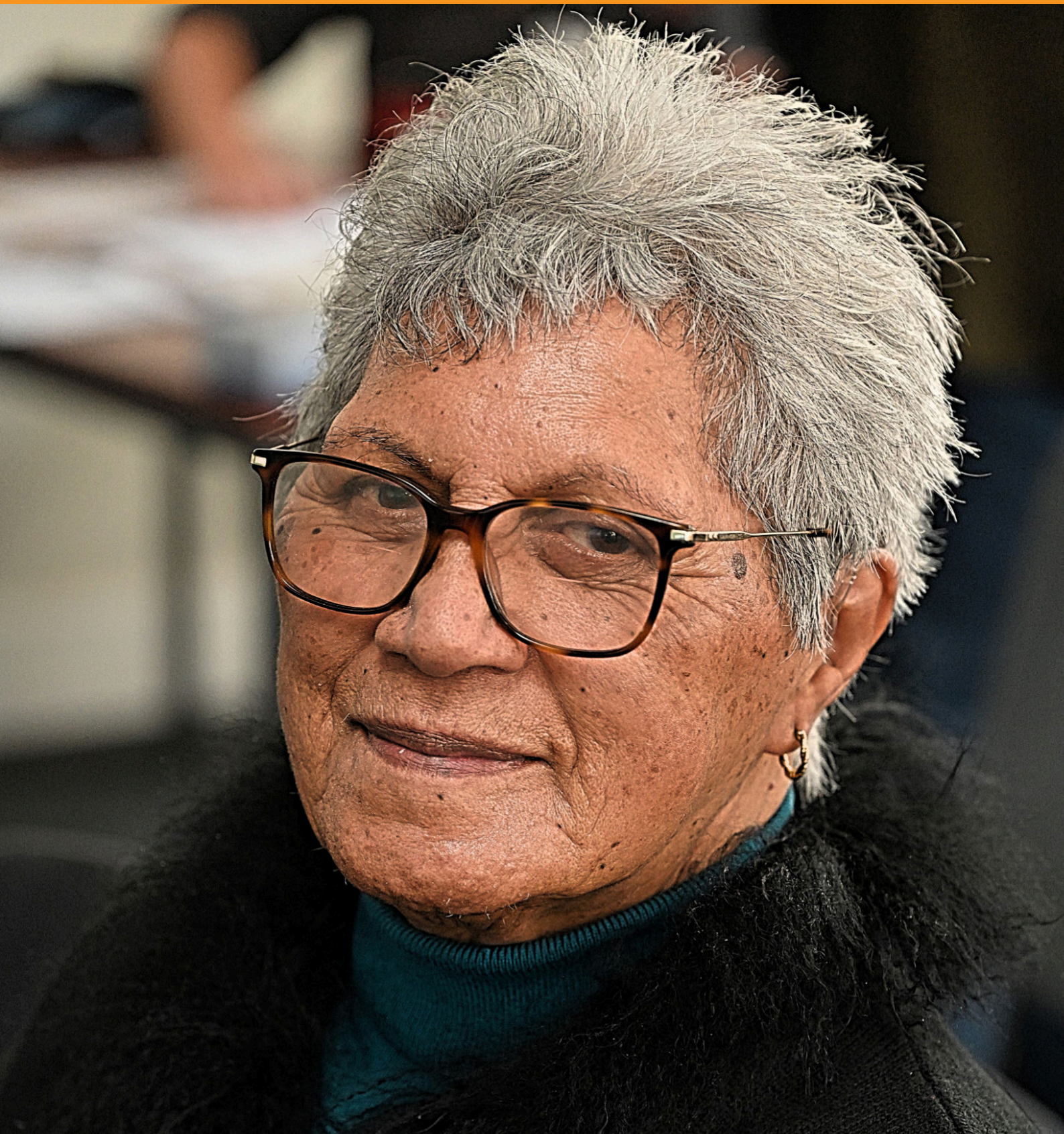




older tenants voice

Housing for the Aged Action Groups Quarterly Newsletter Winter 2025



HOUSING FOR THE AGED ACTION GROUP

FIGHTING FOR HOUSING JUSTICE FOR OLDER PEOPLE SINCE 1983



CHAIRPERSON'S WELCOME



Dear members and supporters,

Sometimes when writing these welcome messages I wonder who is out there on the other end reading? I like to picture you sitting at the kitchen table with a cup of tea in hand, taking a moment of comfort in your little home to browse through the news from the HAAG community.

