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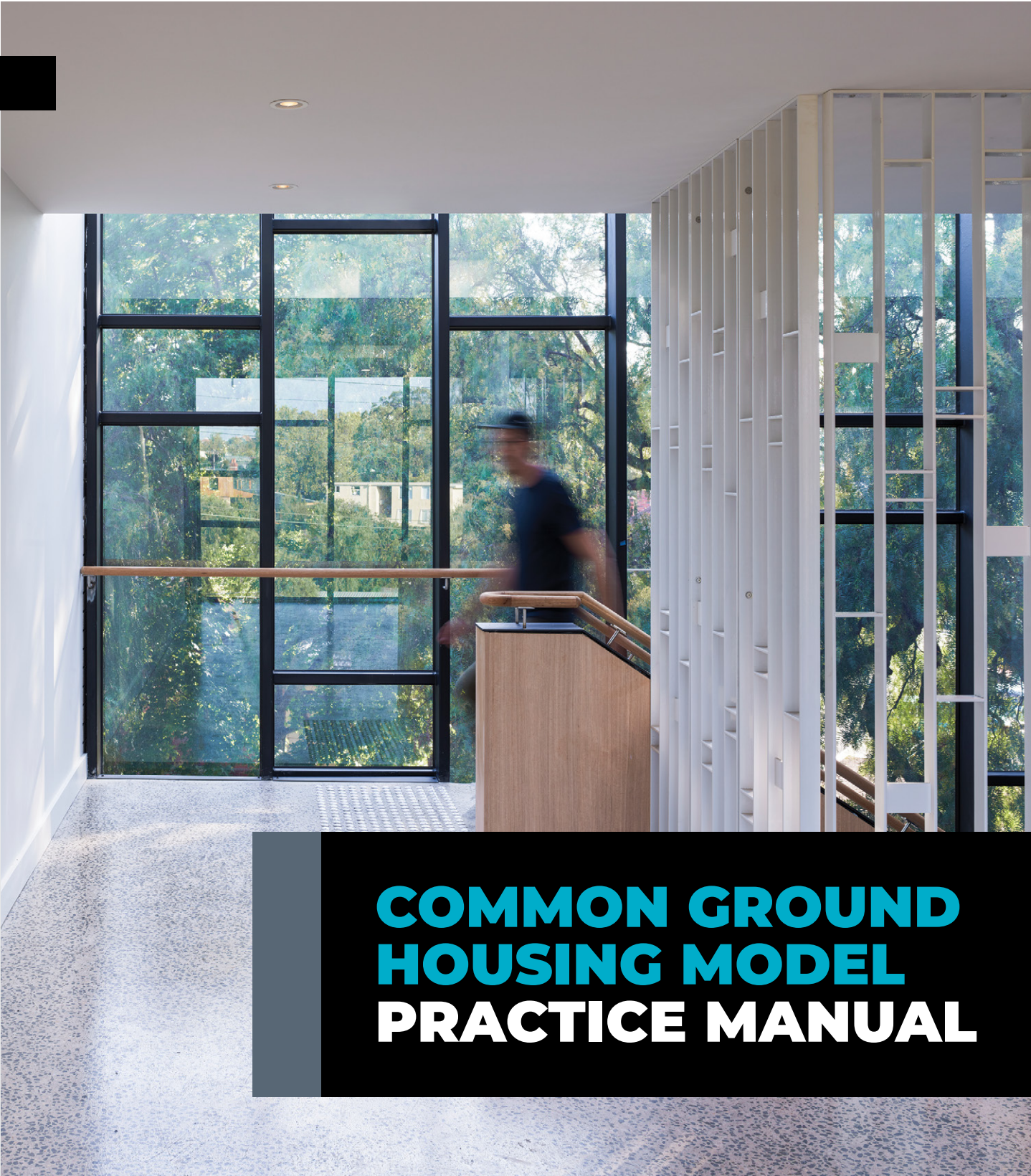
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A photograph of a modern building's interior. A person is walking on a wooden staircase with a glass railing. Large windows in the background offer a view of green trees and a body of water. The floor is made of light-colored, speckled tiles. A black rectangular box is in the top left corner, and a black rectangular box with white and blue text is in the bottom right corner.

COMMON GROUND HOUSING MODEL PRACTICE MANUAL

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Preferred citation

Alves, T., Brackertz, N., Roggenbuck, C., Hayes, L., McGauran, R., Sundermann, K. and Kyneton, N. (2021) *Common Ground Housing Model Practice Manual*, prepared with MGS Architects, Mind Australia, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne.

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Glossary

Glossary

Affordable housing: Affordable housing has different definitions across jurisdictions and research groups but the term is variously used to describe: homes below a certain price point that are deemed affordable for very low, low, or moderate income households; and homes that are part of specific programs such as the discontinued National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS) or the ongoing South Australian Affordable Homes Program.

Common Ground: Common Ground is a supportive housing model that accommodates people experiencing chronic homelessness with complex needs in a congregate setting.

Homelessness: This project draws on the cultural definition of homelessness developed by Chamberlain and MacKenzie (1992). The cultural definition distinguishes between three groups in the homeless population:

Primary homelessness: people without conventional accommodation (living on the streets, in deserted buildings, improvised dwellings, under bridges, in parks, etc.).

Secondary homelessness: people moving between various forms of temporary shelter, including friends' homes, emergency accommodation, youth refuges and hostels.

Tertiary homelessness: people living in single rooms in private boarding houses, without their own bathroom, kitchen, or security of tenure (Chamberlain 2014).

Housing First: Service response model to homelessness that provides people experiencing homelessness with immediate access to permanent housing integrated with intensive support services.

Low-income household: Households with incomes between 21 and 40 per cent of all Australian gross household incomes.

Social housing: Social housing is a term used to describe the combination of public housing (owned and managed by a government housing authority) and community housing. The majority of community housing is owned or managed by registered Community Housing Providers (CHP) although the term may also include, particularly in Census data, homes that are owned or managed by a charitable, church or community organisation that may not be a registered CHP. Basic eligibility for social housing is linked to income, with prioritisation then linked to vulnerability indicators such as health problems, disability, and homelessness, amongst others.

Supportive housing: The central premise of supportive housing is to integrate affordable housing with support services to meet tenants' needs.

Very low-income households: Households in the lowest 20 per cent of all Australian gross household incomes.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This practice manual (Manual) provides guidance for the delivery, design and funding of congregate supportive housing that is based on Housing First principles, such as the Common Ground model. This guidance relates to both the housing itself and the support service model. The central premise of Housing First approaches is to provide people experiencing homelessness with immediate access to permanent housing to enable them to address their support needs. Whilst engagement with support services is not mandatory, intensive support services are integrated with the housing provision. The Common Ground model draws on Housing First principles, accommodating people experiencing chronic homelessness and low-income households in a congregate setting.

The Manual has been prepared by the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI) in collaboration with MGS Architects and Mind Australia for the City of Port Phillip on behalf of the Inner Metropolitan Partnership (IMP), which consists of the Cities of Melbourne, Port Phillip and Yarra. The Manual will provide guidance for the scaling up of congregate supportive housing in the Inner Metropolitan Region, including the development of a Common Ground facility in the City of Port Phillip, and the development of facilities based on Housing First principles in the Cities of Melbourne and Yarra. The Manual also outlines key considerations and processes that are adaptable to different places and to projects of various scales.

How to use this Manual

The Manual is intended as a guide that demonstrates best practice for the delivery of Common Ground and other housing models based on Housing First principles.

The Manual explains the process of initiating, planning, delivering, and evaluating a congregate supportive housing project.

The Manual shows in a practical way how key principles of Housing First can inform development and delivery of congregate supportive housing, including tenant mix, operational philosophy and principles, service provision and integration, asset and tenancy management and building design and performance.

Each section of the Manual includes a checklist and has Australian and international examples of Common Ground facilities and other congregate supportive housing to illustrate best practice.

Figure 1: Outline of Manual



1 OVERVIEW

1.1 COMMON GROUND BEST PRACTICE PROJECT

1.1.1 Background

The Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI) in collaboration with MGS Architects and Mind Australia has prepared this practice manual (Manual) for the City of Port Phillip on behalf of the Inner Metropolitan Partnership (IMP), which consists of the Cities of Melbourne, Port Phillip and Yarra. The Manual is the main output for the project 'Investigation of Best Practice Models, Approaches, Standards and Lessons for the Delivery of Common Ground Facilities in the Inner Metropolitan Region, and Adaptability to Project Scale'. The project provides best practice information on how Common Ground, and other supportive housing models based on Housing First principles, can be delivered. The objectives are:

- To inform and guide the scaling up of delivery of Common Ground projects, and other projects using Housing First principles, on land identified by government, the community housing sector, or purchased in the Inner Metropolitan Region.
- To indicate best practice models, standards, approaches and lessons in the delivery of Common Ground projects, and other projects based on Housing First principles, that can adapt to projects of various scales and targeted housing needs / household types, e.g. singles and families, with a focus on smaller projects.

- To provide a clear practice framework that guides and informs project delivery and management, based on suitable support service model / models, and how the service model / models informs how projects are designed, delivered, and integrated into communities.

The Manual is informed by a review of Australian and international best practice models and approaches providing supportive housing. Throughout the project AHURI, MGS Architects and Mind Australia consulted with key stakeholders, including the Cities of Port Phillip, Melbourne and Yarra, the IMP, local housing and support service providers and people with lived experience of homelessness, to design the service model and develop a theory of change and program logic.

The Manual provides guidance for the delivery, design and funding of congregate supportive housing that is integrated within the local community and is based on Housing First principles, such as the Common Ground model.

1.1.2 Context

Across Australia the number of people who are homeless has been increasing, with one of every 200 Australians classified as homeless in the 2016 Census. The growth in homelessness has been most acute in Sydney and Melbourne, leading to an increasingly urbanised homelessness profile (Parkinson et al. 2019). In response to these trends, strategies and plans to tackle homelessness in Victoria have refocused on reducing rough sleeping in inner-city Melbourne (MacKenzie et al. 2020).

Expensive housing markets and limited housing options affordable to very low- and low-income households have accompanied the increase in homelessness in the inner-metropolitan region of Melbourne. Homelessness manifests in many ways, but there has been a particular increase in the prevalence of rough sleeping. In the 2018 Street Count, 373 people were reported as sleeping rough in the Inner Metropolitan region (City of Yarra 2018).

People sleeping rough can often experience complex health and mental health issues and have alcohol and other drug dependencies. Local cohorts in the IMP-Council areas consist mostly of men aged between 25 and 50, with Indigenous people being over-represented. Female homelessness is often less visible, with women moving between occasional rough sleeping and 'couch surfing'. Besides rough sleeping, secondary homelessness is also an issue in inner metropolitan Melbourne. According to Census data, the largest homeless groups in the City of Yarra and City of Port Phillip are people living in boarding houses, in crisis accommodation, or in overcrowded dwellings (City of Yarra 2019, City of Port Phillip 2015).

Inner Melbourne Councils also experience un-met demand for affordable housing. In the City of Melbourne there is an estimated deficit of 5,500 affordable rental properties (City of Melbourne 2020). For very low- and low-income households, many rental properties are either unaffordable or unavailable, potentially resulting in housing stress (Hulse et al. 2019). These households also have constrained access to social housing due to its short supply.

1.1.3 Policy environment

Responsibilities and resources to address housing and homelessness vary across Australia's three-tiered government system. The Commonwealth Government coordinates housing and homelessness strategies across Australia and contributes funding to the States and Territories and issues bonds for community housing providers through the National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation (NHFIC). Health and human services are the responsibility of State and Territory Governments, including the provision of public housing. Local governments contribute to the delivery of housing

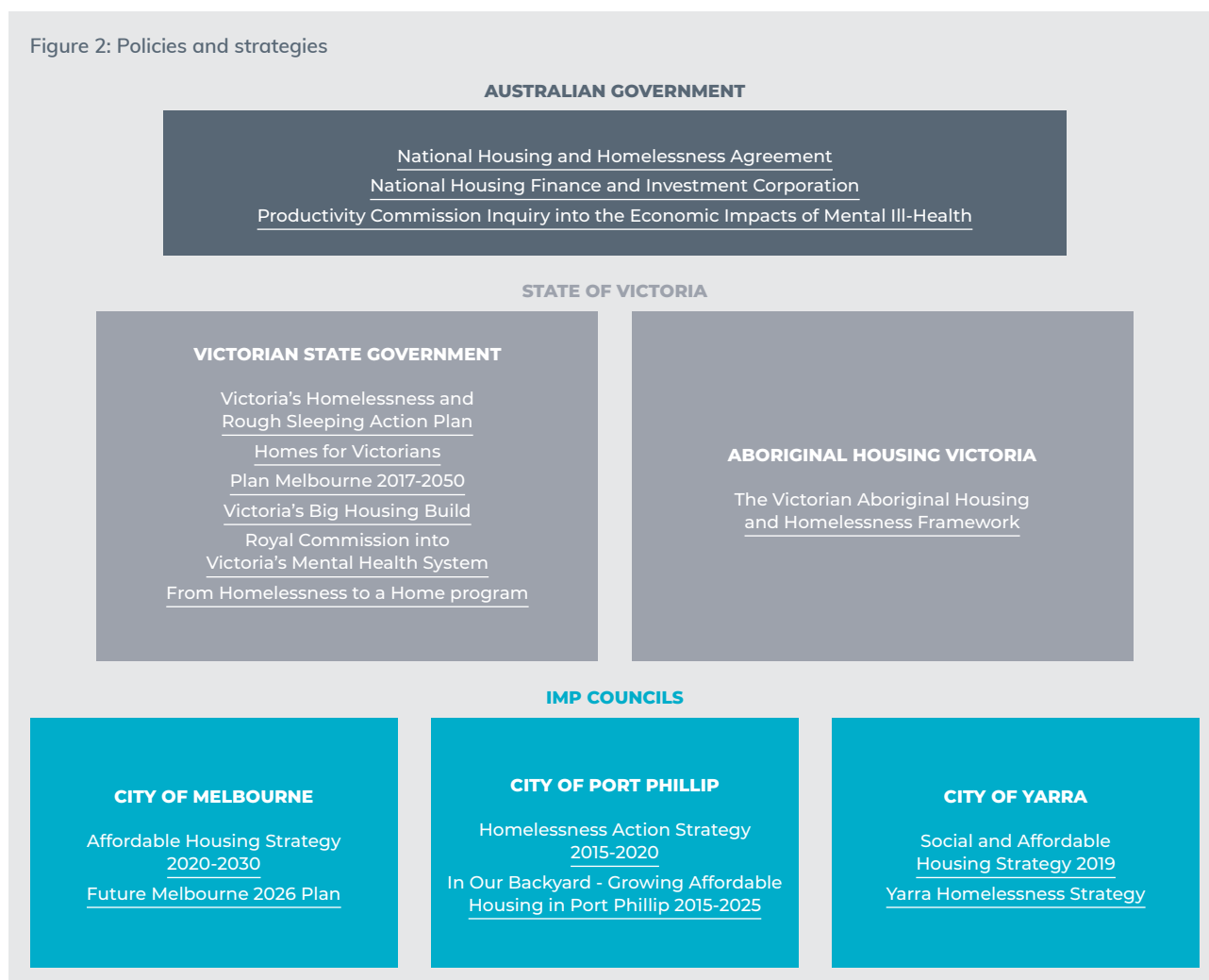
and homelessness strategies and initiatives through their urban planning and community service responsibilities. They also provide health and human services, such contributing financially or providing assets to the delivery of affordable and social housing.

