

5TH National Housing Conference

“ Back to the Future ”

**Community well being begins with
appropriate housing - reflections of local
government housing responses**

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Local Governments are at the coalface of the worsening housing availability ,affordability and residual housing policies and can initiate a range of practical responses:

- identifying land and facilitating affordable housing policies & projects
- promoting principles of individual and community wellbeing
- recognition of local residents as entitled to being full citizens with a right to housing
- one of our most effective long term programs is Sponsorship Housing



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- Sponsorship Housing Programs are agreements between Councils, sometimes in partnership with other community organisations
- Sponsorship programs recognise previous substantial gifts of land and are supported by ongoing rate subsidies by these Councils
- The program is referred to in (Victorian State Housing Authority-Office of Housing) OOH Policy & Procedures and in Deeds of Agreement with local government
- Eligibility is generally for people aged 55+ ,with links to the area from all segments of OOH waiting list.



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The capacity of individual Councils vary from:

- *A smaller allocation program* – (Inner West) Maribyrnong & Hobson's Bay - 70 units and 90 units respectively;
- *A medium allocation program* – (Outer East) Knox – 260 units and (Inner North) Darebin– 250 units; and
- *A larger allocation program* – (Inner South) Port Phillip – 435 units.



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Sponsorship housing agreements fall within local government's mandate-

- developing local solutions for local communities
- housing choice within a familiar neighbourhood
- optimising and promoting positive ageing and wellbeing
- recognising the Human Right to Housing-that is habitable, accessible, affordable, in an appropriate location, has available services, security of tenure, and is culturally appropriate.



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Research into various policy paradigms has supported the finding that local allocations policies and plans are better aligned to sustainable communities and community building.



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Sponsorship Housing Pathways aim to provide a continuum of care from the first point of contact by linking applicants to Community programs such as Home & Community Care, Vic. State funded-Older Person High Rise Support or other services .



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Assistance provided by Local Government housing officers can include:

- Personalised contact
- Follow up
- Home visits
- Introductions to neighbours
- Referral to appropriate supports
- Community Development & Health Promotion
- Obtaining emergency contact details
- Recognition of attachment to place & link to local social networks



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Despite introduction of compulsory superannuation, it has been estimated that in 2050 75% of older Australians will still be dependent on the Age pension for all or part of their income and half will be drawing the full pension.

A significant and increasing proportion of them will not be homeowners.

In order to respond to these older people's attachment to area and decreased choices, Sponsorship pathways need to be expanded.



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In future we plan to develop data collection based on shared learnings and experiences.

This quantitative and qualitative data collection would aim to identify optimal housing needs and outcomes which include broad health and social issues.



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We plan to:

- Continue to link in with the Housing and Local Government Network (HALGN)
- Document clearer and consistent allocation policies
- Explore opportunities to promote best practice
- Identify ways of promoting our advocacy responses to diversity, social cohesion and positive ageing
- Evaluate policy development processes and data collection models



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