Or perhaps you're in your office building, scanning through the newsletter while you cram in lunch at your desk?

Or god forbid you have none of those comforts, with neither your own home or a job to go?

This newsletter now goes out to almost a thousand members, and a further 700 subscribers! We're all connected by a shared belief that all older people need a safe, secure and affordable place to call home, but we're also spread across suburbs and towns all over Australia, and even a few abroad.

With busy lives, and ageing bodies, its easy not to stay in touch.

So this time I'd like to request that we hear something back from you in our [member survey](#) which you'll find enclosed in our print edition of this newsletter as well as for [online readers here](#). We want to hear from members what makes you want to be a part of HAAG, the issues that are important to you, and the most important issues that you think HAAG should be addressing.

Your input will help inform our next 5 year strategic plan, guiding how we grow our services and target our advocacy.

Let us know what you think we're doing well, what we could do better, how you like to hear from us, even what you'd like to read about in the next newsletter.

We always love to hear from members, and so its really nice to feature three letters to the editor in this edition. Please do write in!

There are also three wonderful looking member events coming up in Melbourne, as well as one online, as well as all the regular working group meetings, so hope to see your lovely faces there.

Let's keep up our campaigns for better housing and a better world! Together we can win. Warm regards, Pam Young

WELCOMES AND FAREWELLS

Masters of Social Policy Student Francisca Munoz Rodriguez completed her internship at HAAG writing a report examining the link between Housing and elder abuse. Jackson Payne has left the Housing Support Intake team. We're looking forward to new workers starting in these roles and more, see oldertenants.org.au/vacancies

WELCOMES AND FAREWELLS

Marie-Chase Sillars is retiring from her long time volunteering with HAAG as a founding member of the National Alliance of Seniors for Housing (NASH) and NSW Lived Experience Advisory Group.

As a housing advocate, Marie has passionately campaigned for public housing, and in particular housing for seniors. Marie was the leader of the Ivanhoe Estate Tenants Advocacy Group, where she strongly opposed the demolition and redevelopment of the estate. In 2022, Marie appeared before the NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into homelessness amongst older people aged over 55, where she shared the impact of the estate's closure and being forcibly rehoused into community housing.

Marie was one of HAAG's delegates to Canberra in 2023, when HAAG launched research at Parliament House titled: Ageing in a Housing Crisis: Older people's housing insecurity and homelessness in Australia. Meeting with decision-makers and being interviewed by media have all been ways that Marie has raised the profile of the housing needs of older people.

We thank Marie for her many years of dedicated volunteering and advocacy, and wish her well in retirement.



OBITUARIES

Vijay Laxmi was a familiar face to many HAAG members. She was one of the original members of our CALD reference group and a volunteer bilingual educator. She featured in our video highlighting hidden homelessness in the Indian community, as well as on our main brochure.

She was a gentle and compassionate person and will be sorely missed.

We're also sad to hear that Roger Taylor long time HAAG member and partner of April Bragg recently passed away. Roger was a staunch and influential housing activist and we wish his family all the best.



MAY GENERAL MEETING

The May General Meeting had members joining us online from NSW, regional Victoria and in person. There were some regulars and a few first timers, it was great to have them.

The keynote speaker was Peter Sibly General Manager of United Housing Co-operative. He outlined the development of a housing project, Summerhill in West Footscray. The accommodation is targeted for older women. The project is nearing completion and will have 1 and 2 bedroom apartments designed around a communal garden and communal spaces. The fact it is for older women is a great initiative and hopefully more of these will be funded by the state government. Some of our clients have applied for the apartments.

The general meetings are always a time for our Executive Director, Fiona York to update us on HAAG matters and she gave us a overview of the election campaigning that was conducted and acknowledged our volunteers. Shane from the Tenancy and Retirement Team provided us with a update on Retirement Housing legislation and tenancy advocacy.

Lunch is a great way to catch up with other members and staff and Committee of Management members are always keen to get to know members.