Services to support people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness are provided by Specialist Homelessness Services that are government funded. The focus of these non-government organisations is on providing more general support to people in housing need, in the form of core case support. Some organisations specialise in service delivery to people experiencing particular

issues, like domestic and family violence (Spinney et al. 2020). Specialist Homelessness Services work together with public housing authorities and Community Housing Providers, which provide tenancy and asset management services.

Current policy reforms are seeking to achieve better outcomes for people, focus more on early intervention and prevention, and evaluate service program and design responses to homelessness (Council on Federal Financial Relations 2018: 17).

Figure 2: Policies and strategies



1.2 HOUSING FIRST APPROACH

Housing First Principles

People have the right to a home (including immediate access to housing)

Housing and support are separated

Flexible support for as long as it is needed

Choice and self-determination

Active engagement without coercion

Social and community inclusion

Recovery oriented practice

Harm reduction approach

1.2.1 Rationale, objectives, and principles of Housing First

The Housing First model is based on the conviction that having adequate housing is a human right (Tsemberis 1999) and an important precondition to be able to address other issues with which a person may be struggling. The housing is accompanied by intensive and integrated support for tenants; but whilst encouraged, participation in support services is not a condition to maintain the tenancy (Johnson et al. 2012). Support services are provided to assist tenants to sustain their tenancy and work towards recovery and reintegration into the community (Johnson et al. 2012).

'Housing First' was established initially in the US through the Pathways to Housing program in the early 1990s, as a service response model to homelessness. In contrast to other approaches to accommodate people experiencing homelessness, clients have access to permanent housing immediately, instead of needing to prove their housing readiness through engaging with support services (Johnson et al. 2012). The pioneers of Housing First describe the fundamental principles of the model as providing homeless individuals with immediate access to permanent, independent housing with post-housing support and without treatment contingency. (Stefancic and Tsemberis 2007).

The promise of Housing First approaches to provide people experiencing homelessness rapid access to permanent housing, and the efficacy of programs emerging in the US, are

influencing homelessness policies and program planning worldwide, including in Europe and Australia (Council to Homeless Persons 2018, Johnson et al. 2012). Housing First approaches have been adopted to match the nature of homelessness and service responses in different countries (Y-Foundation 2017, Pleace et al. 2019). Because the homelessness system in Australia differs to the US and other countries, the principles for Housing First approaches need to be adapted to be transferrable to the local context (Johnson et al. 2012). Homelessness Australia has developed Housing First principles for the Australian context (see Appendix), to promote the implementation of the model and facilitate the design and delivery of support services (Dodd et al. 2020).

1.2.2 Rationale, objectives, and principles of Common Ground

Common Ground models draw on Housing First principles, combining congregate housing with wrap-around support services. The target cohort of Common Ground projects are people with experience of chronic homelessness and with complex needs, including people with mental ill-health, experience of complex trauma, alcohol and drug misuse, chronic disease, and brain injury. Common Ground projects often also accommodate low-income households. The congregate setting of the building is designed to provide core support services on-site, create socially mixed communities, and strengthen neighbourhoods (Parsell et al. 2013).

Common Ground Principles

Quality, permanent, affordable housing

A diverse social mix

Coordinated on-site tenancy management and support services

A safe, secure environment

Separation of tenancy management and support services

Integration with the local community (Mission Australia n.d)

Based on experiences in the US, Common Ground facilities have been developed in Australia since 2008 (Parsell et al. 2013). Evaluations have shown the following outcomes of Common Ground facilities:

- **Reduced homelessness:** People with experience of chronic homelessness are provided with permanent housing and wrap-around services to address complex needs. Evaluations of Common Ground facilities indicate that retention rates are high, and tenants who otherwise may lack independent living skills are more likely to sustain their tenancy (Bullen et al. 2016, Verdouw and Habibis 2018).
- **Improved housing outcomes for tenants:** Findings show that tenants are supported effectively and have high rates of retaining their tenancies, whilst feeling at home and perceiving the place to be safe, secure, and comfortable (Verdouw and Habibis 2018).
- **Improved non-housing outcomes:** At Camperdown Common Ground, tenants' health outcomes and health service utilisation improved (Bullen et al. 2016). Some tenants reported modest improvement in their training and labour market participation, establishing social connections through activities and establishing more meaningful relationships in the community and with families (Bullen et al. 2016, Parsell et al. 2015). However, improvements in non-housing outcomes might take a significant amount of time to materialise (Parsell et al. 2015).
- **Cost-effectiveness:** Research evidence shows the cost-effectiveness of congregate supportive housing resulting from a more targeted approach in reducing homelessness through tenants having lower usage of health care and other services (Bullen et al. 2016). Congregate settings also help to reduce costs by delivering tenancy management, asset repairs and maintenance, and support services on a single site (Verdouw

and Habibis 2018). The evaluation of Brisbane Common Ground finds that a previously chronically homeless tenant reduces their annual use of Queensland Government services, including the cost of providing Brisbane Common Ground, by \$13,100 (Parsell et al. 2015).

However, to achieve desired tenant outcomes, both the benefits and the challenges of providing supportive housing in a congregate, single-site facility, compared to multiple scattered-sites, need to be considered (Verdouw and Habibis 2018). Foremost, building a Common Ground facility requires a significant upfront capital investment (Parsell et al. 2013). Due to the housing being permanent, facilities need to support the stipulated number of tenants. Evaluations show high levels of tenancy sustainment and low vacancy rates, reducing the capacity to house further people experiencing homelessness (Verdouw and Habibis 2018).

Congregate supportive housing has limited flexibility to accommodate changes in a tenant's life, such as wanting to live with a new partner. For some tenants, other forms of housing and support services, such as scattered-site settings, can be more appropriate (Verdouw and Habibis 2018). Concerns have been raised also about the potential of large-scale congregate settings to create an overly institutional feeling through communal activities, on-site security, and support service arrangements (Parsell et al. 2013).

The delivery of Common Ground models and other supportive housing based on Housing First principles needs to be integrated with strategies that tackle holistically the multiple contributors to homelessness, including lack of affordable and social housing, barriers to health care and other support services, unemployment, and social marginalisation (Greenwood et al. 2018).

1.2.3 Theory of change

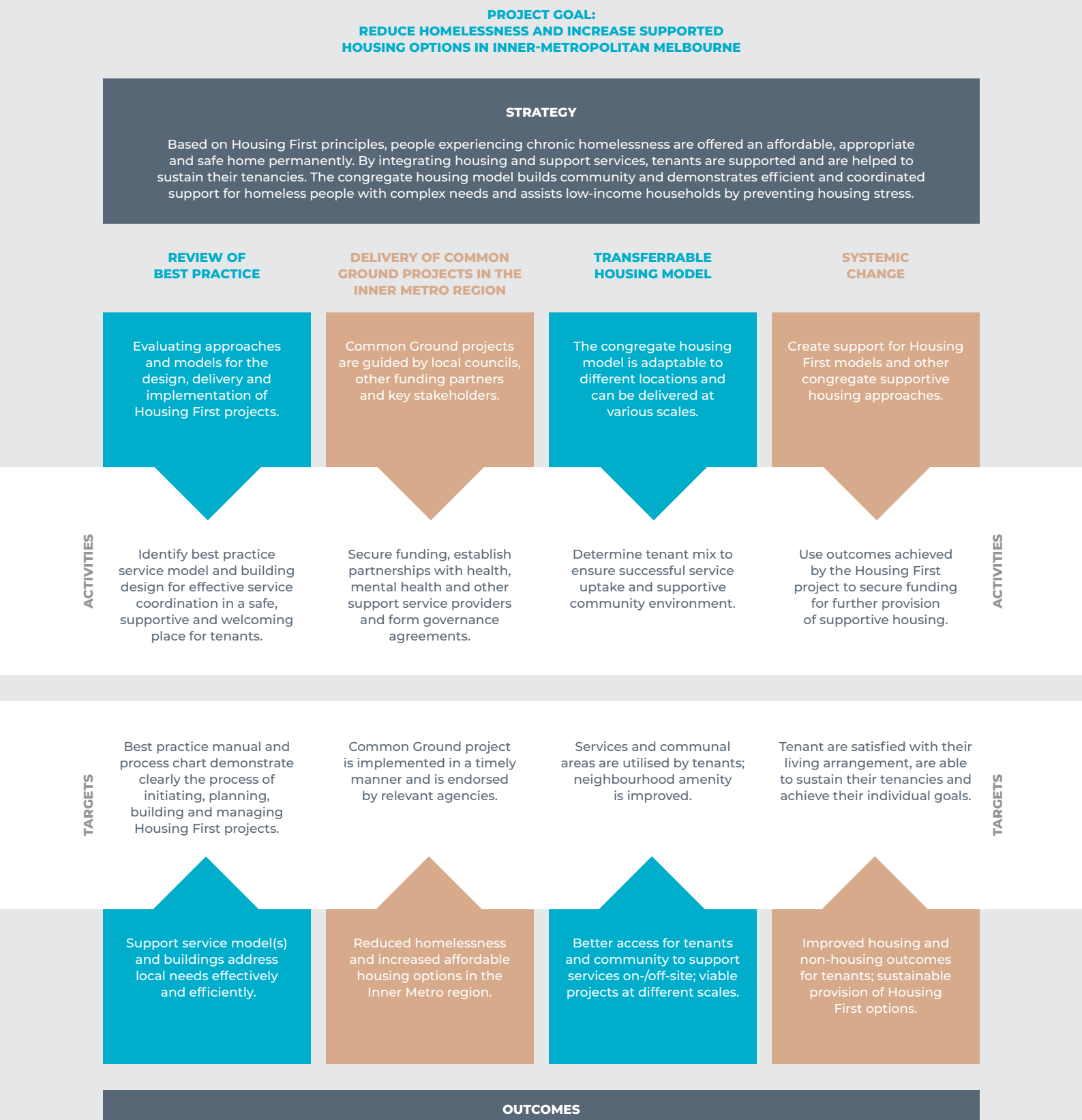
A theory of change is an effective way to articulate the purpose of a project. Key components of a theory of change include a statement of the project's goal, the strategies and activities or resources to facilitate the desired change, as well as the outputs, which can entail measurable targets or indicators, and outcomes the project aims to achieve. By connecting these components through a graphic representation of the theory of change, the overarching function of the project can be communicated clearly.

Figure 2 represents the Theory of Change that sits behind the use of the Housing First model for the Inner Metropolitan Region of Melbourne. Four elements are being pursued as part of the general strategy of adopting a Housing First model to address persistent and increasing homelessness in inner Melbourne. These are: a review of best practice, pilot projects in each of the inner-Metro local government areas, development of scalable and adaptable practices, and, ultimately, changes to homelessness support systems and housing policies.

Figure 3: Theory of change: Problem statement



Figure 4: Theory of change



CASE STUDY 1: CHEZ SOI/AT HOME



What: Study
Where: Canada
When: 2009-2013

Chez Soi/At Home is the world's largest study on the effectiveness of the Housing First approach. Chez Soi assessed tenants' housing stability, social functioning, and quality of life at five sites in Canada where previously homeless people with lived experience of mental ill health were provided with permanent supportive housing. The research, conducted between 2009 and 2013, increased the evidence base from which to improve strategies, partnership agreements, and participatory design processes for Housing First models. Overall, findings demonstrate the impact of Housing First on reducing homelessness, improving housing and non-housing outcomes for participants, and that it can be implemented cost-effectively in different locations and for different cohorts (Goering et al. 2014).

2 PROCESS

2.1 INITIATING A PROJECT

2.1.1 Organisational capacity to undertake a project

The first step in initiating the project will be to evaluate the organisation's capacity to successfully undertake a Common Ground project. This is especially important for organisations who previously have focused primarily on service delivery and advocacy, as engaging in development will require a new skillset, considerable resources, and may change the character of the organisation.

Considerations include:

- Does the project align with the organisation's mission and strategic plan?
- Does the project have the support of the board of directors?
- What staff time and expertise are available to undertake the project?
- Is the organisation willing and able to undertake the long-term operation, management and maintenance of the project once it is built (30+ years)?
- What is the cost of making the business case?
- What are the available resources (land, assets, staff time, knowledge, relationships/collaborators)?
- What resources and finance will need to be brought on board to assemble the development team and how will roles and responsibilities be assigned (e.g. developer, development consultant vs. in-house project management, architect, asset manager, general contractor)?
- What are the risks associated with the project?

2.1.2 The business case

Developing a strong business case for a project is helpful to secure funding and establish partnerships to support the project. A convincing business case is needed to justify the investment and commitment of project partners in congregate supportive housing that requires significant capital investment to design and construct the building, and ongoing subsidy to provide intensive support services.

The business case should be centred on the housing and homelessness outcomes congregate supportive housing aims to achieve and its focus on assisting people experiencing chronic homelessness that have complex needs. Referring to existing evaluations of Common Ground facilities in Australia demonstrates their success in accommodating people with chronic experience of homelessness and complex support needs, improving their housing and non-housing outcomes, and reducing service usage of Government services (Parsell et al. 2016). For the project to facilitate this change, the business case should be addressed towards potential stakeholders who are involved in reducing homelessness and increasing housing options affordable to low-income households.

The following sections on place, people, partners, and participation lay out these components in more detail to provide evidence to strengthen the business case.

