



older tenants voice

Housing for the Aged Action Groups Quarterly Newsletter Winter 2022



HOUSING FOR THE AGED ACTION GROUP
FIGHTING FOR HOUSING JUSTICE FOR OLDER PEOPLE SINCE 1983





Dear Readers

Apologies from our Chairperson Phyll Williams, who for the first time ever hasn't been able to submit her Quarterly Chairperson's welcome. Phyll has been having a terrible run, not only with her health, but with her mobile phone number being lost in the Optus scandal, the local internet exchange going down. It seems like her neighbourhood has gone back to the dark, pre-internet ages.

Absence makes the heart grow fonder, though, and this interruption to her usual broadcasting makes me appreciate how wonderful Phyll's contributions to the newsletter have been. Over the years that I have been editing "Older Tenants Voice", not only have Phyll's messages been a warm and topical introduction to all of the many goings on at HAAG, they have consistently been the only submissions received before the deadline.

As with all members of our Committee of Management, Phyll is a volunteer, yet a more reliable worker could not be found in all of HAAG. It's a testament to how much HAAG owes to the volunteer contributions from our membership. Its not only the practicalities of making our meetings, events and community

outreach happen, it's the authentic voice that keeps publications like this interesting, and guides HAAG with its experience.

Phyll and the Committee have done an outstanding job in keeping this connection going over these years of covid, where its been a real challenge to stay healthy, let alone manage a community organisation.

Others also make wonderful contributions in different ways, such as the peer and community educators (some featured on the front page), Guruswamy's photos (sorely missed of late), our old-timer's "Letters to the Editor" really add a lot to this little newsletter. Other kinds of contributions, movie reviews, artwork, letters, and memories from the early days of our organisation, are also welcomed.

Seeing everyone's work inspires me as a (somewhat) younger person, to want to step up and get involved in the committees of other community organisations, who we mustn't take for granted in filling such important roles in our society.

In my opinion, the recent controversy of Ross House seeking to lease out its ground floor to become a Wine Bar shows how off-track organisations can go when they don't have strong involvement from the community they represent. I hope by gathering community members to express their opinions, we can come up with a better solution to keep Ross House in the community.

I believe with HAAG's strong membership and leadership from our Committee, we are kept safe from the dangers of becoming overly bureaucratic, corporate, or de-politicised, and can stay true to our grass roots as we grow to provide services and advocacy for more and more older renters.

Reuben Endean, Communications Worker

The housing crisis for older people in Victoria is getting worse. Every day, HAAG's Home at Last service is receiving calls for help from older people across the state facing eviction or struggling to pay rent.

There was a steep increase in the numbers of older people both experiencing and at risk of homelessness in Victoria between 2011 and 2016.

- 3,311 people aged 55 years and over were homeless on Census night in 2016, an increase of 57.6% over five years.
- there was a 70.8 % increase in the number of women between 65-74 who reported being homeless, and a 61% increase in women aged 75 years and over.
- 120,000 women aged 45 and over are estimated to be at risk of homelessness in Victoria.

These figures represent the tip of the iceberg as our service systems are not designed with the specific needs of older people in mind.

Older people need stable and affordable housing in order to "age in place". This cannot occur in the private rental sector where the median length of tenancies is currently 22 months in metro Melbourne, and only 1.7% of available rental housing is affordable to a single person on the Age Pension.

It is time to act. We are calling on the Victorian Government to urgently address the housing crisis facing older people by:

Building public, community and affordable housing for older people in areas that allow maintenance of social and cultural networks, access to transport, health and other services, and green spaces.

During 2020, as part of the 2020/21 Victorian Budget, the Victorian Government made a welcome \$5.3 billion commitment to invest into social and affordable housing. Premier Daniel Andrews stated that the "package will boost our state's social housing supply by 10 percent in just four years" and pledged to build an additional 9,300 homes. Most of these are community housing, with the balance being privately owned 'affordable' dwellings. There was no increase in public housing in this announcement.

Even with this investment, Victoria will still have far less social housing proportionally than other Australian states and territories. And the Victorian Government is behind in delivering on its Big Housing Build target. Combined with the demolition of public housing under the "Public Housing Renewal Program" and the state of ill-repair of existing public housing, Victoria's public housing stock has decreased, not increased, over the last two years.

Redirect all Big Housing Build funding to direct investment in public housing on public land

Analysis by Centre for Urban Research indicates that the \$5.3 billion Big Housing Build would be better spent by investing directly. “A direct capital grant model using public land would deliver approximately 20,000 public housing dwellings”. Direct investment in public housing would deliver an additional 7,700 dwellings, 20,000 dwellings in total and, importantly, the asset (land and housing) would remain publicly owned.

We support calls from the sector for 60,000 public and community homes to be built by 2030 and a long-term mechanism for ongoing funding to increase and maintain housing supply.

Fully deliver the reforms recommended by the independent review into Social Housing Regulation

Last year, an independent panel reviewed Victoria’s social housing regulations. The interim report recommended a range of reforms to put “tenants in the centre”. This included introducing strong and equitable standards across both public and community housing and supporting a healthy and professional workforce within community and public housing. To date, Government has not responded to these recommendations.

Earmark 20% of any “affordable” housing investment for the “missing middle”

The “missing middle” refers to a cohort of older people, mainly women, who have a small amount of savings that means they are ineligible for public and community housing, but not enough to afford to buy a home. The not-for-profit Independent Living Unit (ILU) sector, traditionally a low-cost option for many older people, has been in decline for a number of years as land values increase, and older housing stock becomes expensive to maintain or upgrade. Much of it is being replaced by expensive retirement housing or residential aged care, often run by for-profit companies. Information on eligibility and vacancies is difficult to find.