Keep Thursdaay 21st of August in your diary to come in person or online for our next General Meeting, details are on the following page. Thanks to Guruswamy Perumal for the photos below!



Our former treasurer Peter Sibly



Kerry from Save Public Housing Collective asking why "Big Housing Build" money is not being invested in Public Housing



Retirement Housing worker Shane McGrath



Policy worker Jane Stanley with housing support worker Esma Becerevic welcoming people at the door

WINTER EVENT CALENDAR



HAAG's History: Housing Justice for Older Tenants at Open House Melbourne

Saturday 26th of July 10am - 4pm
Level 1, Ross House, 247 Flinders Lane Melbourne

An exhibition exploring HAAG's history, highlighting the stories of HAAG members and their campaigns for housing justice for older tenants as part of Open House Melbourne. There will also be art exhibits, video screenings, and open offices from Ross House Association tenants. More info at openhousemelbourne.org/event/ross-house/

August General Meeting - Soup and Celebration

Thursday 21st of August 11am - 12:30pm
in person at Level 4, 247 Flinders Lane
& online via zoom

Celebrating 100 people housed in the Goulburn Valley region at our August General Meeting, as well as Elder Rights Advocacy report on Aged Care Act and soup served by staff. RSVP at oldertenants.org.au/rsvp



Celebrating over 40 years of housing advocacy at the Seniors Festival

Wednesday 1st of October 11am - 12:30pm,
Koorie Heritage Trust, Federation Square Melbourne

To mark the International Day of Older Persons, join us in a celebration of Housing for the Aged Action Group (HAAG) members and their amazing advocacy for older people's housing justice!

Join us for this celebratory morning tea to socialise with members old and new, share stories and be inspired. We welcome everyone who shares our belief that every older person deserves a safe, secure and affordable place to call home. Come along, learn more and get involved!

More info at oldtenant.org.au/seniorsfest



Homelessness week from the 4th - 10th of August is happening right across the country. Find events near you at homelessnessaustralia.org.au/homelessness-week/

WORKING GROUPS AND COMMUNITY EDUCATION



It was great for our LGBTQIA+ Reference Group to meet with Joe Ball, the LGBTQIA+ Commissioner earlier this month. We had a productive conversation about the unique housing challenges faced by older LGBTIQ+ people.



Liberty Pride Network held a bake sale to raise funds for our LGBTQIA+ working group!



The Craigeburn Filipino Seniors Group holding up HAAG brochures. The brochures are being translated into 22 community languages, if you'd like some to distribute in your community please get in touch with the office.



Narda and Hoda promoting HAAG at the Hume City Council Happy Healthy Ageing Expo in April



Jennifer and Hoda at the Banyule Housing Forum in March



HAAG staff marched in support of the Yoorrook Walk for Truth and Treaty as they arrived at the Victorian Parliament House in June.

Victorian Retirement Housing laws finally pass

In June we welcomed the passing of new Retirement Housing laws after a five year consultation period and many more years of advocacy from residents.

The new laws include significant changes that will improve the day-to-day life of residents, such as a mandatory code of conduct for operators, standardised contracts for new residents, limits on renovation costs, fairer rules about allocating capital gain, and greater transparency and clarity about fees.

We welcomed the introduction of standardised contracts to address the complexity and variety of contracts in retirement villages.

For many years we have been calling for an end to ambiguous and confusing contracts, which have made it difficult for people to compare villages or understand their real costs and so we welcome this reform.

HAAG also welcomes the introduction of a mandatory Code of Conduct for retirement village operators, which sends a strong message to the industry.

We have seen shocking mistreatment of our clients in retirement villages by unscrupulous operators, caused by a lack of adequate consumer protections and regulation. The mandatory Code of Conduct has the potential to provide stronger consumer protection and a better experience for residents.

However, we remain concerned about what happens to people when they leave their villages, as exit fees are not addressed.

It doesn't go far enough in regulating exit fees that can incentivize villages to 'churn' or evict residents for increased profits, and trap unhappy residents in villages that no longer suit them.

The worst operators we see use eviction threats to harass residents to manipulate exit payments and extract windfall profits. This is a practice that should be stamped out, but we are concerned that the new laws will allow this to continue.