2.1.3 Place

Identifying the housing and support needs of a community is helpful to gain a better understanding of the local area and determine required changes. The analysis of housing need should focus on people experiencing homelessness. Homelessness includes people sleeping rough, but also entails secondary and tertiary forms that are often less visible, such as people living in overcrowded dwellings or insecure and inappropriate housing. Potential indicators include:

- Number of people experiencing homelessness: rough sleeping and other forms of homelessness
- People assisted through Specialist Homelessness Services
- Unmet demand for Specialist Homelessness Services

Another issue that analysis should address is the provision of affordable housing in the local area. Constrained access to affordable housing can cause housing stress and put people at risk of homelessness. Indicators showing a potential lack of affordable housing options include:

- Median private rental prices
- Number of rental properties affordable to very low-, low- and moderate-income households
- Number of social housing units and proportion of total dwellings that are social housing (also, in comparison to unmet demand)
- Average wait-times for public housing

Valuable sources to find information on homelessness and housing need include the ABS Census of Population and Housing, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) Community Housing Data Collection and Specialist Homeless Service Collection, and documents published by state governments and local councils, some of which participate in City Street Counts. An example of capturing local data on homelessness and support response is

Port Phillip Zero, a project initiated by the City of Port Phillip in collaboration with local service partners. Through the By-Name List, the incidence and prevalence of homelessness and the effectiveness of Council's housing response is recorded so as to allocate housing and support responsibility, monitor service delivery and improve service responses (City of Port Phillip 2020).

2.1.4 People

Recognising potential cohorts of future tenants and their needs enables the project to support them appropriately with the right service design and mix of support services. The design of the project should acknowledge the diversity of future tenants and aim to establish social connections between tenants and the wider community.

Local demographics and the needs of people experiencing chronic homelessness vary between different local areas. Consultations with organisations active in outreach services are a helpful process to identify local cohorts and their support needs as well as inform later stages of the project. For projects to sustain tenancies successfully, support services and the housing should match needs of future tenants and offer a more attractive option than remaining homeless. This can include culturally appropriate housing and services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders tenants or people from LGBTQ or CALD backgrounds.

2.1.5 Partners

A range of partners is required to deliver the project as well as provide the ongoing tenancy management and support services. The process of identifying the relevant partners and determining their contribution can include consideration of the following partners:

- **Community housing provider** to be responsible for tenancy and asset management and

- **Support service providers** to deliver required health and other support services to meet the needs of future tenants. Having locally established partners may help when identifying and supporting potential tenants by tapping into pre-existing connections with people experiencing chronic homelessness in the area and building upon established trust. Contact could be through crisis or other forms of temporary accommodation, outreach services to people sleeping rough and the organisation's engagement in local networks and advocacy groups.
- **Local and state governments** to contribute assets and developable land. State governments provide capital funding and operational subsidy for most projects. Besides financial contributions, government departments or agencies can also be engaged in coordinating and advocacy roles in promoting the project's impact in reducing homelessness and increasing affordable housing options.
- The **private sector** to support the project by providing additional funding, in-kind or subsidised contributions. This can entail delivering services, such as in the design of the building, or providing specific components, like furnishing the apartments and common areas.
- The **community and philanthropic sector** to facilitate the delivery of specific services for the project. This can include funding activities for tenants or providing functions for the wider community. The philanthropic sector sometimes also provides capital subsidy, to fill funding gaps or contribute to specific components of the project.



What: 11-storey building with 65 apartments
Where: Melbourne, Victoria
When: 2010

Elizabeth St Common Ground commenced in 2010 as the first congregate supportive housing of its kind in Melbourne. The 11-storey building provides housing for 65 tenants in a mix of studio and two-bedroom apartments. The project was initiated by Home Ground Services (now Launch Housing) and Yarra Community Housing (now Unison) to support people experiencing chronic homelessness and severe disadvantage. The project builds upon partnerships with the Victorian Government, and a range of private companies, philanthropists, and community organisations, to secure funding, develop the site, and deliver services (Launch Housing 2016). Among other outcomes, Elizabeth St Common Ground has been successful in providing stable housing to people with psychosis who have experienced chronic homelessness, increasing their well-being, improving the continuity of care, and reducing psychiatric admissions (Holmes et al. 2017).

2.1.6 Participation

Involving local community actors in the early stages of developing the project facilitates its integration in the neighbourhood. Invitations for participation can include adjoining business owners, residential neighbours, and local community groups.

Participation should be centred around ways the project can improve neighbourhood amenity and identify potential conflicts and ways to mitigate these. By providing communal areas and activities, such as a café, gardens, venues for hire or classes, local residents may be able to make use of facilities of the project. Initial consultations may inform the design of the project to incorporate identified communal spaces and the provision of support services. Also, participation should address concerns neighbours may have and develop strategies to avoid these, including clearly communicating responsibilities, contact persons and demonstrate how their considerations have been taken on board. Developing a management plan can help to reassure the local community on the processes to respond to issues that arise and guides tenancy management and housing support (see box).

A communications strategy can assist in deciding the process to identify stages and priorities of consultation. Initial consultations should inform direct neighbours about the project and invite interested community actors to an engagement workshop. To facilitate input, engagement should demonstrate the model clearly and include illustrative concept plans. Setting up an ongoing advisory neighbourhood group can help to communicate problems, present initiatives, and discuss potential solutions.



“By providing communal areas and activities, such as a café, gardens, venues for hire or classes, local residents may be able to make use of facilities of the project.”

2.1.7 Program logic

Developing a program logic is a helpful tool to plan the project by showing the relationship between the current issue the project is going to address, and the inputs and activities required to achieve the desired outputs and outcomes. A program logic can be used as graphical representation illustrating the purpose of the project and its intended effect to promote or evaluate the project.

The program logic draws on the previously described process of initiating a project. The identification of needs and required changes in the local area, and the needs of future tenants inform the contextual and situational factors. Based on the selected project champions and supporters and their resources, potential inputs and activities can be outlined. Desired changes articulated through outputs, immediate outcomes and long-term outcomes are defined in the Theory of Change. The overall development of the program logic is informed through the collaboration with people and partners.

Figure 3 provides an example program logic for the Common Ground best practice project, which can be adjusted to meet the specific requirements of other congregate supportive housing projects. The program logic sets out the contextual and situational factors that relate to affordable housing, homelessness and support services available in Inner Melbourne and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The logic model then maps inputs, activities, outputs, immediate and long-term outcomes according to each of these aspects.

Components of a management plan
Tenant management
Security and staffing arrangements
Hours of operation for support services
Noise and amenity impact mitigation
Responding to complaints
Contact information

Figure 5: Program logic

	CONTEXTUAL AND SITUATIONAL FACTORS	INPUTS	ACTIVITIES
INNER METRO COUNCIL	Limited housing options in Inner Melbourne, affordable for very low to low-income households: » long waitlists for social housing » decreasing number of rooming houses and other affordable housing options	Inner Melbourne Councils: » assets and land » existing facilities and services » funding » strategies and policies	Inner Melbourne Councils: » identify key stakeholders and involve them in design and implementation » establish partnerships » establish target groups and tenant mix » source funding » determine most suited Housing First approach
TENANTS	Rough sleepers, homeless people and people at risk of homelessness in local area: » complex needs » difficulties accessing and sustaining tenancies without appropriate support » trauma » specific local cohorts (gender, age, Indigeneity, residents/non-residents) » Very low and low-income households experiencing rental stress	Tenants with lived experience of homelessness and very low / low-income households: » skills and knowledge » support packages (e.g. NDIS etc.)	Tenants with lived experience of homelessness and very low / low-income households: » peer support for other tenants » engagement in support services » participation in and shaping of activities, advisory groups » building social relationships and community
SUPPORT SERVICES	Support services: » existing local service providers » outreach to homeless cohorts » resource constraints » limited and dispersed services, diminishing the timeliness and quality of support services	Service providers: » support services (including health, mental health, etc.) » experience working with the homeless » staff with right qualifications and experience » peer-support workers	Service providers: » develop operational protocols and service model(s) » provide service arrangements adaptable to changing needs » manage in-take assessment » establish / build relationships with tenants
COVID-19 CONTEXT	Impact of COVID-19: » increasing (secondary) homelessness » enhanced housing stress and need » loss of employment » increased need for mental health and other services » limited access to services and reporting of family violence	COVID-19 response: » hotels and other suddenly vacant accommodation » outreach services » State funding and initiatives (e.g. Homelessness to Home / Big Housing Build)	COVID-19 response: » rough sleepers accommodated temporarily in hotels » government head leasing of private rental housing » identification of sites and housing models for new social housing provision » planning and design of a range of housing projects

Figure 5: Program logic (continued)

OUTPUTS	IMMEDIATE OUTCOMES	LONG-TERM OUTCOMES	
Congregate housing with integrated wrap-around services: » effective partnership arrangements implemented » funding secured » target group and social mix determined » client selection criteria established » good governance arrangements implemented » evaluation and research processes for continuous improvement embedded in the model	Previously homeless tenants are permanently housed. Housing is: » affordable » physically and culturally appropriate » safe » secure	» Reduced homelessness in Inner Melbourne » Increased housing options affordable to the target group » Well-designed buildings, integrated into the neighbourhood: » increased neighbourhood amenity » reduced stigma of supportive housing	INNER METRO COUNCIL
Homes for tenants: » safety and trauma-informed » mix of private and communal spaces » appropriate materials » integrated in neighbourhood	» Tenants are permanently housed and have access to support services on-site and off-site	Tenants have improved housing and non-housing outcomes: » improved health, mental health and wellbeing » better social connections » increased independent-living skills to sustain tenancies » better engagement with employment and training » reduced contact with the justice system	TENANTS
Support provision is integrated within congregate housing » partner agencies deliver and coordinate services effectively » tenancy management and support are provided » staff have the right qualifications, skills and attitude » trusting, on-going relationships with tenants	» Effective support services are provided on-site or in collaboration with nearby providers	» Needs of residents are met » Continuity of care is guaranteed for tenants, including a structured pathway for tenants who choose to move on	SUPPORT SERVICES
» Temporary accommodation of rough sleepers in hotels (some people continuing to sleep rough) » Pathways to transitional and long-term housing » New social housing of different types	» Rough sleepers are less exposed to COVID-19 risks and are accommodated » Economic stimulus through socially focused urban development activity	» Governments are prepared to address homelessness » Support is transitional » Increased provision of permanent housing	COVID-19 CONTEXT

2.2 PLANNING A PROJECT

Considerations for smaller scale facilities
Smaller scale facilities may need to adapt their support service model to help cover operational costs. Potential considerations to enhance viability of a smaller project include:
Focusing on the provision of core services only
Establishing partnerships with service providers to deliver non-core activities off-site
Sharing of services with other nearby supportive housing facilities
Combining concierge services during daytime with a tenancy management presence
Providing night-time security services on-call

2.2.1 Site and location

There are three main considerations in the identification of a site: the ownership of the site, its suitability for redevelopment, and its location close to public transport, groceries and services. Given the high cost of land, sites owned by local or state government, service providers, affordable housing providers or other partners that can be transferred or leased provide the greatest potential for development. The suitability of site location can be assessed using the Housing Access Rating Tool (HART), a tool that scores sites within Melbourne and Geelong for access to key social services, amenities and public transport. Site attributes, such as planning controls, level of contamination, the scale of development that can be achieved, and the impact of the development on the neighbourhood also need to be assessed.

2.2.2 Project scale and viability parameters

To determine the scale of a project it is essential first to identify the required on-site support services for future tenants. Ideally, the needs of tenants are at the forefront and inform the design of the support service model and building accordingly. The scale of existing Common Ground facilities in Australia varies, from around 40 apartments up to 150 apartments. Often, there is a mix of formerly homeless tenants and very low- to low-income households, whose rental payments are one funding stream for the project.

Common Ground facilities require intensive support services to accommodate people with complex needs (key considerations for service provisions and integration are outlined in section 3.1). Specific requirements for congregate supportive housing include having a concierge and after-hours services accessible to tenants, which increases the on-going expenditure. Congregate settings have the advantage of providing on-site services to cover the needs of multiple tenants.

Interviews with housing providers, conducted for this project, indicated that various scales of social housing development offer different opportunities and risks for supported social housing facilities with shared spaces and on-site support services. For example, the viability of smaller developments (under 50 apartments) can be enhanced by introducing a series of arrangements that tailor the service model to the scale of the facility (see box). Single site developments of 50 to 100 apartments is the scale at which support services and communal areas become more financially feasible. Developments of 100 to 150 tenancies are large enough to support place making activities that can also involve the wider neighbourhood and work towards community integration. Providers also indicated that single site developments that are larger than 200 tenancies can become problematic and begin to dominate the neighbourhood.

The need for operating subsidies is critical to the viability of developments of any scale, due to the very low rental income and the intensive nature of the tenancy management, support services, and concierge services required to help people maintain their tenancies.

2.2.3 Planning considerations

Engaging with the planning context enables an understanding of the scale of development permitted, and how it can integrate with the surrounding area. Understand what is permissible under the current planning scheme in terms of land use, building envelope, relationship to heritage, and parking requirements.

Consider what benefits such as uplift (additional floor space) or car parking waivers can be achieved through rezoning the land, or through the planning approval process, given the community benefit provided by the Common Ground model. Strategic justification for these benefits can be found by tying this project to local policy that supports the delivery of affordable housing.

2.2.4 Funding and finance

Funding and financial agreements for the project need to take capital and operating costs into consideration. Initial capital costs include the land, and the design and construction of the building. The main factors contributing to the operating costs are building maintenance, tenancy management and the provision of support services. Evaluations of existing Common Ground facilities have documented the on-going maintenance and support service costs and provide an estimate cost per tenant (Bullen et al. 2016, Parsell et al. 2016).

Establishing agreements with a range of partners can improve the financial viability of the project. Besides key stakeholders investing in the project, this can include architects and developers providing their services for a reduced rate or in-kind contributions for furnishings.

The main source of income is the rent paid by tenants, mostly through those in the affordable housing component. At Camperdown Common Ground the rental income of these tenants covers roughly two-thirds of the costs of asset and tenancy management. Program grants cover the remaining third of this

component as well as contribute entirely to the delivery of support services (Bullen et al. 2016). Projects will almost certainly need to rely on on-going funding and subsidies, in addition to capital grants. Some tenants may be eligible for Commonwealth Rental Assistance and have dedicated support packages, such as through the NDIS.

Research conducted with housing providers for this project indicates that income from rent is insufficient to cover operational costs, and therefore there is a requirement for ongoing subsidy, with this typically being between \$20,000 to \$25,000 per tenant annually. There are several ways of generating additional cash flows or subsidies. In new developments, a proportion of apartments can be sold at market price and proceeds from this can be used to cross-subsidise the social housing component of the project. Other Common Ground models opt for a mix of social, affordable housing and market rent housing, where the higher rental income from the affordable and market rent proportions of the development is used to cross-subsidise the social housing.

