefully small amounts that see thousands of people turned away with no support and nowhere to stay every year. A significant increase in this funding is a must to even meet bare minimum need let alone reduce homelessness.

Recommendation 11

Significant increase in HEF funding to be added within the national plan

Organisations employing the workers who administer that HEF and do the initial assessments with community members seeking support at the entry points, known as IAP workers, are also not funded adequately to meet the need. A significant increase in funding for extra staffing in IAP is essential.

Recommendation 12

Significant increases in funding for IAP workers to be added within the national plan

When our emergency/crisis response workers at entry points are looking to support someone with nowhere to stay there are very few purpose-built, community services-run facilities. This means private motels, boarding houses, and caravan parks are often relied on, particularly in regional/rural areas. These private options can be unaffordable, unsafe, or in many areas they simply won't take in the people organisations like Quantum support due to discrimination around their homelessness experience.

Future sections of this submission will speak about specific facilities for specific cohorts but as a blanket recommendation, purpose-built facilities ran by professionally trained community service organisations need to be significantly expanded to support community members in need with nowhere to stay.

Recommendation 13

Short-term refuges, refuge-like facilities, and standalone crisis properties need to be significantly expanded for all cohorts experiencing homelessness.

Prevention & Early Intervention

Shifting focus from crisis intervention to significant emphasis on homelessness prevention is a necessary strategy if we are to end homelessness in Australia. Quantum agrees that prevention in its truest sense means that homelessness needs to be focused on at a universal level far beyond targeted homelessness prevention. Systems like income support payments, health care, disability support and family support all need to be considered. This also means that responsibility for preventing homelessness needs to be shared right across all of government and into a plethora of sectors.

Recommendation 14

Consider universal prevention in the national plan and how varying systems and sectors can share responsibility to help end homelessness.

Prevention and early intervention within the homelessness continuum itself, something that Quantum has much more direct experience with, focuses on those programs that aim to support people to stay in their tenancies or housing situation before they ever become homeless. Victoria's Private Rental Assistance Program (PRAP) and PRAP Plus are great examples of preventative, holistic interventions that aim to support at-risk households to sustain their housing, rapidly rehouse those that are private rental capable, or help those in the social housing system enter the private market. Looking to these types of examples for the national plan are something we think is key.

Recommendation 15

Utilise Victoria's PRAP and PRAP Plus Models as an example of good national homelessness prevention intervention

Quantum advocates that Victoria's Tenancy Plus program is an excellent targeted homelessness prevention model, but it needs less restrictive guidelines, key performance indicators that are based around quality not quantity, and longer support periods. We also think it could be expanded greatly to better meet the needs of the community.

Recommendation 16

Expand and reform Tenancy Plus to better modernise the service offering and make it less restrictive in support period.

Hoarding and squalor within households is a significant issue we see at Quantum that poses serious risk to many households becoming homeless. As this requires specialist diagnoses and supports, we often see a gap in the service sector for these needs, particularly in regional/rural areas such as Gippsland. Developing a specialist response to hoarding/squalor would be an excellent homelessness prevention tool.

Recommendation 17

Develop a specialist response to renters with hoarding and squalor disorders

Youth Specific Responses

Young people, for the purposes of this paper, defined as those aged 16-25 are a considerable overrepresented population of Australians experiencing homelessness and are often failed by our current housing and SHS systems. It is clear that our generic responses do not fit their cohort and Quantum advocates that youth need specific strategies focused on them to prevent and end youth homelessness.

Recommendation 18

The nation plan to include a stand-alone youth homelessness strategy to prevent and end youth homelessness.

Quantum advocate that specialist youth crisis refuges are an essential part of the youth homelessness response system but are needed to be greatly expanded in order to meet the need.

The Youth Foyer model is showing promising evidence in ending cycles of youth homelessness in both Australia and internationally (Coddou, Borlagdan & Mallett, 2019). Through our direct experience with these models and the 'Advantaged Thinking' framework of practice that is within them, we strongly advocate that foyers are built into the strategy as a 'business-as-usual' response within the youth SHS.

All youth-based case management interventions within SHS should have lengthy support periods that are able to be flexible and tailored to meet the needs of the young people. Currently, our system is built around short, sharp intervention that ceases working with the young person as soon as they establish a property (if they are lucky enough to find one). A youth response needs to be in a longer timeframe than currently offered as the norm. One that can support the young person in building up their independent living skills, assisting them in learning to be a good renter, working on their other needs and goals with them, etc. over a multi-year period.

In Victoria, young people often have significant wait times on the public housing waiting list due to their applications being mainly for individual 1-bedroom properties. A lack of 1 bedroom stock mixed with competition with other cohorts like single elderly people means it can be several years before they could receive a property offer in areas like Gippsland. Some other specialist cohorts have a percentage of public housing stock quarantined just for that cohort. Quantum advocates strongly that this should occur for the youth cohort as well.