The Minister of Consumer Affairs Nick Staikos MP spoke to the amendments, saying:

- ‘ We will also be establishing a conciliation scheme to ensure that disputes between retirement village operators and residents can be resolved, and that dispute resolution service will be linked to the regulator. That is the key – it will be linked to the regulator. In so doing, I say as Minister for Consumer Affairs that I will take a zero-tolerance approach to any retirement village operators who are not complying with the mandatory code of practice. I have also asked the commissioner for residential tenancies and retirement villages to establish a lived-experience forum of retirement village residents so that retirement village residents can have an official channel into government advising on the implementation of these reforms and any further reforms.’

HAAG looks forward to a zero-tolerance approach to operators not complying with the mandatory code of practice, and a dispute resolution scheme linked to a stronger regulator.

If you're living in Retirement Housing and concerned about a term in your contract, a fee that seems unfair or excessive, or the way management are treating you, call our Retirement Housing Advice Service on (03) 9654 7389

CARE FINDER CASE STUDY

Judi*, a woman in her mid-70s, was referred to HAAG's care finder team by a Community Mental Health nurse for urgent housing instability, financial hardship and declining mental health. Previously managing in private rental costing \$490 per week through part-time work as a mental health nurse herself, Judi became unable to work following a severe injury involving a fall and a hip fracture. Living with osteoarthritis and relying on limited in-home support, Judi's loss of income led to rent arrears, unpaid utility bills, medical debts and debt with in-home support service providers. Despite needing to pay a contribution of just \$13.97 per session for in-home support, Judi could not afford the fee. This further impacted her health and contributed to a period of depression.

HAAG's care finders provided immediate support by submitting a successful application to the Victorian Housing Registry

and submitted housing application available through community housing services. Judi was offered long-term community housing in Melbourne's southern suburbs within a week.

HAAG also advocated with the aged care service provider to waive the outstanding and ongoing fees. She secured \$400 towards her bills through the Queen's Fund. To meet the dietary needs unmet by food relief services, we obtained \$200 in vouchers via the G.W. Vowell Trust and sourced essential household items from StreetSmart.

Judi moved into her home in early July. She has expressed deep gratitude for the support and shared that she now feels safe and at peace in her new environment.

*Name changed for privacy

COMMUNITY LANGUAGES

HAAG is continuing our outreach in Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Communities, working with our CALD reference group and the Commonwealth Diversity Aged Care team to translate our service brochures into twenty two community languages.

They've been translated into Arabic, Assyrian Neo Aramaic, Bosnian, Traditional and Simplified Chinese, Croatian, Greek, Hindi Italian, Khmer, Macedonian, Polish, Punjabi, Russian, Serbian, Somali Spanish, Tagalog, Tamil, Turkish, Urdu and Vietnamese.

If you'd like any brochures to distribute in your community, please contact the office.



Not just unfair, unlawful: VCAT rules against village charging Deferred Management Fees

On the 7th of July Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) President Justice Woodward found that the Residential Tenancies Act prevented a land lease village from charging Deferred Management Fees (DMFs). DMFs are a common kind of exit fee charged across several types of retirement housing, often costing departing residents or their families tens of thousands of dollars or more.

We have long said that these DMFs are unfair and, in some cases, unlawful. This decision confirms that some of the most common models for DMFs in land lease communities are prohibited under Victorian law.

Land lease communities, also called residential parks or Part 4A parks, are a form of retirement housing where residents purchase demountable dwellings but lease the land on which they sit. DMFs are an exit fee often charged on the sale price of the dwelling.

The Residential Tenancies Act provides that no fee or charge can be imposed under a site agreement unless the amount is disclosed. An amount based on the sale price of a Part 4A dwelling cannot be properly disclosed, and so cannot be charged.

These fees aren't just technically unlawful, they're deeply unfair and can have a huge impact on older Victorians. They can limit people's access to aged care, reduce the amount they can leave to their families, and trap people in badly mismanaged and substandard accommodation.