2.2.5 Establishing partnerships

For a project to provide the support services required to meet the needs of future tenants it is important to establish partnerships with local service providers in a range of capacities early on. This includes health, mental health and other support services determined through the service requirements (outlined in section 3.1.3).

Partnership agreements should be established to deliver on-site services for tenants. Beyond the case management and services provided by the main support provider of the project, on-site services should entail the services regularly needed by most tenants. Also, the project should provide dedicated meeting rooms for services required occasionally, such as training or employment counselling.

For more specialist services, partnership agreements need to be established so that these can be provided off-site. For the project it is therefore a requirement to identify external service providers meeting the support needs of future tenants and facilitating access to these. Making use of local health facilities may lead to tenants building up support networks outside of the facility establishing stronger community ties.



“Partnership agreements should be established to deliver on-site services for tenants.”

2.2.6 Participatory design processes

Gaining insights from people with lived experience of chronic homelessness is important to meet the needs of future tenants appropriately in congregate supportive housing. Beyond matching support needs, this involves working with people and partners to design the approach and processes for the service delivery model and the design of the building, including entrances, communal areas, and private apartments. Participation of potential future tenants help them feel at home in the project and encouraged to access support services.

The perspective of potential future tenants should be obtained in an early stage of the process to inform the planning, delivery and implementation of the project as well as considering ways to evaluate tenant outcomes. Participation of people with lived experience should involve a meaningful engagement, with their insights contributing to the project. Methods of engagement can include workshops to co-design elements of the building and support services or focus groups eliciting the lived experience of participants.

2.2.7 Eligibility criteria and tenant mix

A unique feature of Common ground is the dual eligibility criteria for tenants (Parsell et al. 2015): those who meet low to moderate income criteria; and those who have experienced chronic homelessness.

Balancing overall support needs in the building, and creating a cohesive social milieu are two factors to consider when determining the tenant mix.

Balancing overall support needs of tenants can be attained by the inclusion of lower needs tenants along with higher needs tenants. Low-income tenants maybe be more likely to have fewer support needs than tenants who have previously been homeless, although this

is certainly not universal. There may also be a need to balance support types – so not all tenants have needs associated with alcohol and other drug use, or forensic histories for instance.

Creation of a cohesive community will be enhanced if the tenant mix includes a critical mass of tenants that are able to contribute to building a pro-social environment. This may be crucial at the initial intake to quickly build constructive social norms in the building.

A thoughtful and thorough assessment approach with identified criteria is useful in this regard and can include validated tools such as the Service Prioritisation Decision Assistance Tool (SPDAT) (e.g., Your Way Home (2018)). A potential tenant will also be assessing Common Ground to consider if a tenancy will meet their need. Assessment is a two-way process and therefore also an information sharing opportunity.



“A unique feature of Common ground is the dual eligibility criteria for tenants (Parsell et al. 2015): those who meet low to moderate income criteria; and those who have experienced chronic homelessness.”

CASE STUDY 3: GUNGAHLIN COMMON GROUND



What: 40 self-contained one-bedroom units
Where: Canberra, Australian Capital Territory
When: 2015

Common Ground Canberra was established in 2015, with the facility providing 40 self-contained one-bedroom units. Prior to commencing the project, the ACT Government commissioned a feasibility study for the establishment of a Common Ground in the ACT. Key components of the report included analysis of homelessness data and existing service provision in the ACT, design of the service model and building requirements, and financial modelling. The report considered the financial requirements for the project, provided a cost-benefit analysis, identified financial challenges, and explored partnership opportunities to meet these (Community Services Directorate 2012).

2.3 DELIVERING A PROJECT

2.3.1 Partnership agreements

For the project to be delivered successfully, concise agreement on roles and responsibilities between partners is needed. Partnership agreements will cover issues ranging from daily conduct between partners and tenants, to operational management structures and shared overarching objectives and policies.

With the tenancy management and support provision separated in Common Ground models, the relationship between both agencies is crucial to support tenants in sustaining their housing and having their needs met. This involves setting-up clear agreements on roles and responsibilities, having a shared understanding of objectives and establishing communication channels to share information.

A formal review process of the partnership agreement can help the project to be responsive to experiences gathered during the running of the project, and the findings of evaluations.

2.3.2 Governance

Effective and clear governance arrangements help to ensure that the project is delivered according to its stated purpose, processes are managed well, and stakeholders are accountable to achieve the project's goal. Components to consider for the project's governance include clarifying roles and decision-making, establishing effective relationships between all involved stakeholders, defining shared objectives, ensuring the project's integrity, and setting-out accountability.

To support the management of the project, governance arrangements could include establishing an advisory body, consisting of tenants, community members and housing and support service staff.

To ensure the governance structure matches the service requirements effectively, it is important that agreements are reviewed to improve processes and relationships between all stakeholders.

2.3.3 Building delivery

The delivery of a Common Ground project can be complex given the potential scale of the project. Having an external project manager may be useful to aid the successful delivery of the project. The architect and the project manager will lay out the relative benefits of different delivery methods, and aid in the selection of a preferred contractor.

2.3.4 Project management

For congregate supportive housing to support tenants with complex needs well, adequate resourcing and prescient risk assessment and allocation are integral parts of managing the project.

Project management should consider the in-take assessment of potential tenants, understanding the need to ensure that available resources can support tenants with complex needs sufficiently. Resourcing should consider the ratio of staff to tenants and the experience of staff. In-take assessments should also take into account the mix of tenants, to mitigate risks of new tenants impacting other tenants through their behaviour

2.4 EVALUATION

2.4.1 Build it in at the start

Embedding evaluation mechanisms from the start will enable simpler systems for data collection and analysis, contribute to data driven decision making (Planigale 2011), and build a culture of continuous quality assessment and improvement (Spellman and Abbenante 2008). It may be useful to engage the professional services of an external evaluator to design an outcomes monitoring plan or framework from inception.

Recording and monitoring systems can be designed to collect information on key indicators (outputs and outcomes) routinely, without laborious effort. Summaries and reports should be simple to create and automated where possible. Staff should be trained and accountable for ensuring quality data is recorded consistently.

Reports should be reviewed in relevant forums. A focus on appropriate indicators identified in the program logic (see sections 2.4.2 to 2.4.5) will give insight into the effectiveness and efficiency of the program, enhancing governance and informing practice development. Co-design and consultation with tenants regarding evaluation targets and strategies will help ensure meaningful evaluation and support tenant engagement and empowerment.

2.4.2 Tenant outcomes

Following the program logic, tenants will have improved housing and non-housing outcomes, such as sustaining their tenancy, improved health (mental and physical), , better engagement with employment, training, and social or creative activities, greater control over their lives to achieve goals for recovery and independence, and reduced contact with the justice system. However, stabilisation or small improvements in these outcomes are acceptable, given the cohort may be living with long-term disability, the effects of trauma, and high on-going support needs. The greatest change in these outcomes may be observed early in the tenure.

Tools that are used in routine case management, assessment and screening can also be used as outcome tools. It can also be important to identify outcomes for specific cohorts, such as tenants who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, or gender-diverse tenants, for example.

2.4.3 Service utilisation

Use of services provided on-site would generally be expected to stay stable or reduce only slightly. This logically follows the program rationale, which is to reduce barriers to service access and provide long-term integrated support to tenants in order for them to sustain their tenancy. Falling rates of local service use may possibly indicate unhelpful levels of disengagement. Use of emergency services (such as Emergency Departments) and acute supports (such as psychiatric hospitalisation) may be reduced if health crises can be prevented through consistent care and effective crisis management. Monitoring of ongoing service utilisation (on-site, external and crisis) is therefore a useful barometer of program success.

2.4.4 Post-occupancy evaluation

Post-occupancy evaluation, or the systematic analysis of the performance of the building, is essential to assist in gathering feedback that can improve the existing building and inform future building designs. It is important first to define the objectives, purpose, and assessment criteria, then gather background information and field data, review the data, identify major issues and findings, and incorporate these findings into the feedback process. Data collection can take the form of questionnaires, staff and tenant interviews, workshops, and expert walk-throughs, as well as using building monitoring systems. The evaluation should typically take place six to 12 months after the building has been completed and tenants have moved in.

2.4.5 Financial management

Narrow financial outcomes, based on net revenues of the project, include profit and loss of the immediate contracted project. Controllable revenue streams such as rental payments versus arrears, can offer guidance on the effectiveness of day to day management.

Tools that measure the broader value of a housing project, such as Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) and Social Return on Investment (SROI), are appropriate ways to understand the overall significance of housing schemes. Tracking financial outcomes in the broader sense enhances the business case for Common Ground approaches and can contribute to the evidence around the scalability or replicability of the model and enhance community support.

CBA and SROI can take into account improved social outcomes, opportunity costs and external savings such as improved tenant wellbeing, improved neighbourhood amenity, reduction in demands on homeless services, reduction in emergency department visits, reduced psychiatric hospitalisations, reduced contact with corrective services, reduced police time and reduced harm from alcohol and other drug use (Parsell et al. 2015). Where possible, evidence of cost avoidance, such as reduction in use of external services, should be captured to help justify the higher operating costs of Common Ground models.

2.4.6 Broader outcomes - housing and homelessness

Because congregate supportive housing targets people with experience of homelessness and complex support needs, the project's evaluation should consider broader housing and homelessness outcomes, such as the impact on reducing rough sleeping in the local area. Through the affordable housing component, the project should also contribute to increasing affordable housing options in the local area.

Finally, evaluation of a project should consider its influence on improving broader neighbourhood amenity and integration in the community. Another potential outcome of the project is to promote change and strengthen the agenda of enabling all residents in a community to have access adequate, affordable, safe, and secure housing.

CASE STUDY 4: BRISBANE COMMON GROUND



What: 14-storey building with 146 units
Where: South Brisbane, Queensland
When: 2012

The Brisbane Common Ground provides 146 units in a 14-storey building in South Brisbane. The facility was established in 2012 to house tenants who have experienced chronic homelessness, and tenants on low to moderate incomes. The project was evaluated in 2015 to assess its success in assisting tenants to sustain their tenancy and improve their quality of life. The evaluation considered the project's implementation, reviewed the design and performance of the building, identified the model's effectiveness in improving long-term tenant outcomes, and measured its value for money (Parsell et al. 2015).

FIGURE 6: PROCESS CHECKLIST

KEY CONSIDERATIONS: INFORM
PLANNING AND DELIVERY

SERVICE PROVISION AND INTEGRATION

See Figure 9: Service Provision Checklist

Phase 1:
INITIATION

IDENTIFY

- ☐ Resources
- ☐ Partners
- ☐ Risks

DEFINE

- ☐ Objectives
- ☐ Parameters
- ☐ Outcomes

- ☐ Consider organisational capacity, including expertise and resources
- ☐ Identify the housing and support needs of the local community
- ☐ Recognise specific support needs of potential tenant cohorts and be inclusive of diverse cohorts
- ☐ Reach out to a range of project partners and determine their contributions
- ☐ Involve the local community early on and identify potential conflicts and ways to mitigate these
- ☐ Develop a program logic to structure the activities and inputs for the project according to the desired change

BUSINESS CASE

- ☐ Clear aims and objectives
- ☐ Build on existing evaluation findings
- ☐ Identify stakeholders to secure funding and support partnerships

Phase 2:
PLANNING

DETERMINE

- ☐ Site
- ☐ Project scale
- ☐ Tenant mix

ESTABLISH

- ☐ Partnerships
- ☐ Participatory design process

- ☐ Explore site options and planning system opportunities / constraints
- ☐ Identify the required on-site support services for future tenants
- ☐ Consider the different opportunities and risks of various project scales
- ☐ Determine available capital / recurrent funding requirements, including subsidies and rental income
- ☐ Reach out to a range of partners to improve the financial viability and provide required support services
- ☐ Involve people with lived experience of homelessness in design of the approach and process
- ☐ Develop an allocation process that sets out clear eligibility criteria, ensures adequate support services are available, and balances overall support needs

PROJECT PLAN

- ☐ Architectural / site concept design
- ☐ Service model design
- ☐ Funding and finance agreements
- ☐ Statutory planning application

ACTIONS

OUTPUTS

FIGURE 6: PROCESS CHECKLIST (continued)

BUILDING DESIGN AND PERFORMANCE

See Figure 11: Building Design Checklist

**Phase 3:
DELIVERY**

PROJECT GOVERNANCE

- ☐ Set-up effective and clear arrangements
- ☐ Create advisory body, consisting of tenants, staff and community memb

BUILDING DELIVERY

Architect role:

- ☐ Coordinate consultants
- ☐ Design development
- ☐ Contract documentation
- ☐ Approvals

PROGRAM DELIVERY

- ☐ Define roles and responsibilities of partners
- ☐ Develop shared understanding of objective

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

- ☐ Assess and allocate risks
- ☐ Provide adequate resources to cover capital and operating expenditure

BUILT ASSET

- ☐ Building constructed and commissioned

**SERVICE AGREEMENTS
OPERATING FUNDS**

**Phase 4:
EVALUATION**

PROJECT EVALUATION DESIGN

- ☐ Include evaluation from the outset to structure data collection and analysis
- ☐ Select appropriate outcome tool

TENANT OUTCOMES

- ☐ Measure tenant achievements
- ☐ Monitor ongoing service utilisation

FACILITY PERFORMANCE

- ☐ Conduct postoccupancy evaluation to analyse the building's performance

- ☐ Track financial outcomes of the project

BROADER OUTCOMES AND IMPACT

- ☐ Evaluate social and economic outcomes and changes in external service usage
- ☐ Measure the project's impact on housing and homelessness

**PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT FUTURE
BUSINESS CASES ON-GOING SUBSIDY**

**KEY CONSIDERATIONS: INFORM
PLANNING AND DELIVERY**

3 KEY CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 SERVICE PROVISION AND INTEGRATION

This section shows how Housing First principles can be operationalised to provide required services, case coordination and case management, and asset and tenancy management. The client's right to a home, their support needs, and recovery-oriented practice are central to this approach. To achieve sustainable tenancies and positive tenant outcomes, careful balancing and integration of operational considerations, service mix and asset and tenancy management is required. Case management and case coordination aim to ensure that tenants can access the services they need, and that the various support services are coordinated effectively.

3.1.1 Service model design

Key steps in developing a service delivery model include:

1. Develop and understand the guiding principles (see Appendix for Housing First Principles)
2. Develop a vision for what the services should look like (see 3.1.2 Service philosophy)
3. Developing the operational framework and detailed policies and procedures
4. Designing the service delivery model (identify key practices and collaborators/ partners, look at staffing structures, understand and calculate costs, understand and calculate how scale affects costs, analyse risks)

Steps 3 and 4 require detailed and involved processes and will be different for each project.