“Affordable” housing investment should include reinvestment and revitalisation of the Independent Living Unit (ILU) sector, as a low-cost alternative for older people that is well-connected to services, community and green spaces.

Respond to the Inquiry into Homelessness in Victoria report

In 2020, Victorian Parliament’s Legal and Social Issues Committee held an inquiry into homelessness in Victoria, which held 18 public hearings and received almost 500 submissions from across the State. HAAG gave evidence and made submissions to this inquiry and the final report was tabled in

parliament in March 2021. The Government has not responded within the required 6 months.

We are calling on the Government to respond to and implement the recommendations of the Inquiry into Homelessness in Victoria report, including recommendations for early intervention, increased public housing and inclusionary zoning.

Release the Ten Year Social and Affordable Housing Strategy

HAAG welcomed the Victorian Government's commitment to developing a Ten Year Social and Affordable Housing Strategy and made detailed submissions to the discussion paper in April 2021. The Strategy has not yet been released. We are calling on the Victorian Government to launch the strategy, and implement our recommendations to the discussion paper, including:

- Specifically recognise older people's right to housing and their unique housing needs.
- Fund data collection and research to identify the population size and demographics of the "missing middle"; specifically, how many people in Victoria aged 55 and over are at risk of homelessness as they are ineligible for social housing because of savings or assets above the asset limit. Of note, Victoria has the lowest asset limit for social housing in the country.
- Implement strategies to address the housing crisis for older people at risk of

and experiencing homelessness in Victoria.

- Implement mandatory Inclusionary Zoning across Victoria.

Improve protections for retirement housing residents, to make retirement housing a fairer and more affordable housing option.

Residents of both retirement villages and Part 4A parks (also known as residential parks, lifestyle communities or "manufactured homes"), face many issues with their housing, including unfair fees, unclear and inconsistent contracts and issues with management. HAAG is calling for legislative reform to better protect the rights of retirement housing residents, whether they are covered by the Residential Tenancies Act or the Retirement Villages Act.

Establish a housing ombudsman, with specific expertise in retirement housing and social housing, that provides free, fast, accessible and binding dispute resolution

Older public and community housing tenants and residents of retirement housing face numerous issues in resolving disputes with their housing providers or managers. These include unclear processes, a power imbalance that inhibits the assertion of their rights, poor training for managers and

housing providers, and a lack of timely responses to requests for repairs etc.

The Victorian Ombudsman in her investigation into the complaints system in social housing found that “the social housing complaints system is not working. In fact, it has not worked for years”, and called for an independent and specialist Social Housing Ombudsman, as well as improved training and resourcing for housing providers. We recommend this be expanded to include retirement housing, including residential parks and retirement villages, with appropriate expertise to resolve disputes. Any ombudsman or dispute resolution process must be free for residents, fast, independent and binding.

Expand the successful Home at Last program across Victoria as part of an early intervention and prevention approach.

A recent cost-benefit analysis of HAAG’s Home at Last program demonstrated that for every \$1 spent it delivers a \$2.30 benefit, largely in avoided costs to the crisis homelessness, aged care and health systems. HAAG assists over 1,000 older

people a year, including successfully finding long term, affordable housing for approximately 150 older people.

We have an early intervention and prevention approach to homelessness, which involves providing community and professional education to alert people to what places older people at risk of homelessness and pathways to support. Since 2015, we have had a strong Cultural and Language Diversity focus, and a team of bilingual workers who provide community education to groups of older people from a non-English speaking background. We are now working with the LGBTI community to reach older LGBTI people at risk of and experiencing homelessness.

Home at Last currently operates mainly in metropolitan Melbourne, with some outreach into the Barwon South and Goulburn Valley regions. The Queensland Government has recognized the benefit of this program and is implementing a similar service in their state.

We are calling on the Victorian Government to expand the successful Home at Last service into other regions of Victoria, to allow equitable housing support and access for all older Victorians.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor, please find my first angry letter. I feel something had to be said about the way that HAAG is going off its beginnings and moving away from its roots.

Regarding last editions review of “Queen Bees” - these older womens language do not talk to the grassroots of HAAG - That’s

why I joined HAAG so many years ago. The members then were inclusive, angry at the Powers That Be... Women then got angry and did something about it. But I am sorry to say that in the media they are still abusing younger women and their children.

Yours sincerely, an old Haagie.

There is real momentum for change to address homelessness and housing issues of older people in Victoria. Our voices are powerful. People speaking out and asking decision makers for action can shift policy to improve housing outcomes for older people in the State.

We encourage you to contact your local State representative and other local candidates to request meetings to talk about homelessness and housing issues of older people. Local members are open to meeting their constituents, especially when there is an upcoming election. They are interested in local concerns and with the right information, encouragement and clear recommendations, you can be a champion for older people and their housing issues.

"I had a positive meeting with my local MP. She was interested in planning and housing, approachable, well briefed and very supportive"

Maeve Browne-Cooper, HAAG member

Here are some tips for meeting with your federal representative

1. Find your local State representative and other local candidates

Helpful information on a range of election related topics: icanvote.org.au/meet-the-candidates/

You can find your electorate here: parliament.vic.gov.au/findelectorate/

You can find local state representative here: bit.ly/3RQ5VWN

Contact details of the current state members are available here: bit.ly/3d3HDd5

Information about other candidates will be available on their respective party/personal websites. Some key websites include:

- Victorian Labor party: bit.ly/3BroafD
- Victorian Liberal party: vic.liberal.org.au/our-team/state/
- Victorian Greens: greens.org.au/vic/candidates/state

Once you have identified the representative or candidate, you will then need to search for their contact details, preferably an email address. Contact details are usually available on the above websites.