TENANCY ADVICE

Rental Disputes Resolution Victoria

VCAT has introduced a new service called Rental Dispute Resolution Victoria (RDRV) which will use trained mediators to try to resolve disputes between landlords and tenants without the need for a formal hearing. At the moment, RDRV is dealing with new claims involving repairs, rent increases, and bond and compensation claims.

HAAG has long felt that VCAT was a poor forum for many older people wanting to resolve renting disputes, and we hope this new forum will provide a good alternative. However, we still believe strongly that an ombudsman is the best model for older renters in particular.

Anyone who'd like more information about RDRV can call our Tenancy and Retirement Team on (03) 9654 7389, option 2.

Renter's Rights

Consumer Affairs Victoria's have launched a campaign called 'fundarentals' to boost renters' understanding of their rights and raise awareness among rental providers about their responsibilities.

The campaign shares tips on the top issues facing renters, such as getting urgent repairs, properties not meeting minimum standards, rent increases, and renters not being clear on their rights before signing a rental agreement.

To find all this information online go to consumer.vic.gov.au/fundarentals

Elder Abuse and Housing Report

On the 10th of June we released a report looking at the link between housing and elder abuse, coinciding with World Elder Abuse Awareness Day.

The report examines the experiences of older people facing housing insecurity who presented to Housing for the Aged Action Group with suspected elder abuse between 2020-2024. The findings highlight that elder abuse is a complex and hidden issue, most often occurring within close family relationships and within shared living arrangements, and reinforce the importance of secure and stable housing as a critical pathway out of abuse.

The deep dive into five years of our client data shows that many older people are living with people who are doing them harm, often because they have no choice. Rising costs and limited availability of affordable housing leaves many people trapped in cycles of abuse.

Housing represents a crucial pathway for older people to escape abuse. There is therefore a need for increased investment in

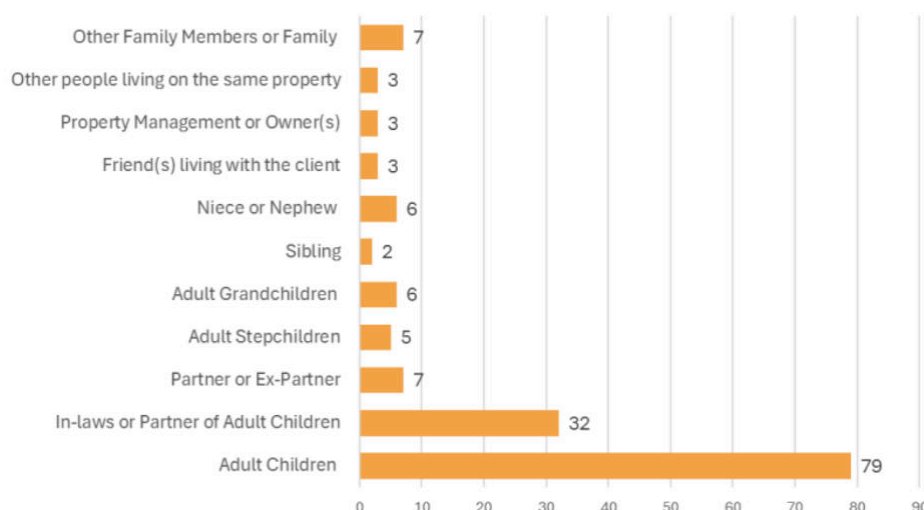
more public and community housing to ensure that older people (and their adult children) have access to affordable and secure housing alternatives. Integrating housing support within the broader context of elder abuse and family violence services will also be critical to improving outcomes for older people facing abuse and mistreatment.

The report shows that elder abuse can occur across different housing conditions, and frequently arises from external stressors such as insecure housing and financial hardship. Older adults of any age were at risk of experiencing abuse, and were more likely to be living with the people who caused harm, either in the same home or property.

Many clients did not explicitly identify their situation as elder abuse, instead indirectly describing behaviours and harms that aligned with it. This reflects both the challenge an older person faces in acknowledging they have experienced abuse and the difficulty of recognising harm within emotionally complex and close relationships.

Read the report at oldertenants.org.au/publications/housing-and-elder-abuse-haag-clients-experiences-2020-24

Perpetrators of Elder Abuse - EA Clients 2020-24



Federal election wrap up and next steps

HAAG worked tirelessly in the lead up to May's Federal election to get older people's housing on the agenda. We were pleased to see older person's homelessness receiving greater attention in the media, and we'll keep pushing to raise the profile of this issue.