Figure 7 illustrates how Housing First principles inform service provision, case management and case coordination, and asset and tenancy management in congregate housing. It can be used to develop a detailed and unique service model for each project.

3.1.2 Service philosophy

A clearly articulated and shared service philosophy ensures that all aspects of operations (including service delivery, asset and tenancy management, hiring staff and interviewing potential tenants) are committed to implementing Housing First principles, using similar approaches. A shared service philosophy will allow services to take a consistent approach to supporting tenants to build on the foundation of stable housing and home as a platform for recovery, health, and self-determination.

Questions to consider include what is the service delivery approach (e.g., trauma-informed—see Box, strengths based, etc.), how might engagement in voluntary services be encouraged, how will information be shared between services, what training will staff receive in the service model, and how and at what intervals will the service philosophy be reviewed?

Recovery oriented practice

Recognises that while recovery is a goal, people may be at different stages along the continuum of behaviour change

Focuses on offering hope and actively encouraging people to dream and gain a sense of purpose

Celebrates successful experiences, but also acknowledges processes of trial and error

Works with people's strengths, capacity and abilities

Is appropriate to developmental stage, cultural and gender identities

Harm reduction approach

Supports people's safety by assisting them to reduce negative impacts of substance use, gambling, self-harm, and high-risk behaviours

Enables people to make informed choices

Fosters individual choice

Does not require abstinence to provide housing and support

3.1.3 Potential services

It is useful to think of key components of service provision (e.g., health support or mental health support or AoD support) separately to the delivery of these components (how they are packaged, co-ordinated and delivered). Service components are considered in the next three sections, and delivery in section 3.1.6.

Effective support is critical to the success of a Common Ground project. Consistent with Housing First principles, services should be flexible, voluntary and must be easily accessible and engaging for tenants. It is important that services work together, and coordination usually occurs through the central case management function. If there is clarity about the support components, then it is more likely that role clarity for support workers will follow.

Core services usually funded and managed by a Common Ground or similar housing model include:

- **Concierge/ triage support** This serves a number of important functions, including presence in communal areas, reception for tenants and visitors, monitoring access to the building, security, support, safety, creation of a friendly environment, and after-hours response to any incidents, emergencies or maintenance issues (Parsell et al. 2015). Front desk personnel can come from a range of backgrounds, including security, social work, or general staff, but require good interpersonal skills and experience dealing with challenging behaviours and crisis situations. Front desk staffing will depend on the size and budget of the project. Consultations considered two people providing 24/7 support as optimal, but fewer staff or hours (e.g., staffing until 10pm or midnight) may still work well if appropriate emergency and contingency plans are put into place that consider security.

- **Case management/ case-coordination/ key work** (considered more fully in Section 3.1.6). This includes support brokerage, assertive engagement, counselling and coaching (Brackertz et al. 2016, Gronda 2009).

Other services can be provided on-site, either permanently or through in-reach, using designated spaces. This can include visits from local community specialist agencies and government agencies (e.g., employment and training, income support, NDIS). These services can be provided through scheduled visits at intervals to meet client demand (e.g., low demand services visit fortnightly, high demand services visit multiple times a week). However, frequency is not an indication of how important a service is. Low demand services can still be critical when the need for them arises. Some of the most frequently used services can be financial (Mason and Grimbeek 2013), health, and mental health services. The least used might be legal, disability, and Education and Training services (Bullen et al. 2016).

Alternatively, services can be provided by referral to community-based services, provided tenants have transportation and any other needed support to access these services. Another model is to provide mobile services, where services are provided at a location of the tenant's choosing (e.g., in their home, at a community location such as a park or restaurant, or at an agency's office).

Tenants are actively involved in choosing the services they would like to receive

Doctor and/or nurse to attend to physical health needs

Dentistry

Mental health services (e.g., psychiatrist to assist with medication, psychologists, counsellors) that can be bulk billed or funded through NDIS packages

AoD support through specialist providers

Community legal supports to assist with legal and justice issues

Domestic and family violence specialists

Child protection

Employment and training

Income support (Centrelink) and welfare agencies

Disability support and assistance to access the NDIS

Podiatry and other allied health

Money management

Advocacy

Independent living skills

Peer support

Trauma-informed care and practice

Is aware of the prevalence of trauma

Recognises the impact of trauma on people's behaviour, relationships, physical and mental health

Recognises the signs and symptoms of trauma

Integrates knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices

Aims to avoid re-traumatisation

Aims to ensure that people are physically and psychologically safe

Aims to build and maintain trust

FIGURE 7: SERVICE MODEL DESIGN

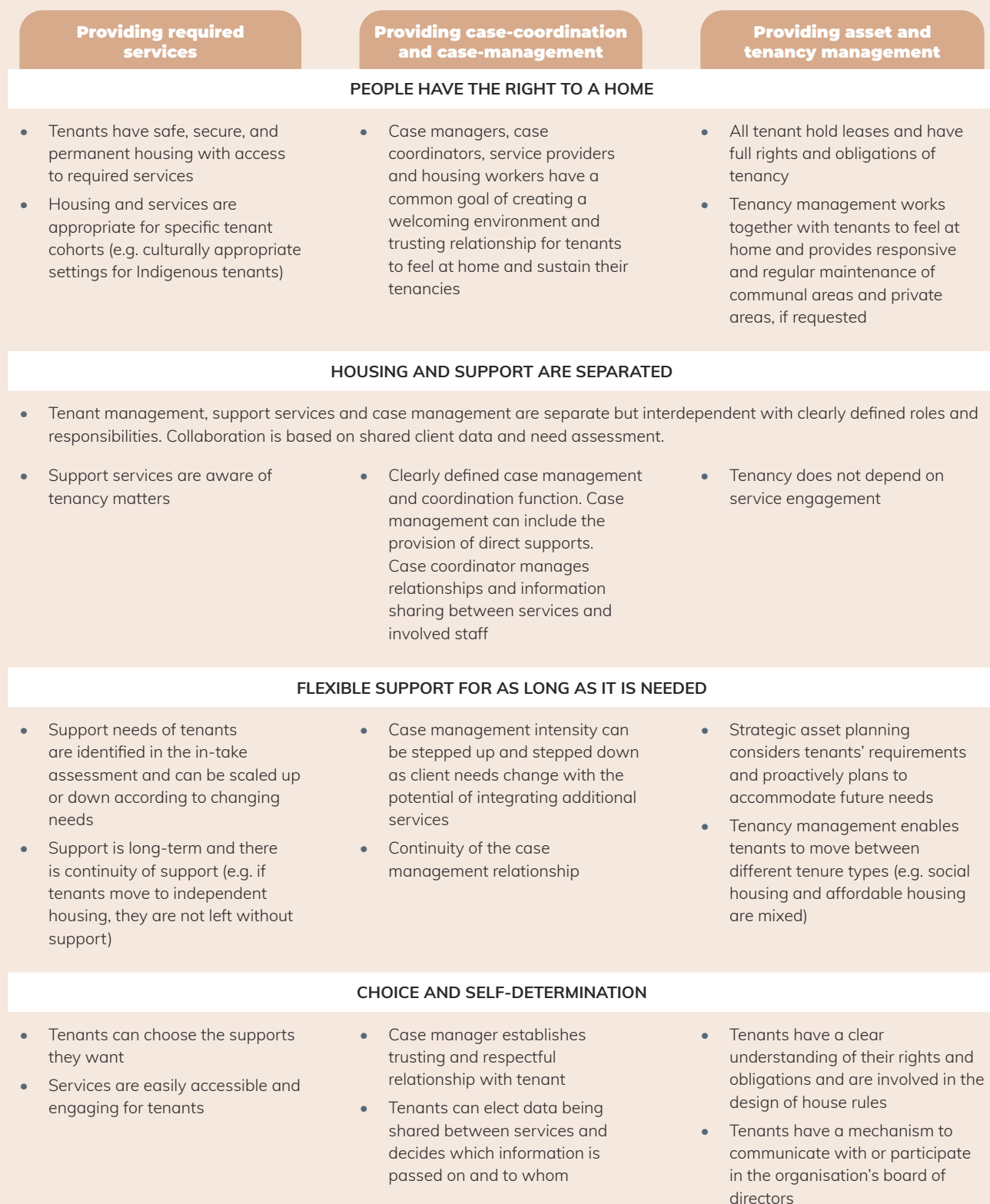


FIGURE 7: SERVICE MODEL DESIGN (continued)

Providing required services	Providing case-coordination and case-management	Providing asset and tenancy management
ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT WITHOUT COERCION		
• Service engagement is voluntary and respectful • Onus is on service providers to find ways to engage with tenants	• Case manager provides assertive outreach to tenants and is responsive to their needs • Support fits the person and not the service	• Tenancy matters are resolved constructively with a focus on early intervention and support. Failure to meet key aspects of the tenancy agreement are identified early
SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY INCLUSION		
• Support enhances citizenship and social inclusion, as well as education and employment • Services aim to build a respectful, engaging, inclusive and supportive environment	• Case managers provide advice and facilitate engagement beyond immediate housing and support needs • Tenants are supported to be actively involved in the local community	• Communal areas are welcoming and accessible to all tenants • Asset and tenancy management adopts an inclusive and responsive approach to problem solving and negotiation with tenants
RECOVERY ORIENTED PRACTICE		
• Services operate within a recovery paradigm and aim to build trust	• Case management and case coordination aim to achieve recovery as defined by the tenant	• Asset and tenancy management facilitate a safe, clean environment and promote health and wellbeing
HARM REDUCTION APPROACH		
• Housing and support are not conditional on abstinence • Services aim to help tenants reduce harm caused by their special needs	• Case managers are qualified and suited to the work environment • Support is guided by tenant choice, including assistance to access specialist services	• Tenancy management proactively supports tenants to maintain their apartment • Tenancy and asset management enhances a sense of safety and security for tenants

3.1.4 Determining service requirements

An important goal of services planning is to determine what services will be provided, how and by whom, for example through direct service provision within the Common Ground facility, or through partnerships and by leveraging community services and resources. These decisions will be influenced by the size of the facility, available budget, the existing service infrastructure in the local area and by the needs of the target group.

Determining service requirements involves a systematic examination of tenants' current and future needs against a realistic assessment of available services. A written services plan should describe the available services, whether services will be provided directly or through referral, who will provide the services, in which location and at what times.

Consistent with Housing First principles, the aim of providing and co-ordinating services and support is to enable tenants to build their recovery and maintain their tenancy (Parsell et al. 2015). This includes considering the requirements of tenants with complex or intersecting needs (Bullen et al. 2016). What services are needed can be determined from information about the number and characteristics of the target population and their anticipated needs. Data collated from intake interviews and provisional service planning can be utilised to gain a clear picture of need. Initially, there will be high levels of complex needs that require extensive support, but support needs may ameliorate over time. Required service intensity and frequency, equity issues in accessing services (e.g., will all services be available to all tenants), and cultural considerations will all need to inform the service mix.

It is an objective of Common Ground to ensure that tenants have support to access to the core universal services they need. Centrelink services can be provided through regular in-reach, and GPs, psychiatrists, and psychologists through regular bulk-billing clinics held on-site (Bullen et al. 2016). To date, NDIS access has been challenging for people with lived experience of homelessness. Therefore, assistance to apply for and access NDIS packages may be part of the Common Ground service model.

The extent of concierge availability is a critical decision and affects issues of crisis management, tenant need and community relations. 24-hour concierge support can ensure problems are de-escalated and help avoid the use of ambulances, police and emergency departments (Parsell et al. 2015). Other services include internally implemented activity groups, based on client interests, needs and community-building goals.

Determining and delivering the optimal service mix is a work in progress and it may take a few months or upwards of one to two years to establish the right mix (Parsell et al. 2015). The evidence generated through evaluation (see 2.4) can be used to improve and refine the range of services and their implementation. In refining and improving interventions, a critical application of the evidence may be required. Practices may need to be adapted, within reason, to get the right outcomes (Parsell et al. 2015).

Service planning will also need to consider whether, how, and for how long support will be provided to tenants when they leave Common Ground, to ensure successful transitions to living in independent housing. Or, in the case of a negative exit or eviction, what arrangements will be made to ensure the person has access to safe and appropriate housing after they leave their Common Ground tenancy.

Although it is important that all stakeholders work together for a common aim, Housing First principles demand the separation of roles and responsibilities for supports from tenancy management, site management and security. Specific roles and responsibilities should be clearly differentiated (Parsell et al. 2015). This is discussed further in section 3.1.7.

Once the elements of support are understood, decisions about service planning can be undertaken. Factors such as the size of the project, accessibility of neighbourhood services, contractual and consortia arrangements, funding requirements and budget are relevant.

Establishing service needs

What is the tenant mix?

What are tenants' needs?

What are tenants' daily living skills?

How are tenants' needs likely to change over time?

How will service providers respond to changes in tenant mix or tenant need over time (e.g. AoD, mental health)?

What level / intensity of support is needed?

Will each service be available to all tenants?

How will language and literacy barriers be addressed?

How will cultural issues be addressed?

How many tenants are expected to use each service and how frequently?

What will be the staff to tenant ratio and how does this compare to other similar projects?

What arrangements and support will be provided to tenants when they exit Common Ground?

3.1.5 Responding to specific tenant cohorts

Specific tenant cohorts in a Common Ground development will vary, depending on the characteristics of the local homeless population who obtain tenancy. Any Common Ground project could also choose to reserve tenancies for specific cohorts.

Groups with increased risks for homelessness may have higher representation in Common Ground, such as people identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, women and children who have experienced family violence, people living with a disability, people living with mental illness, people exiting custodial arrangements (i.e., a forensic history), people leaving care, older people, and young people presenting alone (although they may be diverted to youth specific housing options) (Brackertz et al. 2016). People living with alcohol or drug dependence are another specific cohort.

Aligned with Housing First principles, best practice for all cohorts always begins with client choice and individualised supports (Parsell et al. 2015). Client consultation, codesign and participation are essential to meet the needs of specific cohorts. There is also a need to respond to the intersectionality of any tenant, that is, they may have intersecting requirements around multiple needs (Parsell et al. 2015).

Specific support needs of tenants with cognitive disabilities include a focus on independent living skills and support with structured daily living, such as vocational and educational support. Planning and goal setting support is also valuable.

Women and children who have experienced family violence may find the Common Ground approach particularly suitable to meet their safety needs with concierge supervision at the entrance. Trauma informed practice is important with this group of residents (Sullivan and Olsen 2016). They may

be disturbed by other tenants with aggressive behaviours and may feel more comfortable in gender specific locations within the development.