"I found my MP willing to listen, very aware of the issues and keen to talk about social housing"

Kris Spark, HAAG member

2. Do your research

Before you contact your local representative and candidates, find out some information about them. Check their website, social media and media releases to see what motivates and interests them, whether they are in government, opposition or an independent.

Do they have ministerial responsibilities or a particular interest? Do you have any common ground or interests? The more you know about the representative or candidate, the easier and more free flowing the conversation will be.

3. Requesting and setting up the meeting

We have a template letter that you can use to request a meeting. Find the letter on our website at

oldertenants.org.au/candidate-letter

About a week after sending the request, give the electorate office a call. These representatives and candidates receive a huge amount of correspondence, so calling to follow up can be effective. You will probably speak to a staff member rather than the representative / candidate themselves. They will be able to help you arrange the meeting. You may also have to call a few times if they are busy.

4. Be clear, prepared and briefed before you call

When you call your local representative or candidate's electorate office, introduce yourself and explain where you are calling from. Make it clear that you live in their electorate. Clearly explain the reason for your call, and that you would like to have a meeting with the representative or candidate to explain your concerns. Have the date and other information about the meeting request (letter or email) handy so the staff members can track it down in their correspondence records.

Consider your availability and preference for the meeting location before you call. The meeting could be in person at their electoral office, a community hub/local service or online.

You may wish to take along an advocate, friend or a family member. Give the staff member enough information to convince them that they should arrange a meeting for you. Offer to send through more information by email if that would help. Election times are particularly busy, and staff member deal with a lot of calls on a variety of issues. They will appreciate clarity and brevity. During the call, ask for the best email address and phone number to contact the staff member if needed.

5. Once you have arranged the meeting

Following the call, be sure to email or write to the office to confirm the meeting details.

6. Meeting the representative/candidate

See below for more information about how to prepare for the meeting.

Take a photo (if you're comfortable) for social media platforms with the representative or candidate.

7. Follow up promptly

Make sure you follow up after the meeting by thanking the representative or candidate and their staff via email. Share relevant information (links to reports are available on the HAAG website). Maintain your relationship with the representative/candidate by keeping in touch about important new developments or issues.

"Homelessness is a 'solvable problem'. We know what needs to be done, we just need the will to carry it out."

Fiona Patten MP

The meeting

You will probably have 30 minutes to an hour at the most for your meeting with the representative or candidate. Introduce yourself (any others accompanying you) and use your time wisely. Get to the point. Be specific and clear about the issue and what you want them to do. Try to cover these two main areas in your meeting:

1. How does the issue affect the representative or candidate's electorate

If you are comfortable with doing so, share your story or consider asking another member of the community or a community advocate to the meeting to tell their story. Explain what you know about older people's risk and experiences of homelessness in the community. Personal stories make the issue relatable and harder for the representative to deny or downplay the importance of. Older people's experiences of housing stress and homelessness are the result of systemic and structural failures but the representative or the candidate may not know how it affects their constituents.

2. What are you asking them to do?

Consider the key policies you would like to see. For example, if your main concern is about lack of affordable housing for older people, ask them to commit to investing in social and affordable housing. HAAG is asking the State government to take very specific measures.

- You can align your “asks” to HAAG’s policy recommendations (see below).
- You can ask that them to take housing policy commitments to the State election with a clear focus on older people.
- You can also ask the representative or candidate to make a public statement about the need for polices that address older people’s homelessness.

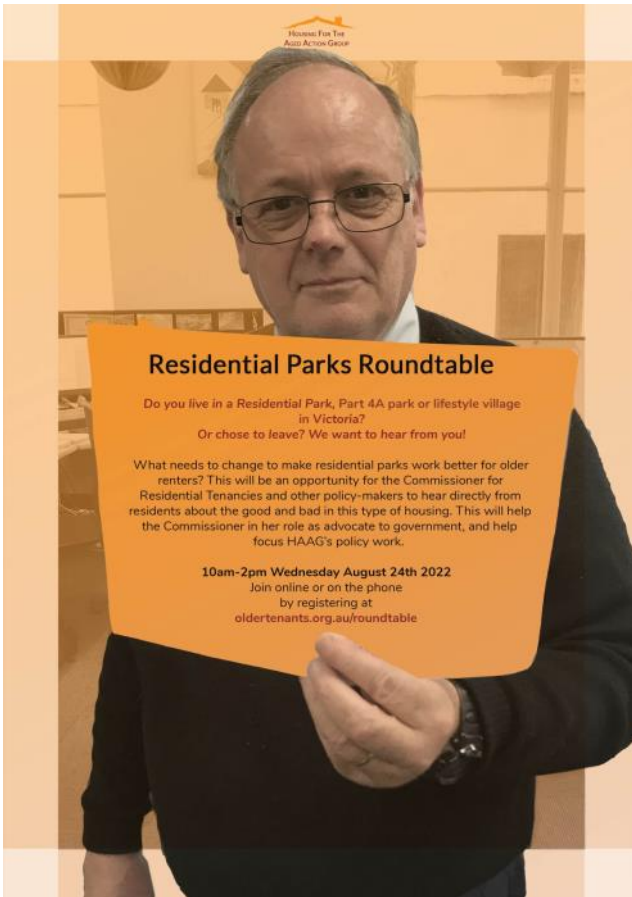
HAAG’s policy recommendations

The full list of HAAG’s policy recommendations are available at oldertenants.org.au/vicvotes-policy. Feel free to print this document and leave a copy with the representative or candidate. Broadly, HAAG is asking the decision makers to:

- Build 60,000 public and community homes in well-connected locations by 2030.
- Put tenants in the centre of policy making.
- Earmark 20% affordable housing for older people who are unable to get on the social housing waiting list.
- Improve protections for retirement housing residents.
- Establish a Housing Ombudsman with specific expertise in retirement housing and social housing.
- Expand Home at Last service to ensure the service is available to all older people in Victoria.