We're really grateful for the efforts of members who contacted candidates in all sorts of ways – writing letters and emails, organising meetings, and speaking to them at events, and anywhere they encountered them – to raise the housing issues faced by older people, and the housing crisis more broadly.

Now the election is over and the result is clear, we will engage with the new and continuing ministers:

- Claire O'Neill, Vic – Minister for Housing, Homelessness and Minister for Cities
- Mark Butler, SA - Minister for Health and Ageing, and Minister for Disability and NDIS
- Sam Rae, Vic – Minister for Aged Care and Seniors (new)
- Rebecca White, Tas - Assistant Minister for Health and Aged Care; Assistant Minister for Indigenous Health; Assistant Minister for Women
- Josh Burns, Vic – Special Envoy for Social Housing and Homelessness (new role)
- Katy Gallagher, ACT – Minister for Women; Minister for Government Services; Minister for Finance; Minister for the Public Service

HAAG has written to all these ministers to raise the housing issues facing older people,

introduce them to HAAG, and requesting a meeting. We are also writing to all the new and returning Labor back benchers.

If you're keen to meet with your local Member of Parliament and would like some support or advice, we're happy to help. Call (03)9654 7389 or email

jane.stanley@oldertenants.org.au and claudia.burgner@oldertenants.org.au.

Recognising housing as a human right one step closer in the ACT

An Australian Capital Territory Parliamentary Committee has recommended their Parliament pass a bill to make access to adequate housing a human right.

The proposed legislation would include the right to housing in their Human Rights Act. Secure, adequate housing is fundamental to the wellbeing of older people.

We made a [submission in support of the legislation](#) and are pleased to see that the report of the inquiry by the ACT Legislative Assembly Standing Committee on Legal Affairs into the Bill shares this view.

Enshrining the right to housing in law would help to reorient the way housing is perceived, providing greater protection for tenants and ensuring government planning and policy development considers the right to housing. HAAG supports measures to ensure older people's rights are protected and they are empowered to exercise those rights.

If the ACT parliament passes the Bill it will become the first jurisdiction in Australia to recognise housing as a human right, and set an important precedent for action in other states and territories.

Inquiry into the Future of Melbourne's Public Housing Towers

The Victorian Government is continuing with plans to demolish and redevelop all 44 high-rise public housing towers by 2051. A parliamentary inquiry is now underway to look at this proposal, which our members made submissions to. We continue to watch closely, especially for its impact on older public housing residents.

Here's what you need to know:

- **When:** Hearings are already happening, with more planned over the coming months
- **Where:** Some hearings are being held in the towers themselves, like the recent session at Simmons Street in South Yarra. The next scheduled hearing is Tuesday 22 July and will be held at North Richmond Community Health
- **How to watch:** You can watch hearings live or catch up online at parliament.vic.gov.au/get-involved/inquiries/publichousingtowers/hearings
- **When will we know more?** The inquiry's final report with recommendations for the government is due in December 2025.

Tenants and advocates have raised serious concerns about people being displaced and about the long-term loss of public housing. The government says the towers will be replaced with a mix of public and community housing, but what that looks like in reality is still unclear.

We're making sure the voices of older residents are heard throughout this process. We'll keep you updated as things progress.

Save the towers protest

Public Housing Residents and community are rallying together to save their towers and keep Public Housing in public hands! Join their rally at **11am on 2nd of August at the State Library of Victoria.**



Homes not tofu cubes

Sarah Ennity is a Public Housing resident

Instead of demolishing the towers and in the process traumatising residents, retrofit the towers to bring them up to modern building standards and infill on the estate grounds to create more housing. **Rachael Dexter reported** how OFFICE's feasibility study for the Flemington estate would save the Government \$300 million. When extended across the 44 towers, the savings come to around \$1.5 billion!

The new homes built on the old walk-up estates have been described as 'tofu cubes' by one resident and the embedded electricity network provider is more costly than the boiler system used in the towers.