Indigenous tenants can be engaged early in the design stage to develop culturally appropriate settings and approaches. Family obligations may be challenging to negotiate, and some Indigenous tenants may appreciate the support of the concierge service in setting the boundaries they wish to choose (Parsell et al. 2015). Collaborating with Indigenous support services, such as Ngwala Willumbong in Victoria, can inform the project to develop and implement culturally appropriate services.

Drug dependence and mental health issues are common co-morbidities, often with poor long-term outcomes, necessitating long-term support.

Individualised service plans

Actively involve tenants in design, development, and implementation of service plans

Develop realistic goals that are achievable and measurable

Reflect tenant preferences

Regularly update plans to reflect changing service needs and goals

Highlight existing strengths

Focus on practical strategies to achieve goals that are important to the tenant

Document tenant progress towards goals outlined in the service plan

Potential cohorts

People with serious mental illness (including co-morbidities)

People with cognitive impairment

People with substance misuse disorders

People with co-occurring mental illness and substance misuse

People with physical disabilities and/or serious physical ailments

Victims of domestic and/or family violence

People with traumatic brain injury

Older people

People identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

People from culturally and linguistically diverse communities

Very low-income households experiencing severe rental stress

Active engagement without coercion

Active engagement without coercion in voluntary services are key principles of Housing First. Voluntary participation means that tenants can choose the services they prefer and whether to participate, without this affecting their tenure. Staff can use a range of proactive strategies to engage tenants:

A non-judgemental attitude and non-threatening demeanour

Consistent, clear, and fair communication

Respect tenants, their opinions, and concerns

Communicate honestly and follow through on promises or commitments made; do not promise things that cannot be delivered

Allow tenants to drive the goals, not the service

Recognise and celebrate progress

If a tenant is struggling to achieve a goal, see this as a problem with the goal, not the tenant

Develop practical strategies to address obstacles to achieving goals

Ensure a safe and welcoming physical environment

Work to build a trusting relationship with residents

3.1.6 Case-management models and case coordination

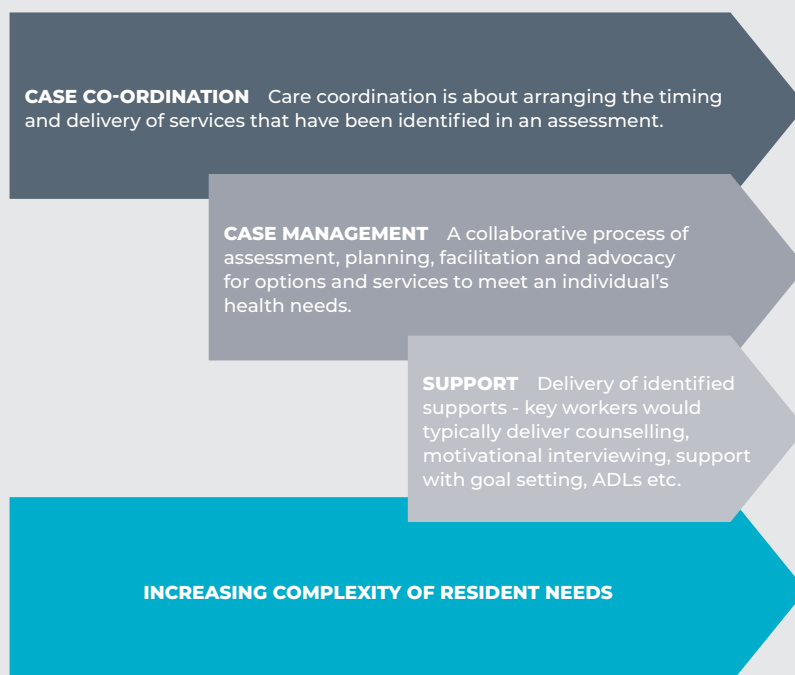
Figure 8 illustrates how Housing First principles inform service provision, case management and case coordination in congregate housing.

Case management models may vary between Common Ground sites, depending on funding and contractual arrangements, but the aim is clear – to ensure clients have access to the range of services they need, that there is optimal engagement with services by the tenant (Hayes et al. 2016), and that services have a shared understanding of the tenant and their support goals. 'A failure to coordinate is likely to mean each of the component services is less effective at supporting people who are homeless' (Productivity Commission 2020: 583).

Effective case management is associated with less homelessness and improved mental health (Brackertz et al. 2016, Coldwell and Bender 2007, Productivity Commission 2020).

Although case manager roles may be combined with triage or concierge support roles, it is useful to separate these activities for more effective work practices (Bullen et al. 2016). They can either be separate positions or workers rostered to only one activity at a time. The triage support worker role is there to deal with immediate issues and manage appointments while the case co-ordinator role can co-ordinate engagement with other services and provide supervision (Bullen et al. 2016, Parsell et al. 2015). Ensure that staff are well qualified to deal with a complex and demanding work environment (Bullen et al. 2016).

Figure 8: Case co-ordination, case management, support



It is important that case management takes a deliberate approach to achieving service outcomes rather than a reactive approach (Bullen et al. 2016). Being locked into a crisis focus, will mean lower needs or less challenging crisis behaviours attract less support until they too escalate, or the tenant disengages (Bullen et al. 2016).

"Having a peer support worker that has lived experience of homelessness or living in these kinds of places would be a really good idea, because [tenants] are like, 'Okay, if this person can get through, maybe I can.'"
(Consumer, Common Ground consumer consultation)."

Mechanisms that supervisors and case managers can use to support effective service integration include deliberate focus on building positive interagency relationships and formalised interagency devices such as MOUs (Brackertz et al. 2016). It is important for all services and stakeholders to "get on the same page" with the common aim to support sustainable tenancies for all tenants (Bullen et al. 2016).

Collaboration also depends on shared or aggregated client data (within the bounds of privacy requirements) and standardised assessments of client needs and outcomes (Mollinger-Sahba et al. 2020). When all agencies use agreed outcome measures to build an integrated picture, data gaps are minimised, accountability is built in, evaluation can be streamlined, and there is consistent understanding of required outcomes. Consider carefully how and how much personal information of the tenant is shared – less sharing may increase privacy, but tenants may need to retell their story multiple times (Bullen et al. 2016).



"Importantly, tenancy management is considered separate to service supports. This is a key tenet of the Common Ground model."

Best practice for service integration is regular meetings (frequency to be specified in MOUs for instance) (Corporation for Supportive Housing 2003). This may involve monthly meetings at higher management level (Bullen et al. 2016) and daily or even twice-daily handovers for frontline staff (Bullen et al. 2016). Weekly meetings amongst core support staff and building management are optimal (Corporation for Supportive Housing 2003).

Sometimes an external provider will be the 'lead agency' (i.e., take up the case management role), for instance if a tenant has an NDIS support co-ordinator and information sharing and lines of responsibility may need negotiation.

Importantly, tenancy management is considered separate to service supports. This is a key tenet of the Common Ground model. Thus, the tenancy management team will be focused on adherence to tenancy agreements and service providers should not be directly involved (Parsell et al. 2015). However, support providers such as case managers should be aware of tenancy issues and should be able to assist the tenant to in sustaining their tenancy. Effective liaison between tenancy management and support providers is key to sustaining tenancies in most cases (Parsell et al. 2015).

Complexity in management and governance can lead to multiple rather than single lines of accountability, reduce transparency and reduce clarity of decision making (Bullen et al. 2016). Adequate consultation and advisory meetings ensure stakeholder engagement and accountability (Bullen et al. 2016).

Coordinate tenancy management and support services
Property and tenancy management and support services have separate and distinct roles
Tenancy managers and support services work together to sustain tenancies
Comprehensive written policies detail communication procedures, roles and responsibilities, what to do to prevent evictions, what to do in case of eviction, processes for resolving conflicting approaches
Tenancy managers and support services staff receive training to understand each other's roles and responsibilities
Property and tenancy managers promptly notify services staff of any unmet tenant service needs
Services staff promptly notify property and tenancy managers if they observe safety or maintenance concerns

3.1.7 Coordinating property and tenancy management with other supports

The separation of the property and tenancy management from other services and supports is a hallmark of the Common Ground model, yet there needs to be close coordination between the two, a shared service philosophy, understanding of each other's functions, and frequent communication.

3.1.8 Strategic asset planning

Strategic asset management focuses on long term strategic planning (typically 40 years) rather than day-to-day operations. This includes long term financial planning and managing the performance of the real estate asset for the benefit of owners and investors.

The building and the property on which the congregate supportive housing is situated are the main assets of the project. Key components of a strategic asset plan include the appropriateness of the building and its interior to match the determined service requirements and consider future service and maintenance needs.

A property asset renewal strategy can act as framework for renewal and can help to identify the potential value of land, for example to increase number of units.

Strategic asset planning should ensure that the design and performance of the building is well integrated with the support service provision. Beyond planning for current requirements, the project needs to be adaptable to future changes in use. During the lifecycle of the building, preferable living arrangements may change from larger communal areas to more self-contained apartments. Communal rooms should be planned to serve multiple purposes and accommodate a range of uses, such as meetings, arts classes or sharing meals.

Another consideration of the strategic asset plan is the sustainability of the building. This can include salutogenic design, green spaces, and ways to achieve thermal comfort outcomes that improve the health and well-being of tenants while reducing long-term energy costs.

3.1.9 Building management and maintenance

Maintenance is a key consideration for day-to-day asset management. This involves:

- Project planning to ensure that maintenance can be conducted safely and easily
- The use of quality, durable materials to minimises replacement maintenance
- Regular maintenance of communal areas and tenant apartments
- Proactive maintenance
- Clear procedures for lodging maintenance requests that are understood by tenants
- Repair of damage caused by tenants because of behavioural issues or negligence due to limited independent living skills



“Beyond planning for current requirements, the project needs to be adaptable to future changes in use.”

3.1.10 Tenancy and operational management

Pro-active management of tenancies is key to good outcomes for both tenants and service providers and provides a framework for mutual understanding and fair process. Tenants remaining engaged with support providers is generally key to sustained tenancy.

Effective tenancy management begins with the development of tenant rules, based on the appropriate legal framework under tenancy law, and tenant rights and responsibilities. The allowable rules can vary with building classification (e.g. rooming house versus residential building). There may be different reactions to rules for affordable housing tenants and formerly homeless tenants (Bullen et al. 2016).

When they sign their agreement, tenants should have a clear understanding of their tenancy obligations (and what constitutes a breach) (Productivity

Commission, 2020). This should include an understanding of behavioural expectations, accountability for visitors, paying rent and cleaning. Support agencies can be involved at sign-up to ensure the tenant understands the agreement.

Failure to meet key aspects of the tenancy agreement should be identified early and managed before the situation becomes critical or untenable. Use of tenancy law and VCAT services can be effective and make clear to tenants that there are consequences for breaches. Rental arrears should be identified immediately and managed strategically to avoid evictions (Bullen et al. 2016).

Issues such as 'squalor' and inappropriate behaviour can be a source of concern or irritation to other tenants and need to be managed constructively (Bullen et al. 2016). Conflict management may help to resolve issues affecting the building community.

Tenancy manager to tenant ratios need to be such that managers have sufficient capacity to establish trusting relationships with vulnerable tenants and to conduct regular but respectful check-ups.

Issues often arise around shared facilities and spaces, and it is therefore important to ensure that these are staffed or monitored appropriately, that there are clear guidelines around expected behaviours in these spaces, and that tensions between tenants are managed swiftly and effectively.

Tenancy rules should also consider the ability of tenants to keep pets. There is increasing recognition of the importance of pets to people with lived experience of homelessness (Stone et al. 2021).

Educate tenants about rights and responsibilities
Understand the lease agreement
Primary responsibilities (pay rent on time, maintain property, respect neighbours)
Behaviours that can jeopardise a tenancy (violent or threatening behaviour, property damage, illegal activities within the home, causing serious health, fire or safety hazards)
Practical issues related to living in the tenancy, including emergency procedures (calling 000, operating smoke detectors and fire extinguishers, how to evacuate the unit or building), operating lights and locks, cleaning
Repairs and maintenance
Schedules and processes for inspections
Lease violations and eviction processes
Front desk/ concierge responsibilities
Building security and visitor policies
Grievance policies and procedures

Develop tenant rules
Rules should have a clear purpose and intent that is understood by both staff and tenants
Rules should be enforceable and apply to all tenants and staff
Rules should be consistent with residential tenancy legislation and other relevant laws
Rules should be simply and easily understood – too many rules are difficult to remember and enforce
Tenants should participate in the development of house rules to ensure they are appropriate, and that tenants feel ownership of the rules
Rules should consider enabling tenants to keep their pets to foster their recovery
Non-negotiable rules should be made clear from the start
Potential tools to enforce rules include warnings, breach notices and VCAT

FIGURE 9: SERVICE PROVISION CHECKLIST

Providing required services
Providing case-coordination and case-management
Providing asset and tenancy management
PEOPLE HAVE THE RIGHT TO A HOME

- ☐ Services and supports are clear about and share the same philosophy for working with tenants (e.g. trauma informed practice, strengths-based approach, etc.)
- ☐ Concierge to ensure a friendly environment and provide safety, support, and monitoring
- ☐ Decide front desk staffing hours and after-hours support protocols
- ☐ Ensure service delivery is responsive to specific tenant needs (e.g., culturally-appropriate settings for Indigenous tenants)
- ☐ Develop a shared understanding between case workers, service providers and housing workers, to work towards sustaining tenancies
- ☐ Establish positive interagency relationships and devices (e.g. MOUs)
- ☐ Base tenant rules on appropriate legal frameworks
- ☐ Provide tenants with keys or swipe cards for their apartment and floor
- ☐ Support tenants to decorate and furnish their apartment
- ☐ Ensure privacy of apartments is respected
- ☐ Keep communal areas clean and respond proactively to damages

HOUSING AND SUPPORT ARE SEPARATED

- ☐ Agree on assessment processes, schedules for meetings and protocols for information sharing, as determined in consortia agreements, contracts or MOUs
- ☐ Case workers, service providers and housing workers have an agreed understanding of how support tasks are assigned
- ☐ Determine optimal service mix based on tenant needs
- ☐ Decide which services will be provided on-site, in-reach or externally
- ☐ Decide how in-reach and external services are provided and by whom
- ☐ Coordinate services central case management function in a collaborative manner
- ☐ Clearly identify lead agency lines of responsibility for each client
- ☐ Focus on adherence to tenancy agreements
- ☐ Inform support services of tenancy issues, if required