Helpful Resources

- [HAAG At Risk 2021: Older women facing homelessness in Australia, from awareness to action, outcome summary](#)
- [Submission to The Victorian Social Housing Regulation Review: Role of Regulation in sector accountability, viability and growth](#)
- [Submission to The Victorian Social Housing Regulation Review: Service Delivery and the Tenant Experience](#)
- [Submission to Victorian Social Housing Regulation Review: Interim Report](#)
- [Submission to: Establishing a 10-Year Strategy for Social and Affordable Housing Discussion Paper](#)



On the 24th of August, HAAG together with the Residential Tenancies Commissioners office hosted a forum for residents of residential parks who feel like they are falling through the gaps in the legislation that covers different kind of retirement housing. Around 70 residents attended from villages across Victoria to discuss shared issues and concerns from their experiencing living in this type of housing. Members of RAAG, a working group of HAAG members who live in retirement housing, some of whom have also formed a residents association called Manufactured Home Owners Association (Vic), were vital in connecting residents to make sure we had diverse attendance across the state to capture the breadth of the issue.

Many people living in residential parks are covered by the Part 4A section of the Residential Tenancies Act. This means they own the unit or dwelling they live in, and then rent the land. This unique arrangement

can often be misunderstood by the general public, prospective residents, park staff and often even legal professionals; because of this it means that for some it is not clear what their housing rights and responsibilities are until they have already signed the contract and moved in.

In the forum, residents participated in a large group discussion, and then had the opportunity to join smaller 'breakout room' discussions on ZOOM to speak to specific topics important to them. Some of the key issues discussed were; overly complex contracts, lack of explanation of contracts by staff, unfair fee structures including unaffordable rent increases and exorbitant exit fees, need for more extensive management training, issues with inadequate or slow maintenance and repairs, and the lack of impartial, accessible and fair dispute resolution processes. All the sessions were recorded, and notes taken by staff to ensure the experiences of residents were accurately captured to compile a report. The information from the forum is currently being compiled, so stay tuned!

If you have an issue in your retirement housing or want to learn more about joining RAAG, you can call the Retirement Housing Advice Service on 9654 7389, option 2 or email them on

retirement@oldertenants.org.au

If you would like to get in touch with Manufactured Home Owners Association (Vic) you can email them on info.mhoa.vic@gmail.com or call them on 0431 347 797



Seniors Festival is back with a packed program of events throughout the month of October.

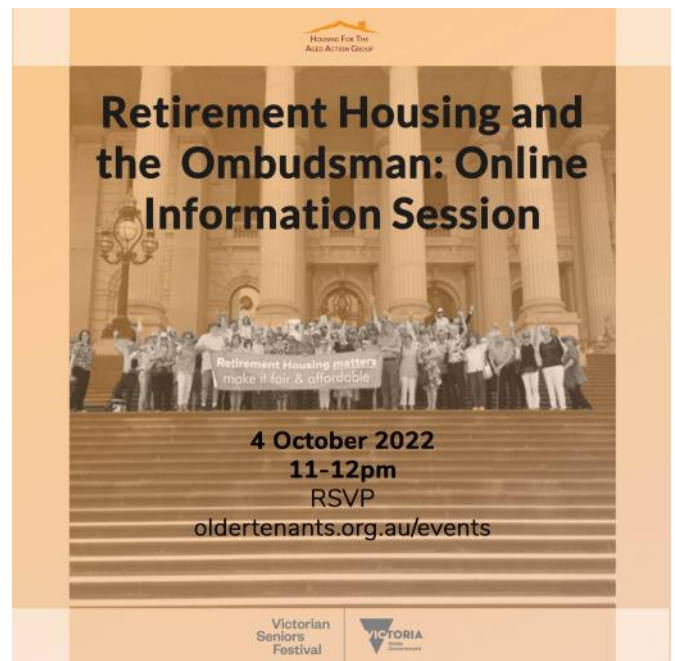
HAAG is preparing many in person as well as virtual events covering everything to do with older people and housing.

Make sure to save the dates and RSVP for all these events at oldertenants.org.au/events or by calling HAAG on 9654 7389.

An information session for all residents of retirement housing types including retirement villages, residential parks, lifestyle villages, rental villages, independent living units about the need for a specific, timely, free, accessible and binding dispute resolution service for all retirement housing residents, as well as other information on fair fees, management training and simplified contracting.