Young care leavers are a particularly vulnerable cohort within our community that is overrepresented in our population of those experiencing homelessness (CCYP, 2020). For many factors including but not limited to the experience of institutionalization growing up in a 'care' system, we find upwards of 50% of young care leavers entering the homelessness system within 3 years of leaving care in Australia (AHURI, 2021). Young care leavers can often have multiple and complex needs and experience more difficulties than the average person their age in establishing housing. In Victoria, the work in the leaving care space in the last decade has been impressive but the access to housing opportunities for young care leavers has not increased. Quantum advocates for dedicated housing to be built and pathways to be attached to leaving care support programs for young people leaving care.

Recommendation 23

The national plan to direct that there will be dedicated housing options for young care leavers to be invested in and expanded with pathways to that housing to be attached to leaving care support program throughout Australia

Family Violence Specific Responses

Quantum proudly supports and has contributed to our Specialist Family Violence peak body 'Safe & Equal' in their submission for the national plan on housing and homelessness. Quantum is deeply dedicated to supporting victim survivors of family violence and we commit ourselves to the Commonwealth Government's 'National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children 2022-2023'.

Housing and homelessness are intrinsically linked with Family Violence and Quantum supports all recommendations of the National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children's First Acton Plan and it's specific recommendations around housing for victim-survivors (Department of Social Services, 2023).

With this said, we would like to highlight a few key recommendations that are particularly important to our organisation and the community of Gippsland.

Quantum advocates that in the first instance, a 'safe at home' approach should be offered if preferred and safe to do so as it promotes the principle that victim-survivors of family violence should not be further punished and disadvantaged by being forced to leave their home and that punitive measures should be directed towards the perpetrator instead (DV Vic, 2020). It's important to make that safe at-home approaches are also preventative measures so that victim survivors do not have to end the homelessness system.

Recommendation 24

Safe At Home Approaches should be adopted as the preferred method in supporting victim survivors of family violence where safe and appropriate

Quantum also advocates that there should be an increase in dedicated short, medium and long-term housing stock specifically for victim-survivors of family violence.

> *Recommendation 25*
>
> Increase dedicated short-, medium- and long-term housing stock for victim survivors

Increasing the amount of specialist family violence crisis accommodation to prevent victim survivors needing to enter private motels, caravan parks and boarding houses is also a must.

> *Recommendation 26*
>
> Increase dedicated specialist family violence crisis accommodation options such as specialist refuges and crisis properties so that inappropriate private options like motels do not need to be relied upon

Housing-led responses with lengthy, flexible and tailored supports such as housing first models for victim survivors of family violence are key to best practice case management.

> *Recommendation 27*
>
> Housing led responses such as housing first models specialised for victim-survivors to be included in the national plan

Rough Sleeper Responses

Those sleeping rough, at our most acute end of primary homelessness require specific strategy and responses. Regional/rural communities such as Gippsland often have unique experiences with rough sleepers and rough sleeping communities that aren't as visible as those in metropolitan spaces and can be spread out in large areas geographically. Quantum advocates that all local government area's should have dedicated rough sleeping assertive outreach programs.

> *Recommendation 28*
>
> Assertive outreach funding for rough sleepers to be given to all local government areas

The Advance to Zero methodology has shown some promising results both in Australia and internationally of keeping line of sight on rough sleepers, ensuring they don't 'slip through the cracks' at providing communities real time data on their rough sleeping homelessness. The nation plan should include a review of this coordination methodology coupled with appropriate levels of housing as a potential permanent part of the SHS system.

> *Recommendation 29*
>
> Review the Advance to Zero methodology in line with it being coupled with appropriate housing stock and consider it to be fully built into the SHS system

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Responses

Whilst Quantum does not identify as an expert in housing and homelessness for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, we certainly support the self-determination of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people/s and organisations and in the context of this submission specifically in relation to housing and homelessness.

The housing crisis disproportionately impacts Victoria's First Peoples. More than one-in-six Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Victorians have experienced homelessness, compared to one-in-76 non-Indigenous Victorians.

This vast overrepresentation is a direct and ongoing consequence of colonisation.

(VCOSS, 2023)

Quantum endorses Mana-na worn-tyeen maar-takoort, the Victorian Aboriginal and Homelessness Framework in its entirety and believes this framework needs to be considered within the national plan.

> *Recommendation 30*
>
> The national plan to integrate actions from Mana-**na worn-tyeen maar-takoort into its content**

Quantum joins others in advocating that the Victorian Government should quarantine 10% of all future stock for Aboriginal Victorians.

> *Recommendation 31*
>
> The nation plan Quarantines 10% of all future social housing stock for Aboriginal Victorians

Planning

Inclusionary Zoning

Both voluntary and mandatory inclusionary zoning policies are an important tool to consider freeing up planning barriers. Whilst we don't identify as experts in this space, we look to peak bodies such as Community Housing Industry Association and our Community Housing colleagues and support their advocacy in this space.

Recommendation 32

Amend State Planning Acts to include mandatory inclusionary zoning policies in local government planning schemes.

References

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