FLEXIBLE SUPPORT FOR AS LONG AS IT IS NEEDED

- ☐ Consider the level and range of support needs
- ☐ Plan for changes so that services can be flexibly scaled up or down
- ☐ Arrange services so that they can move with tenants should they re-locate
- ☐ Adopt appropriate assessment tools for the case worker to assess needs
- ☐ Ensure tenants have access to all required services through a case coordination model
- ☐ Provide required intensity of casework depending on the identified need of the tenant
- ☐ Implement a strategic asset plan
- ☐ Incorporate lifecycle planning in the asset management plan

CHOICE AND SELF-DETERMINATION

- ☐ Deliver services suited to individual needs
- ☐ Ensure services are easily accessible to tenants (remove barriers to access)
- ☐ Where possible, facilitate client co-design and participation
- ☐ Ensure case work model is responsive to any intersectional needs
- ☐ Support client driven goal setting based on a strength-based approach
- ☐ Set-up consent procedures for appropriate data sharing across services
- ☐ Explain to tenants their tenancy right and obligations at in-take
- ☐ Respect tenants' autonomy over their apartment
- ☐ Allow tenants to select their apartment, if possible
- ☐ Design communal areas for multiple purposes

FIGURE 9: SERVICE PROVISION CHECKLIST (continued)

Providing required services	Providing case-coordination and case-management	Providing asset and tenancy management
ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT WITHOUT COERCION		
☐ Provide assertive outreach ☐ Develop a deliberate approach to achieving outcomes	☐ Consider case-coordination, support brokerage, assertive engagement, counselling, coaching ☐ Establish an appropriate case manager to client ratio ☐ Engage in a persistent, respectful, and creative way	☐ Plan regular maintenance and address damages ☐ Pro-actively plan and communicate refurbishment and renovation through building lifecycle planning
SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY INCLUSION		
☐ Build a supportive, pro-social environment ☐ Provide support that enhances citizenship and social inclusion, including education and employment ☐ Set up a tenant advisory group and a peer-support network	☐ Aim to build a respectful, engaging, and supportive community environment ☐ Offer life skills training and support with social engagement	☐ Set up house rules collaboratively with tenants to outline expected behaviours ☐ Manage communal spaces so that they are welcoming and inclusive to all tenants ☐ Design shared spaces to be suitable for on-site support services
RECOVERY ORIENTED PRACTICE		
☐ Develop clear service guidelines and procedures to address the requirements of tenants with complex or intersecting needs ☐ Provide consistent and continuous support	☐ Support tenants to identify their goals and work towards them ☐ Ensure support is trauma-informed and strength-based	☐ Create a separate secure area for vulnerable tenants, if required ☐ Provide green spaces and apply salutogenic design principles ☐ Consider companion animals
HARM REDUCTION APPROACH		
☐ Identify and prioritise needs of tenants that pose the most significant risk of harm ☐ Provide access to extra supports for specific tenant cohorts ☐ Reduce negative impacts of substance use and high-risk behaviours	☐ Ensure qualified staff are available to address emerging and/or challenging issues and behaviours ☐ Provide information to make informed choices	☐ Pro-actively manage tenancies to identify early on and report on tenancy concerns, such as arrears, hoarding, or anti-social behaviour ☐ Ensure safety for all tenants and staff ☐ Clearly communicate and consistently apply consequences for tenancy breaches



CASE STUDY 5: CAMPERDOWN COMMON GROUND

What: 104 units

Where: Sydney, New South Wales

When: 2011

The Camperdown Common Ground has 104 units, with the first tenants moving in from 2011 onward. The project was planned in response to increasing numbers of people sleeping rough in Sydney and to promote a best practice model of providing housing integrated with support services. On-site services and established partnerships with local government agencies and service providers assist tenants to sustain their tenancies and build community relationships. The service model builds on a coordinated and integrated approach to ensure consistent tenancy management and case coordination and has been adjusted to enhance governance structures and tenancy support (Bullen et al. 2016).

3.2 BUILDING DESIGN AND PERFORMANCE

The Housing First approach acknowledges the strong connection between our physical environment and our overall health and wellbeing, and places particular emphasis on providing a built environment which supports tenants as they transition from homelessness to housing.

The design guidance provided in this section operates across three scales of intervention: place, community, and home. The four design principles presented in Figure 10 reflect what it means to design with 'homeliness' in mind, creating safe and welcoming spaces to support tenant wellbeing across a range of scales.

To achieve a built environment which facilitates meaningful outcomes for tenants, a nuanced balance between competing factors is required. Where on-site support is required for tenants, the balance between home and workplace must strive to empower both tenants and support staff. Similarly, when designing a 'home' for people with a history of rough sleeping or other forms of homelessness, home-like characteristics can often be neglected in favour of the substantial effort required to cater for basic physical needs.

These guidelines outline the need for a holistic approach to providing support services and residences, which places well-being at the forefront of design decisions, to amplify positive outcomes for tenants.

3.2.1 Preparing a design brief

Having a well-prepared design brief helps to ensure that the project will meet the needs of future tenants and

fulfill the project mission. The design brief should set the tone for the project and clearly communicate its objectives, values, and intended outcomes. These design guidelines should act as a prompt for creating detailed design briefs for all specialists required.

The service model design (see section 3.1) will influence the spatial requirements of a project. The needs of tenants and staff will dictate the schedule of areas delivered in the design brief. Ideally, service model design and tenant needs would be established prior to the design brief. However, these can be developed in tandem should the project timelines require this.

3.2.2 Finding and engaging design professionals

Selecting the right architect and broader design team is important to ensure a successful design process and resulting built project, and to support ongoing occupation and maintenance. Form a shortlist of architects based on the checklist adjacent, and either commission directly or invite shortlisted firms to respond to a Request for Proposal (RFP). The RFP should include a high-level brief, budget, time frames, selection criteria, project appreciation and methodology. The selection process should be fair and equitable, ideally following the Australian Standard AS4120 Code of Tendering. Either do not request any concept design work or else run a paid design competition in line with the AIA Guidelines for the Conduct of Architectural Competitions..

Preparing a design brief
Mission statement outlining project goals and key objectives and how they relate to the organisation's own strategic plan
Detailed site information
Detailed information about the client and user groups
Schedule of spatial requirements including number of rooms and support service spatial requirements
Completion date and key project milestone dates
Review dates
Budget
Scope - what the design team is expected to deliver
Not in scope - services that will be completed by another party

Selecting design professionals
Relevant experience in high needs housing, social housing and building typology (eg apartments)
Project team expertise in these areas
Engagement in research in these areas
Industry recognised awards in last five years (eg AIA awards)
Testimonials from previous clients
Site visit to completed projects

FIGURE 10: DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Designing for place

Designing for community

Designing for home

ACCESS SAFETY AND SECURITY

- The physical environment plays an important role in supporting a sense of physical safety and ontological security
- Ensuring physical safety is essential to help tenants to transition from homelessness to housing
- Controlling access to facilities can help tenants to escape negative influences and keep street culture out, but tenants must also feel free to come and go as they please
- Each apartment must be a safe, secure place for the tenant to retreat to

CONNECTION TO COMMUNITY AND IDENTITY

- Using activity and action to create a physical and social environment can encourage community through placemaking
- Within the community, ensuring tenants feel safe in shared areas is paramount, especially for groups with trauma history or other special requirements
- While maintaining and forming community connections is important, so too is the ability to return to a private space
- As one tenant of Ozanam house notes: 'Having my own room and en-suite makes me feel respected...'

DESIGN FOR WELLBEING

- Designing for wellbeing incorporates elements of salutogenic design, which actively promotes improved health and wellbeing by reducing stress and improving access to nature (Golembiewski 2010).
- Enrich the environment with complexity, order and aesthetic considerations as well as provide suitable spaces for visitors, special personal belongings and possibly even pets
- Allowing tenants control of their environment, (with details such as opening windows or operable shading), providing opportunity to participate in day-to-day activities (such as cooking, cleaning or sports), and providing choices in the use of private space can promote a positive sense of identity and instil pride

ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE AND LONGEVITY

- Building green spaces into the design to increase access to nature improves wellbeing, but green landscapes can also become a part of an environmental design strategy
- On-site power generation and water harvesting and re-use can help to reduce bills and improve efficiencies
- By embracing sustainable design strategies, ongoing operational costs can be reduced as well as providing superior comfort to tenants through appropriate glazing and insulation
- Paying attention to selecting durable materials which wear well and require minimal maintenance reduces the need for major repairs or renovations as well as improves comfort for tenants

3.2.3 Designing for place

ACCESS SAFETY AND SECURITY



Clearly defined entrances

Ensure safety and identity in the public realm by activating the ground plane with lobbies, common areas or commercial spaces

General public access through the site should be avoided. If this is not possible, access should be treated similarly to a street to promote safety and usability for all tenants

Ensure that the main entrance is safe and clearly identifiable, and any other entrances are visually permeable, to encourage potential users to enter the building

Ensure that the concierge is located prominently and close to the building entrance, to provide surveillance of the entrance and common spaces, to help control access, and to ensure safety

Consulting rooms, offices and staff rooms should be located on the ground floor and be accessible by the wider community if desired. These spaces should permit more permanent staff and services as well as offer flexibility to accommodate visiting or infrequent services

CONNECTION TO COMMUNITY AND IDENTITY



An activated, welcoming ground floor

Stitch the built form into the local neighbourhood through movement networks, open space, and tenure-blind apartment buildings. Improve and enhance pedestrian connections to and through the site, linking to public transport and community services

Speak the local language in terms of built form and materiality and respond to local conditions such as noise pollution from nearby streets

Create a sense of meaningfulness and identity through connection to community, both within and outside the building

Through early consultation with existing communities, NIMBYism can be prevented or reduced. It is also important for future tenants to feel welcome in the local community, which can be achieved by managing relationships with neighbours and the broader community

Common spaces on the ground floor, or communally accessible upper levels, should be geared towards improving life skills through active and social programmed activities. These might include commercial kitchens for cooking classes, garden beds for vegetable or flower growing, quiet study or library spaces, TV room for socialising, and an area to entertain guests.

DESIGN FOR WELLBEING



Respond to the local context

Ensure built forms respond to the surrounding context in terms of height and character, while also maximising sunlight and views to nature

Maximise urban greening through the introduction of trees, ground cover, vertical and roof top vegetation

Employ clear wayfinding measures to, into and around the site to improve legibility and the comprehensibility of the environment

Differentiate between more public and more private spaces through different materials or colour palettes

Where possible, establish unobstructed, long views to surrounding natural landscapes

ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE AND LONGEVITY



Shared greenspaces

Residential developments should aim to achieve a 6-star energy rating, which should be seen as a minimum standard for new-build multiple dwelling types

Work toward installing double glazing and/or high-performance glazing wherever possible, as well as fixtures, fittings, and appliances with low water or energy use

Maximise potential for energy generation on site with solar panels to most rooftops

The total life cycle cost of the building should be understood and considered when determining design responses, including the choice of materials and systems

Aim to select materials that have a low 'embodied energy' (energy consumed by manufacturing) and use local materials where possible, to minimise energy consumed by transport to site

Appropriate setbacks, orientations and forms should be designed to avoid the need for screening of habitable room windows facing neighbouring properties



Natural light

Visual connection to nature

Material palette in shared areas mimic materials found in more public places or outdoors to signal communal nature of space

Hard-wearing, durable materials

COMMUNAL KITCHEN

Ozanam House, MGS Architects

“There are a lot of exits in this building ... I have PTSD so I like to see these exits and it makes me feel that if something happened out there, there is five different ways I could get out.”

- Resident, Ozanam House

3.2.4 Designing for community

ACCESS SAFETY AND SECURITY



Passive surveillance

Create views into shared communal spaces to support passive surveillance and safe use of shared facilities, especially from the concierge desk or other regularly occupied office spaces

Provide generous lighting throughout the property, this includes artificial lighting for undercroft, covered and outdoor areas with select light fittings to minimise vandalism and tampering

Avoid hidden areas, paths with poor sight lines, poorly lit spaces, and blind corners

Using dedicated lifts for residential floors, with key card access only, will allow tenants and staff to control access and promote a sense of personal safety Common stairs and lifts should be located in a position visible from external public areas

Building design should ensure that tenant safety is paramount, including reducing the risk of self-harm by removing jump opportunities and ensuring fit outs pass ligature audits.

CONNECTION TO COMMUNITY AND IDENTITY



Thoughtful communal spaces

Where possible, interior communal spaces should be orientated to provide a space that is light-filled and pleasant during the day.

Where multiple user groups are accommodated within the one site, consider their different needs and requirements and the potential for multiple buildings across a site dedicated to different cohorts

Where possible, corridors should allow views out to greenspaces and maximise daylight. Where long corridors are unavoidable, include views to natural landscapes and break the monotony by using colour or texture contrasts in materials

Ensure a clear contrast between wall and floor to provide a sense of scale and depth

Larger programmed communal spaces should be located on the ground floor or a communally accessible upper floor, to facilitate passive surveillance

Communal spaces should be designed to allow for different furniture layouts and changing functions over time

DESIGN FOR WELLBEING



Light-filled spaces

Where possible, provide a variety of outdoor spaces to encourage relaxation and social interaction while also maximising opportunities for landscaped elements throughout the building. Introducing urban greening can help reduce stress for tenants and provide a comfortable working and living environment

Design for diversity, ensuring that all members of the community are welcome. Placing an aboriginal and LGBTIQA+ flag in a prominent place near the entrance can help encourage more people to access facilities and services

For on-site medical and staff facilities, spatial requirements include consultation and treatment spaces, staff offices, restrooms, and lockers

ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE AND LONGEVITY



Water sensitive design can become spaces for community

The need for air conditioning and heating systems should be minimised where possible via improved design solutions

Larger double-height spaces should be considered to improve the sense of space and amenity of the area for residents. As these spaces are often difficult to heat and cool, passive solar design, natural ventilation and the like should be carefully designed to avoid mechanical heating and cooling

Larger and double-height spaces improve amenity and sense of space for tenants. However, as they can be difficult to heat and cool, passive solar design and natural ventilation should be employed to avoid mechanical heating and cooling of these spaces. Maximise the thermal performance of buildings through higher-grade insulation, to lower living costs over time and to increase comfort and amenity for tenants



Multiple exits

Variety of outdoor spaces
and nooks for more private
or open social tendencies

COMMUNAL COURTYARD

Ozanam House, MGS Architects

“I like it because there’s absolutely no sound. I don’t know how they have done that, but no sound gets through. This is great ... it means I can sleep.”