Tuesday 4th October, 11am – 12pm

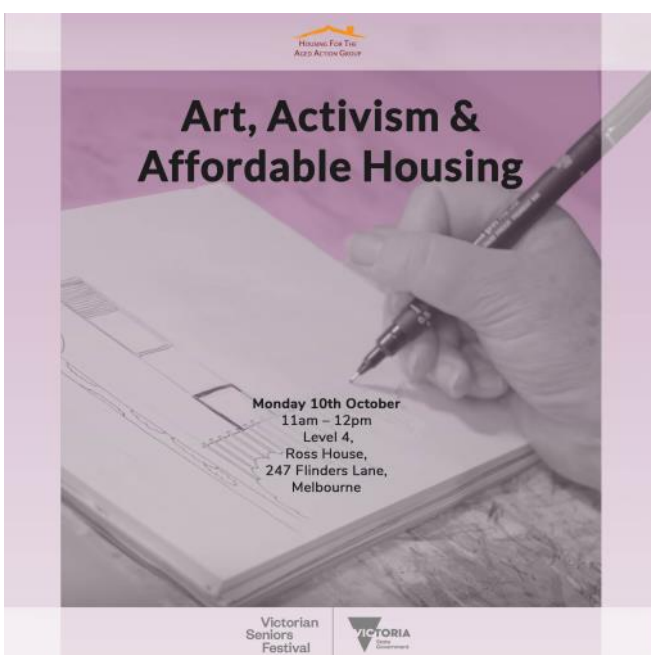
Online event. Zoom link provided upon registration

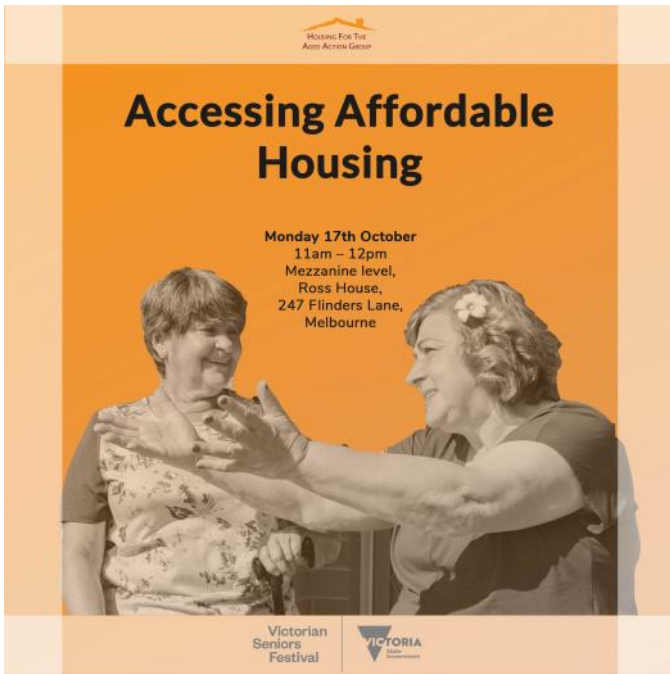


Channel your creativity at this arts-based workshop, where we'll explore HAAG's activist history and how art can be used to fight for housing justice, so older people aren't at risk of homelessness. All art materials are provided and a catered lunch is included.

Monday 10th October, 11am – 3pm

Level 4, Ross House, 247-251 Flinders Lane, Melbourne



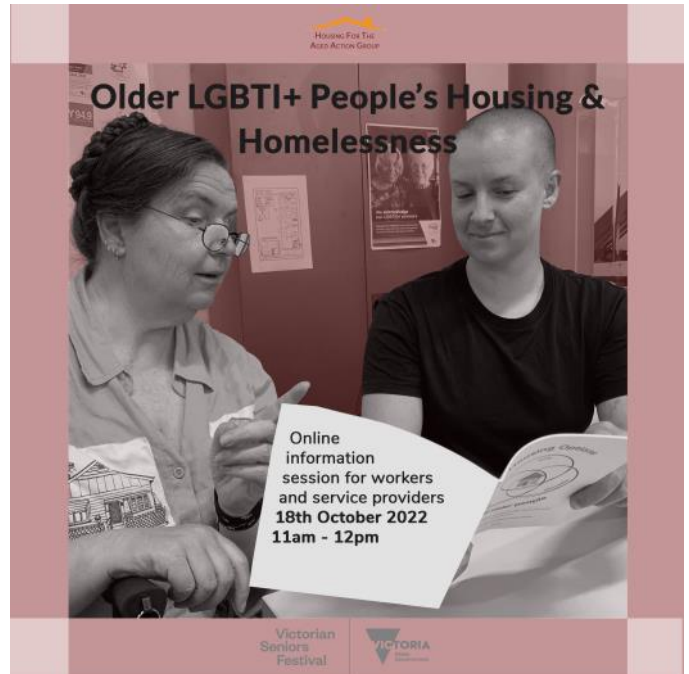


A presentation on how older people experiencing housing stress can access affordable housing through HAAG's services. Suitable for older people on a government pension or low income, who are in private rental or under financial stress with mortgage payments. Light lunch included.

Monday 17th October, 11am – 12pm
 Mezzanine Level, Ross House,
 247-251 Flinders Lane, Melbourne

Online information session for workers and service providers wanting to learn more about the housing experiences of older LGBTI+ people.