Moreover, as the high-rise redevelopment project will only deliver a 10% increase in housing for low-income tenants across the 44 tower sites, with the rest allocated to market-priced (or near) housing, this scheme can't be regarded as a solution for the 60,000 households languishing on the waiting list, or for the 30,000 homeless Victorians.

Previously over many years, a net profit was realised from rental income. Under the Ground Lease Model, the Government will be shelling out service payments for the next 40 years without collecting any rent from the tenancies. Imagine the savings if instead, they were building and retro-fitting public housing – no need to wonder why Victoria is running a \$167.6 billion deficit.

At the same time, existing public housing is left to rot – my estate hasn't been refurbished in 25 years. It's time to dissolve Homes Victoria and return public housing to the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing.

Making the rich richer and the poor poorer

Uncle Tim has been a resident of Flemington Public Housing tower for almost 30 years.

The demolition of Public Housing to develop high density private apartment blocks will either increase the population of our area and put pressure on local schools, hospitals and other services that are already at capacity. Or, it will create ghost towns in our city because the Government won't be able to rent out all of the private apartments. I am worried about this because this is the reason the Government is slashing stamp duty on apartments - because not enough people are buying them.

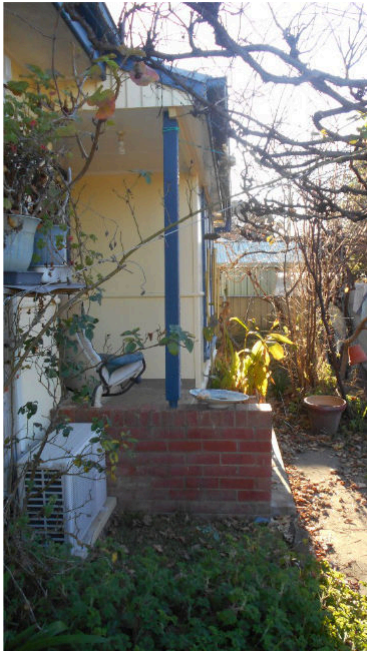
This policy makes the rich and big business, richer and the poor poorer. If this goes ahead, Victoria will no longer have public housing for the next generation.

The Government is spending \$20 million just to demolish one building. There are over 60,000 households on the wait list. If we demolish all of these homes, where will these people live?

People want houses while there is an over-saturation of apartments in Melbourne. If the Government builds all of the apartment blocks, many will sit vacant and our area will become a ghost town.

People in my building moved into Community Housing across the road because they felt pressured to move. They didn't want to move. When they moved they had to get rid of so much of their furniture, even though it was still in good condition, just to buy furniture that would fit into their small community housing units. It has been such a stressful and tiring time for our community.

Uncle Tim also spoke to Fiona York on the latest episode of our podcast, **Raise the Roof**



Ageing Community Housing Standards

*Greg Dollin is a
Community
Housing resident
and member of
the Lived
Experience
Action Group in
New South
Wales*

I live in a two bedroom cottage in regional NSW, built by the Department of Housing (DOH) in 1958. It has north-east facing windows in the kitchen, dining, entry and lounge-rooms with access to light and heat from the morning sun during autumn and winter. This building is one of DOH's really good layouts and makes for a beautiful home. It used to be Public Housing but now its managed by a Community Housing Provider.



However the building is barely insulated and desperately needs some investment to keep it warm in the winter, cool in the summer, reduce energy costs and bring it up to today's minimum rental standards. We recently experienced a 2 week cold-snap with night time minimums of minus 7. We had 2 split systems and 2 column heaters running to keep the living areas warm during the day and evening.

This costs me too much to run. 100% of my Commonwealth Rent Assistance is going to my Community Housing Provider, on top of

25% of my income. I need at least some of this supplement that's meant to assist tenants to go towards my energy bills.

My daughter and I moved in here in 2006. In that time we've had the wooden windows frames replaced with aluminium ones as well as an adjustable air vent. Also, I have covered the floor with multiple layers of carpet mat to insulate the floor. I have planted a permaculture food forest of about 50 trees with under-storey veggie & herb gardens with vines. This provides a shade difference in summer and a resource. I love & appreciate my home!