– Resident, Ozanam House

3.2.5 Designing for home

ACCESS SAFETY AND SECURITY



Provide a buffer between public and private spaces

Aim to install high quality locks and provide front door access security systems

Where possible, avoid immediate entry into private living areas by providing porches, lobbies, and entry spaces

In the home and in communal areas, furniture should be designed with homeliness but also durability and safety in mind. Ensure that larger objects, such as tables, couches and beds, are weighted so that they cannot easily be thrown. Chairs and other movable objects should not have sharp elements, for example sleigh chair legs should be used instead of chairs with individual legs

CONNECTION TO COMMUNITY AND IDENTITY



Visual connection to surroundings

For permanent tenants, the inclusion of a space to receive family and friends, while ensuring other tenants feel safe in their home, is paramount to maintaining existing social relations

Providing a visual connection to the surrounding landscapes and neighbourhood will increase a sense of place and connectedness

As a guide, medium-to-long-term accommodation should include roughly 5m² of communal living space per tenant sharing that space, provided on the same level as their apartment, with additional large programmable communal space on the ground floor

DESIGN FOR WELLBEING



Private spaces

Include a private bathroom and kitchen in each apartment to allow tenants to continue with daily activities with independence, improving self-esteem

Window openings should be located and sized appropriately to maximise natural light and be operable to promote cross ventilation to habitable rooms and circulation areas. Where possible, these windows should provide outlook to landscaped vegetation

Ensure superior acoustic insulation between apartments and within the building. Adjacent to noisy streets or areas, ensure double glazing or other high-quality glass wherever possible

Where mechanical heating and cooling is required, ensure that each tenant has control over the temperature in their individual room/ apartment

Living and dining areas should be designed with a northern aspect and outlook, where practicable, for passive solar access

ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE AND LONGEVITY



Design with durable materials

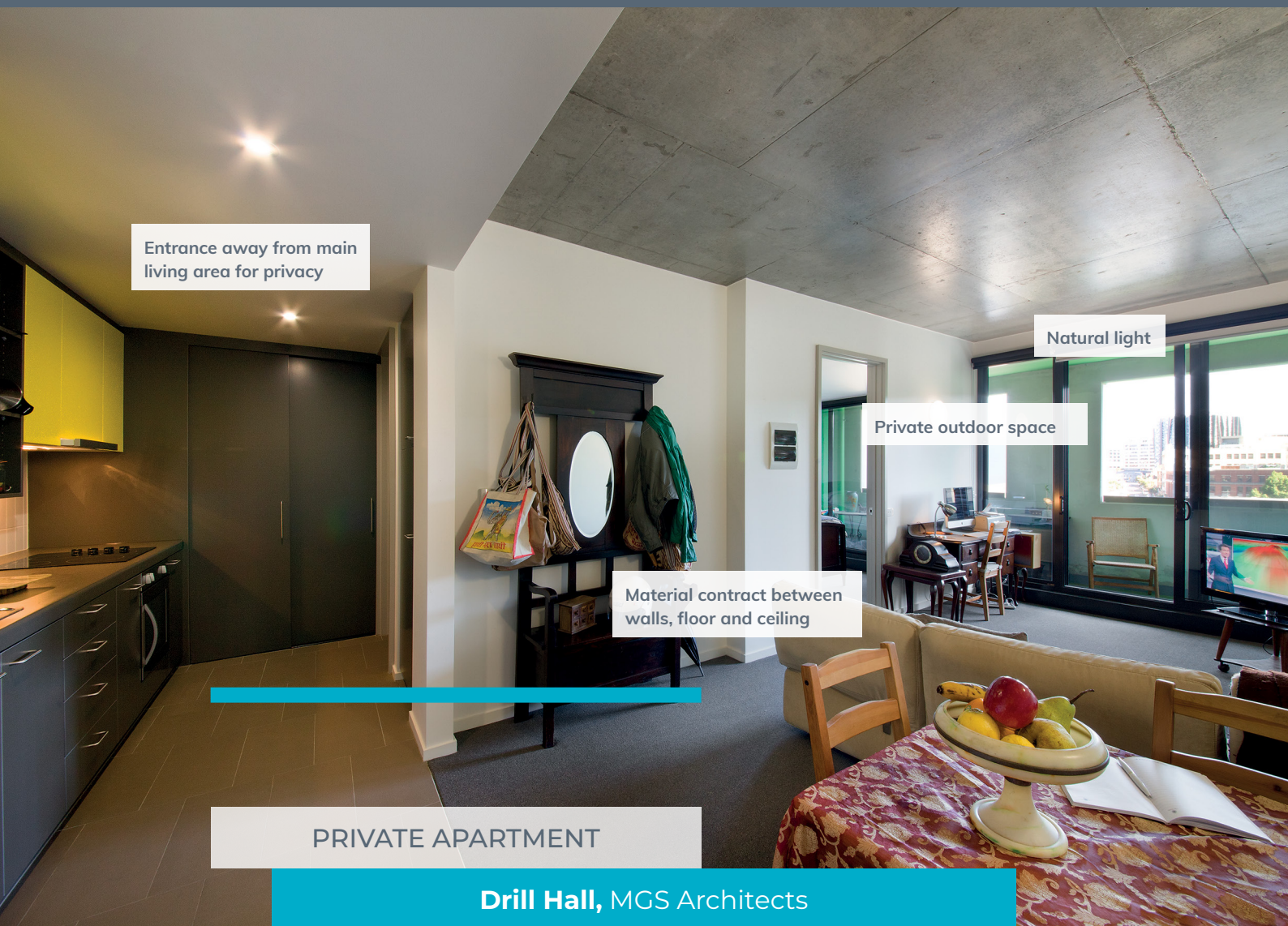
Enduring design and high-quality materials create a sense of pride for tenants and reduce maintenance costs over time. Wherever possible, furniture that is solid and durable should be selected, including stain-resistant and flame-resistant upholstery

Select standard models of appliances, fittings and fixtures from reputable brands that allow for ease of finding and affording replacement parts and servicing. Select stoves, ovens, washing machines, HWS and other electrical items on the basis of their energy efficiency and star rating, to ensure economical running costs

Select floor coverings with ease of cleaning in mind and avoid materials with many joints. Where possible, preference materials that are hard-wearing and easy to clean

Where paints are used, select long-wearing paints with easy to match colours

Smoke detectors should be thermal detectors within kitchen areas to prevent the fire brigade being called unnecessarily



"It's really important to have your own space, to have a sense of control over where you live but some people may not be as selfcontained (independent) ... and might like the communal areas."

– Consumer, Common Ground consumer consultation survey

FIGURE 11: BUILDING DESIGN CHECKLIST

Designing for place	Designing for community	Designing for home
ACCESS SAFETY AND SECURITY		
- Safe and convenient access for tenants - Secure entry and passive visual surveillance - Main entry is activated, safe and clearly identifiable - Street interface promotes security and discourages vandalism - Ample lighting after hours	- Ensure all spaces are adequately lit with tamper-proof fittings - Avoid hidden areas, paths with poor sight lines and blind corners - Aim to have common stairs and lifts visible from external public areas - Improve a sense of safety with dedicated lift access	- Provide high quality locks and front door security systems - Avoid immediate entry into private living areas - Include a private bathroom and kitchen within each apartment
CONNECTION TO COMMUNITY AND IDENTITY		
- Access to public transport, vehicle share programs cycling routes, groceries, post office, banking, and retail shopping - Property appears welcoming with a sense of identity - Material finishes are in keeping with the neighbourhood character - Scale of the building responds to the surrounding context	- Consider the size and type of community being created, accounting for multiple pathways for different user groups - Ensure passive surveillance of communal spaces by concierge, other staff and tenants	- Include spaces for visitors within the building - Provide a visual connection to the surroundings to increase a sense of place and connectedness
DESIGN FOR WELLBEING		
- High quality landscaping and vegetation on the street front - Clear wayfinding measures - Respond to the surrounding context, such as noise from surrounding streets - Universally accessible for tenants with a disability	- Provide a range of outdoor spaces - Ensure all groups are welcome through the display of indigenous and LGBTIQ+ flags at the entranceway	- Position windows and openings to maximise natural light and ventilation - Ensure superior acoustic insulation between apartments - Where mechanical ventilation is needed ensure the tenant has control
ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE AND LONGEVITY		
- Minimum 6-star Greenstar rating for all residential buildings must be achieved - Create opportunities for on-site power generation - Undertake a lifestyle analysis - Use materials with low embodied energy where possible	- Maximise the thermal performance of all buildings - Ensure common spaces have access to natural light with passive solar design and natural ventilation	- Use standard fixtures and fittings - Select energy efficient appliances - Use solid and durable furniture and finishes - Ensure passive design principles and high thermal performance to improve amenity and reduce living costs

CASE STUDY 6: OZANAM HOUSE

What: 134 units

Where: Melbourne, Victoria

When: 2019

Ozanam House in Melbourne functions as a homelessness resource centre and provides 134 purpose-built units for crisis, extended supported accommodation and long-term independent living. The building was re-developed in 2019 to increase and improve housing options for people experiencing homelessness. The design of the building aims to create a feeling of home for tenants, enhance their health and wellbeing, foster choice and control, facilitate social connections, integrate well with the neighbourhood and local community, and ensure people's physical and emotional safety.



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5 APPENDIX

Homelessness Australia Housing First Principles

Source: Dodd et al. 2020.

PEOPLE HAVE A RIGHT TO A HOME

- **Access** – Immediate access to a permanent, self-contained home which meets people's cultural and social needs.
- **Eligibility** – No treatment or behavioural eligibility pre-conditions.
- **Tenancy** – People enjoy full tenancy rights and standard rental conditions with security of tenure.
- **Suitability** – Location, affordability, access to services and quality of property meets the specific needs of the individual or family that are housed. Considerations include safety and community connections, and for people with physical disability - maximising their capacity to live independently.
- **Sustainability** – People are able to keep their homes if they have absences for family, cultural or other reasons (eg. hospital or prison stays) and are assisted to quickly find a new home if a tenancy fails.
- **Safety** – The housing provided must be safe and secure.

HOUSING AND SUPPORT ARE SEPARATED

- **Separation** – While they work closely together to maintain and support tenancies, the provision of housing and support must be functionally separate. This is to ensure housing and support are not contingent upon one another and unwavering advocacy is provided for the individual or family.
- **Tenancy** – There are no additional requirements to participate in support or treatment as part of the tenancy and people are able to maintain their home regardless of their engagement in support services.
- **Continuity** – The offer of support stays with the person if they choose to move home or if a tenancy fails. The support is available to people in their new living situations including a return to homelessness or to an institutional setting where support will actively assist people secure new homes.
- **Security** – People are supported to follow the terms of their tenancies in the same way as anyone else renting a home. Support services work to maintain tenancies while understanding the critical part a home plays in the wellbeing of both individuals and families.

FLEXIBLE SUPPORT FOR AS LONG AS IT IS NEEDED

- **Continuity** – Support does not have a fixed end date and people can return to or continue support for as long as needed.
- **Holistic** – Support is directed by the people receiving the support, and is available across a wide variety of domains being sensitive to people's family context, cultural identity and past trauma.
- **Intensity** – Support intensity can rise and fall with individual or family need so services can respond positively when people need more or less support on a day to day basis.
- **Accessibility** – People are able to quickly re-engage with support without needing to undergo a new assessment or intake process.
- **Relationship** – Support is built from an authentic relationship and it is practical, flexible and creative – responding to each unique set of circumstances as required.

CHOICE AND SELF-DETERMINATION

- **Home** – People define for themselves what makes a place a home which may include connection to particular land. People are given a choice of where they live and the type of housing in which they want to live.
- **Support** – People are able to make real choices about how they live their lives and these choices determine the support they receive including how, where, when and by whom it is provided.
- **Household** – People are able to choose with whom they live, who they invite into their own home and whether visitors are able to stay.
- **Person-centred** – Support acknowledges that the best way to understand and respond to people's needs, is to listen to their views and questions, so that any planning is directly responsive to their particular concerns and dreams. This approach respects each individual and that person's strengths rather than focusing negatively on each person's limitations.

ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT WITHOUT COERCION

- **Responsibility** – The onus is on workers to maintain the relationship and employ creative and imaginative approaches to ensure their work is engaging rather than blaming people for "disengaging".
- **Persistence** – While individuals and families can refuse support, staff persist without intruding and use their relationship to make ongoing and regular offers in ways that show care and respect for people.
- **Compassion** – A deep understanding of people, means that support is designed to fit the individual rather than the individual being required to fit the service.
- **Availability** – Caseloads are small and support is available outside normal working hours. This allows workers to be persistent and proactive in their approach, doing "whatever it takes" and not giving up and closing when engagement is low.
- **Trust** – Because of people's past experiences of trauma, extended homelessness and exclusion, it is critical that services build trust and have a strong commitment to "doing what they say", so they are experienced as trauma and gender informed, reliable and transparent.

SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY INCLUSION

- **Belonging** – Social and community inclusion is an integral part of support as it rebuilds a sense of self and connection to others, which in turn is a protective factor for people's tenancy, health and well-being.
- **Relationships** – People are supported to build friendships and relationships within their community, and where possible to reconnect with family, culture and those who are important to them.
- **Participation** – People are supported to participate in a wide range of pursuits including education, employment and volunteering opportunities as well as cultural, artistic and recreational activities.
- **Community** – Homes exist as part of a community. Support not only helps people connect to that community, but also uses strategies to build acceptance amongst neighbours of people with different experiences, lifestyles, and appearances.

RECOVERY ORIENTATED PRACTICE

- **Recovery** – Understanding that recovery is not about an expectation that people be symptom free. Rather recovery focuses on people being able to recover a sense of themselves and their place in their community.
- **Hope** – Support offers hope and actively encourages people to dream and imagine a future for themselves, a future focusing on gaining a sense of purpose with the prospect of enjoying a good and secure life.
- **Dignity of risk** – A process of trial and error involving small steps forward and backward celebrating successful experiences but also learning from experiences of pain and frustration without a sense of shame.
- **Strengths** – Celebrating and working with people's capacity and abilities that are quite separate from any diagnosis they may have.
- **Appropriate** – To developmental stage, cultural and gender identities.

HARM REDUCTION APPROACH

- **Safety** – Support uses a wide range of proactive strategies to assist people to reduce the negative impact of substance use, gambling, self-harm and potentially high-risk behaviours.
- **Education** – Factual information is provided in a non-judgmental style to enable people to make informed choices about their health, tenancy and relationships with others.
- **Change** – Support is guided by individual choice and for those who choose it, connections are made to specialist services that are accessible and culturally appropriate. Support is also mindful that recovery is not a linear journey and does not necessarily require abstinence.
- **Inclusion** – Housing and/or support are not withdrawn from people who choose to continue to drink, use, self-harm, gamble or participate in high-risk activities.