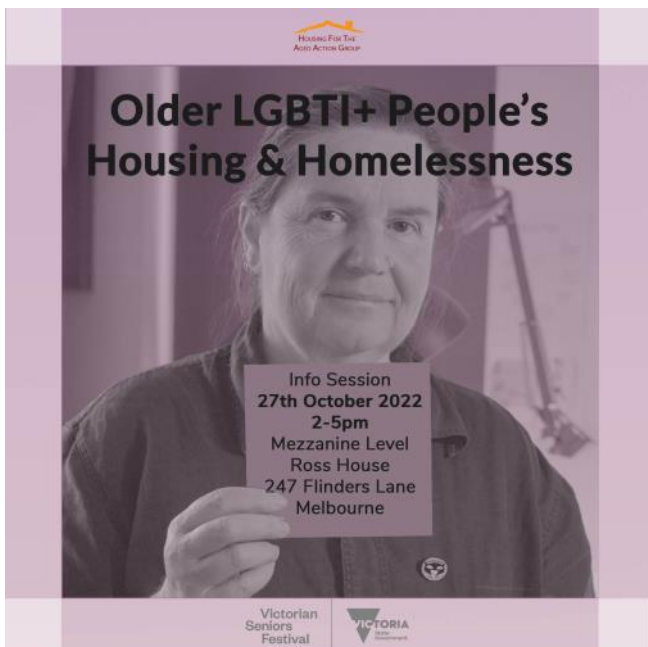
Tuesday 18th of October, 11am-12pm.
 Online event. Zoom link provided upon registration at oldertenants.org.au/events



In-person information session on the housing experiences of older LGBTI+ people for LGBTI+ community members as part of Victorian Seniors Week festival.

Refreshments provided.

Note the date has been changed
Thursday 27th October, 2.00pm - 5pm
 Mezzanine Level, Ross House, 247-251 Flinders Lane, Melbourne





Dykes on Bikes Melbourne are holding a fundraiser raffle for our Housing & Homeless LGBTIQ project.

The prize is three nights in a balcony cabin on the 'Pacific Explorer' cruise ship departing Melbourne on the 9th of December

Get on board by buying a ticket!

Buy tickets at oldertenants.org.au/raffle

Tickets are selling fast for this fabulous opportunity. Winner drawn Monday 14 November 2022 7:00 PM

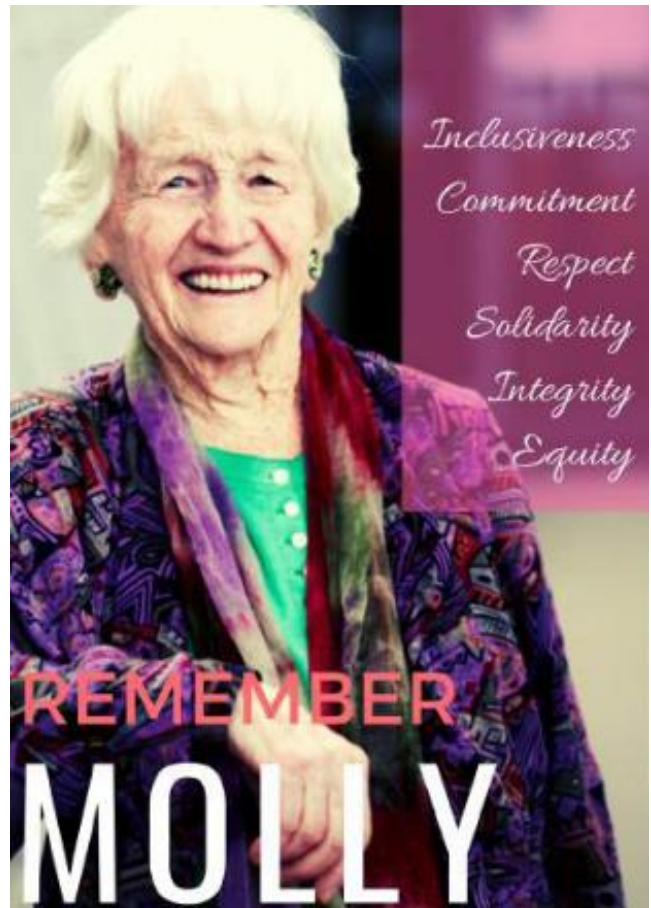
Come and join us to remember those who have passed whilst homeless

Homeless Memorial

Tuesday 11th October 2022
Ceremony from 4:30pm to 7:00pm

Held at The Peanut Farm Reserve Corner of Chaucer St & Shakespeare Grove, ST Kilda Next to Veg Out (Melways Ref. 2P B9 - behind Woolworths in Acland St) (Look for the marquee)

Artwork: Tree of Life by Justine Jones



Join the St Kilda community in remembering those who have passed while homeless

Tuesday 11th October
4:30 - 7pm

The Peanut Farm Reserve Corner of Chaucer St & Shakespeare Grove, ST Kilda Next to Veg Out

This years AGM will be held on Thursday November the 17th and we will be marking the 100th birthday of Molly Hadfield. We'd like to celebrate the occasion with memories of Molly as well as all older people of HAAG . Any thoughts, old photos, newsletters or memorabilia are encouraged to be sent to us at HAAG for the celebration.

A new group of Community Educators, including the LGBTQIA+ Reference Group members (pictured right and on front page) have all completed their training (woo hoo!) and are now also all community educators. They celebrated this achievement in person over lunch, which was very special after having so many meetings on ZOOM. Those who couldn't come in person attended via ZOOM link to receive their certificates, congratulations and a packet of lettuce seeds to get that spring veggie patch going! The training has come at the perfect time as the group has had a real swell of community education opportunities, including: speaking at a Statewide Wellbeing Plan for Victoria Consultation, an Office of the Public Advocate event, as well as the upcoming HAAG Seniors Festival information sessions; one for community members and one for service providers.