New builds in NSW are at least 7 Star energy rating, whereas this home is 2 star. A number of economical options are available for retrofitting this building and bringing it up to 4 stars. Insulation under floors, insulation of walls either internally with pump in variety, replacing the fibro skin or adding an insulated skin on the outside, upgrading by adding to roof existing insulation, air ventilation, installing off-peak heat banks, solar panels, batteries and rainwater tanks.

I've asked our community housing support worker about getting some of these improvements. The overall response from staff has been mixed. Some have supported the idea of improvements whilst some other workers have been reticent, even hostile.

Landlords need to ensure their rented properties meet minimum standards to be fit to live in. Home's ability to withstand heatwaves and cold snaps without becoming a health risk for the tenants should be one of those minimum standards! It was great to hear the recent Victoria Government announcement that cooling, insulation, and draught proofing will all be essentials for rental homes, not just new builds. Currently, many Community Housing properties are below the standard of new builds and many in the private rental market.

I think we need to adopt more of a can do & solutions based attitude. It is probably going to take some educating & convincing to start addressing this obvious gap in service. More can be done by all players where a will to seek the necessary funding will be found.

Member views and letters to the editor are always welcome, write to
haag@oldertenants.org.au



Aged Care in the spotlight at Melbourne International Film Festival

We're excited to see HAAG's Mornington care finder worker Hanh Vu and her client

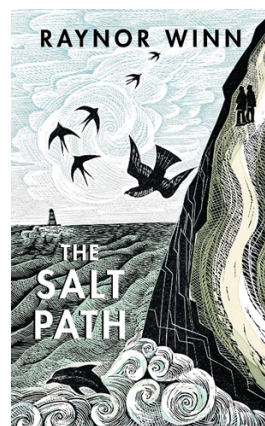
Beverly featuring on the silver screen at the Melbourne International Film Festival (MIFF).

Careless is directed by Sue Thompson who also directed the moving documentary *Under Cover* (2022) featuring the stories of older women experiencing homelessness.

In a country where ageing has become a business, this funny, moving documentary follows older people's fight to grow old their way.

When Sue Thomson's 89-year-old mum, Margaret, begins to need additional help, they face a decision that most families will encounter: whether to consider a residential aged-care facility; and, if so, how to find a suitable one amid a sector with a reputation for neglect and mistreatment. Margaret's story becomes a springboard for an investigation of the political history of aged care in Australia, marred by a 40-year bipartisan privatisation agenda. As we hear from advocates, journalists and senior citizens who have experienced the system, a group of schoolkids discuss the situation we've reached with aged care and where we need to go from here – and of what we can expect in the future.

Careless will have 3 screenings at MIFF commencing with the world premiere on August 16th at ACMI at 4pm. See miff.com.au/program/film/careless for tickets and more screening times as they're announced!



The Salt Path - Raynor Winn

Raynor Winn and her husband Moth, both in their 50's, lose their farm and livelihood after a friend's investment scheme fails and he sues them. If this isn't bad enough, at the same

time Moth is diagnosed with a terminal neurological illness.

With very little money, and nowhere to go except sleeping on friends couches for the foreseeable future, they decide to walk Britain's 630 mile South West Path. They have almost no money for food or shelter and must carry only the essentials for survival on their backs as they live wild in the weathered landscape of cliffs, sea and sky.

An underlying theme of *The Salt Path* is the experience of homelessness, and the reality of surviving day to day with no money. Their experience illustrates how people can become homeless as a result of the decisions of others, and outside forces.

Along the way they meet many others who are homeless, causing Winn to reflect on the way people experiencing homelessness are treated – when people think they're an intrepid older couple who have chosen an adventurous holiday they are held in awe and treated as inspiring. But if they say they're homeless and doing the walk out of necessity, people's attitudes change, and conversations peter out into awkward silence.

The Salt Path is a compelling account of the couple's courage, deep love and fortitude, with vivid descriptions of the wonders, hardships and discoveries of the walk.

Housing for the Aged Action Group

Level 1, Ross House 247-251 Flinders Lane,
Melbourne 3000

ADMIN: 9654 7389

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

The late Vijay Laxmi on Human Rights Day 2020. Cover photo shows HAAG member Celia Hotene at our May General Meeting. Photos by Guruswamy Perumal