You can see our community educators out in the wild for Seniors Festival at the events listed on the previous pages,

Also, stay tuned for a stall at Midsumma in January 2023, a presentation at the Better



Together Conference in Adelaide in February 2023, and keep your eyes peeled for some other exciting sessions in the pipeline!

If you would like to hear more about being involved in the LGBTQIA+ group or being a community or peer educator you can get in touch with Fiona Waters or Rebecca Cook on 9654 7389.

You can also complete the survey about your experience of housing as an older LGBTQIA+ person at [surveymonkey.com/r/GJNPCR8](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/GJNPCR8)

AGED CARE SERVICE NAVIGATOR

The last few months have seen a steady flow of referrals coming into the ACSN. The majority of them have been assisting people who require support but are under 65 and therefore not eligible for My Aged Care but also not meeting the eligibility criteria for support from NDIS. We have been able to assist most of them to register for the Home and Community Care Program for Younger People Program which operates out of most councils in the Melbourne. We have also had an increase in the number of older women

at risk of homelessness who need to move out of their existing accommodation for a variety of reasons and are also needing to connect to a range of support services to assist them in the transition to a more suitable type of accommodation.

Steph has been working closely with the HAL Housing Support Team and the Retirement Housing Team to help people connect to the services and supports that they require.

HAAG coordinated NSW Ageing on the Edge Forum worked with NSW Social Issues Parliamentary Committee to set up an inquiry into older people experiencing homelessness. The submission highlighted a range of issues and made a number of recommendations. Of about the 90 submissions, we also managed to get over half of the submissions to support Ageing on the Edge asks in full or in part including letters of endorsement from Ministerial Advisory Council on Ageing (MACA), NSW Age and Disability Commissioner, advocacy bodies, service providers and a number of academics.

We were invited to give evidence before the committee in July and Fiona flew in to give evidence and highlight the need for a service similar to Home at Last model in NSW. We then made a supplementary submission to provide additional information about the service.

As part of the inquiry, we supported a number of older women to share their personal stories with the committee. This also provided them with an opportunity to share their story with media to raise awareness about the issue and the need for policy reform.

Meanwhile in Queensland a new Housing Older Women's Support Service (HOWSS) is ready to open, providing a similar service as Home at Last to women across Queensland. The service is being run by Footprints in their new hub in West End Brisbane, and HAAG staff and members have been very active in sharing our expertise and experience in running an older people's specific housing service!



Fiona and Dini at the NSW Parliament



Video of Marie Sillars giving evidence to the inquiry



HAAG workers meeting with the new staff at the new Queensland Housing Older Women's Support Service Hub!

Marie is 81-years-old and was living in a very dishevelled, 120 year old cottage. She was renting for a number of years and had paid for things to be done on the cottage herself, as the landlord did not want to spend the money. She was understandably very worried she would get blown away in the next big storm, the cottage was very unsafe. Her only means of transport was a scooter because she has very bad legs and could not walk very far at all, and she also suffered from a number of other illnesses.

When I first spoke to this lovely lady, she had no idea about how she would go about looking for another home, and was very perplexed about forms for housing requirements. She was very stressed about the idea of changing housing and did not want to leave the area, For me to tell her this would all be done for her was just such a relief for her. She couldn't have been more grateful and you could see in her face she was just a little less stressed. We were able to find her a one bedroom Public Housing unit. We supported her with the relocation

and with moving many years of goodies and pots as she has a love of plants and did not want to leave these behind. We contacted a local removalist and we managed to have her moved without causing further stress.

Walking alongside this lady on this very stressful journey was a very interesting time for myself and I am pleased to help her and have a very positive outcome. I could see in her face and body that she felt much more relaxed and comfortable and could focus on more pleasant things in her life. Thanks to the Ian Rollo Currie program in the Goulburn -Hume Region and HAAG this lady is no longer living in a very unsafe environment. Now she feels safe and secure in her forever unit, and I am proud to have been a part of this journey. - Teresa Jasper”.

HUME-GOULBURN VALLEY REGION PILOT PROJECT

Are you an older person struggling to pay the bills and keep a roof over your head? Home at Last is HAAGs free service that provides confidential advice, support and advocacy for people aged 50 years and older to assist them to find housing. We are now actively working in the Goulburn-Hume region of Central Victoria, as well as the

Barwon South West region, and of course metropolitan Melbourne.

We can provide one-to-one assistance to anyone in the area, or link people to other services that can help. Give us a call on 1300 765 178

MEMBERSHIP DATA

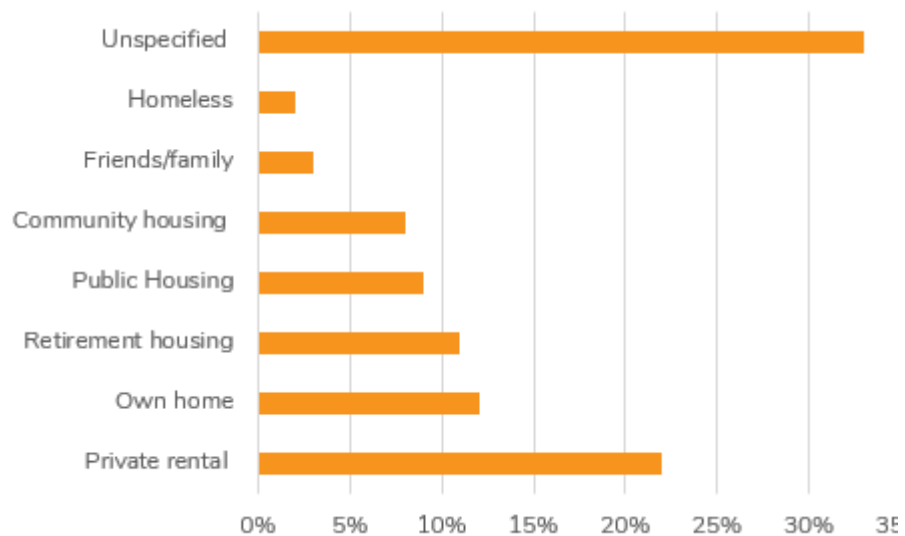
For this newsletter we are presenting data about our membership, instead of the normal client data. It's surprising to see how many of our members are still living in Private Rental - or homeless - as many join after they have been assisted through our service to find more affordable housing. It's a reminder that members are also encouraged to access our services!

Not all live in Victoria though, while we began as a Victorian organisation we now have members in most states and territories, as well as a few international members! This has been a huge help in our campaigns to get similar services starting up in other states! Have you asked your friends about becoming a member?

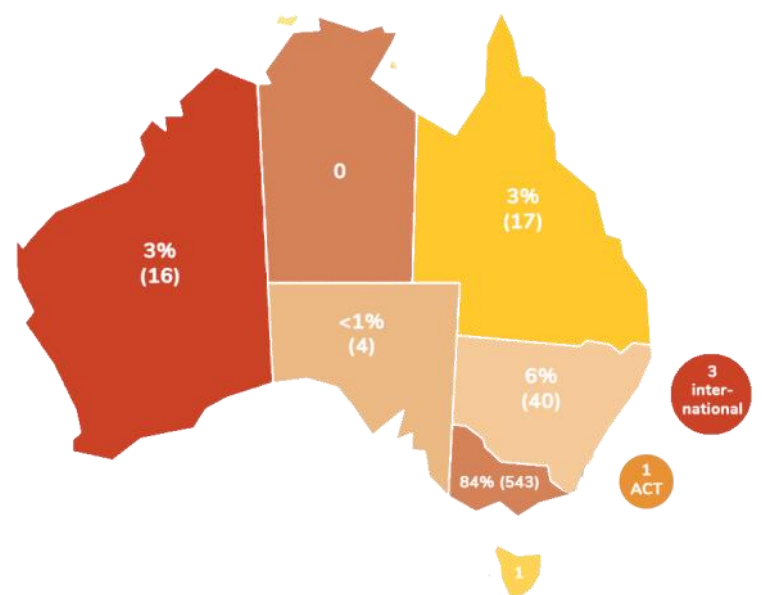
You don't have to be an older person to become a member, housing for older people is an important issue for everyone!

We'll be doing a call around to hear from members and update this member information, look forward to having a chat!

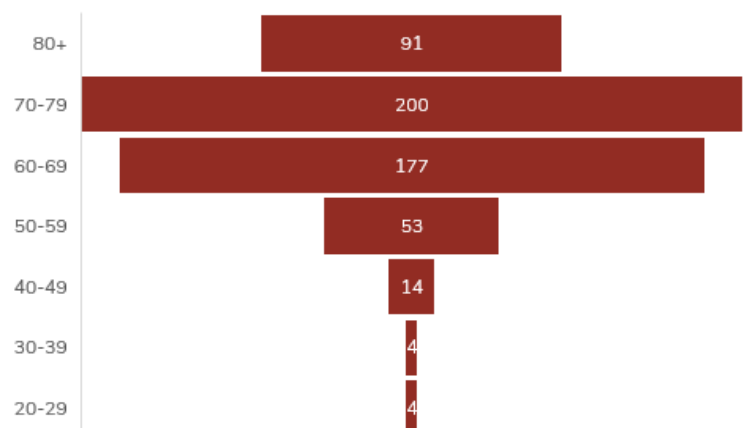
Member's Housing Situation



Member's Home State



Member's Ages





Undercover is a feature length documentary about “the hidden face of homelessness”- older women. It follows ten older women across Australia who are either currently homeless or have been homeless, finding themselves in housing crisis due to a “life shock” like divorce, losing a job, rent increases, or illness. Like many of the older women who come to our Home at Last service, they are from all walks of life, and have used all their personal resources to survive, some sleeping in cars or vans, others now living in social housing. HAAG was involved in the production of this film, providing key information on the issue. Unfortunately our staff and members did not make the final cut, however, some of them have been on panel discussions at the Melbourne International Film Festival which has allowed us to talk about the issues and solutions in a way that the film was unable to. It was fantastic to hear Margot Robbie, who narrates the film, talk about the need for more public housing – however, the focus on “pop up” shelters and emergency housing as a temporary solution was disappointing. It was great to see older residents of caravan parks also represented in the film, as the pros and cons of this type of housing is not something you see very often! Overall, the producers have done a great job in sensitively telling these stories, and bringing the issue to new audiences. They have plans for more screenings over the coming months, and the film is in cinemas on 6 October. Let’s hope it can spur decision-makers to act!

You can hear an interview with producer Diane Fisk on our radio show here: 3cr.org.au/haag/episode/undercover-hidden-faces-homelessness

For showtimes and other information, see: undercoverdocumentary.com/

★★★★★ - Fiona York

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Fighting for Housing Justice for older people since 1983

HAAG offers FREE confidential advice, housing and support to over-55's



The team gathering to celebrate Molly Hadfield's 100th Birthday - remember to send in your old photos and other memorabilia for the AGM!

- Housing Options Information
- Outreach Housing Support
- Retirement Housing Advice & Support
- Research & Policy Development