

Program

Tuesday 1 April 2025

Time	Session information			
8:30am	Registration			
9:00am	Welcome to Country			
9:15am	Opening address Invited speaker: The Hon Harriet Shing , Victorian Minister for Housing			
9:45am	Plenary 1 First Nations Housing and the Treaty Process In November 2024, the Victorian Government and the First Peoples' Assembly began negotiating Australia's first Treaty. Learn about the role of the Assembly and the Treaty process, and hear First Nations' perspectives on how we can work together to change the housing system to better meet the needs of Aboriginal Victorians. Darren Smith , CEO, Aboriginal Housing Victoria Djaran Murray-Jackson , Dja Dja Wurrung Reserved Seat holder in the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria			
10:45am	Morning tea			
11:15am	Concurrent 1 SPVs demystified: everything you need to know Discover the drivers and implications of Special Purpose Vehicles (SPVs) for your business, and what it means for the community housing sector more broadly. Hear from the authors of recent analysis on this topic as well as sector leaders on the pros and cons of establishing and managing SPVs. Speakers: Rob Tyson , Director, Polis Partners David Fisher , CEO, Housing Choices Australia Lee Monik , Chief Governance Officer, Community Housing Ltd	Concurrent 2 Community housing - an accidental career? Who comes to work in our sector and why? How can we attract, keep and develop the community housing workforce? Dive into insights from the 2024 workforce survey on motivation and career aspirations, hear about actual career pathways of community housing workers and take part in a workshop designed to explore participants' career paths and build an understanding of the dynamics of the sector workforce. Speakers: Robin Zakharov , Director, Workforce, CHIA Vic Lisa May , State Operations Manager, Community Housing Ltd Facilitator: Jennie Bentley , Manager HR/OD, Aboriginal Housing Victoria	Concurrent 3 The future of tenancy dispute resolution Starting mid-2025, Rental Dispute Resolution Victoria (RDRV) will streamline tenancy dispute resolutions by creating new pathways for managing rent, damages, repairs, and bonds, diverting cases away from VCAT. This session explores RDRV's role in the broader context of social housing disputes. This includes how housing managers can help avoid disputes, what is changing in the formal dispute management process, and potential community housing practice improvements. Speakers: Deputy President Lindsay Warren , Head of Residential Tenancies Division, VCAT Jennifer Beveridge , CEO, Tenants Victoria	Concurrent 4 Aboriginal cultural walk Join the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation on a guided walking tour through the inner city. The tour will highlight the significant history of the Wurundjeri people and the cultural connection between people and place. Please note: This walk will proceed regardless of the weather so come prepared! Book your spot during registration. Numbers are limited; waitlists available.

12:30pm	Lunch		
1:30pm	Plenary 2	Building the future of community housing	
	<p>Gain a better understanding of Homes Victoria's vision for the community housing sector at this facilitated discussion with Simon Newport, the CEO of Homes Victoria. The conversation will touch on community housing's role in the social housing system, how to grow the community housing sector into the future and much more.</p> <p>Simon Newport, CEO, Homes Victoria</p>		
2:00pm	Plenary 3	Launch of House Keys Victoria	
	<p>Join us for the launch of House Keys Victoria and see how this innovative industry benchmarking tool can help improve tenancy services and financial performance for community housing organisations.</p>		
2:15pm	Concurrent 5	Concurrent 6	Concurrent 7
	<p>Future directions in social housing regulation</p> <p>Now that the Victorian government has responded to the final report of the Social Housing Regulation Review, what will this mean for the sector? What are the next steps? Be part of the conversation around how we can move towards a national regulatory system and discover insights from the first year of real-time regulation in this not-to-be missed conference session.</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <p>Justin Peysack, Housing Registrar</p> <p>Dr David Hayward, Emeritus Professor of Public Policy and the Social Economy at RMIT University; and Chair, Victorian Government's Social Housing Regulation Review</p>	<p>Harnessing AI for community housing: opportunities and risks</p> <p>Get ready to dive into the tech revolution! Explore where the AI landscape is up to for not-for-profit organisations and how you can use AI to support your business.</p> <p>From unpacking key terms to exploring the range of apps available, this session will help you to understand how AI could be used in your organisation, and identify and manage the risks involved in using AI tools.</p> <p>Speaker:</p> <p>Kate vanderVoort, Social Mediology</p>	<p>Innovative construction for social housing</p> <p>Prepare to be inspired in this session as we explore how modern methods of construction are being used to deliver social housing in Australia. From off-site manufacturing to standardised designs, processes and 3D printing, you will leave thinking differently about how you can design and build your next community housing project.</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <p>Duncan Maxwell, Building 4.0 CRC and Monash University</p> <p>Brad Draper, Aboriginal Sustainable Homes</p> <p>Additional speaker TBC</p> <p>Facilitator: Dr Corrie Williams, Master Builders Victoria</p>
3:45pm	Afternoon tea		
4:15pm	Plenary 5	Funding resilient and fragile social housing systems: reflections from Ireland and Denmark	
	<p>Wrap up the first day with an engaging presentation live from Ireland by Professor Michelle Norris, an international expert in social housing. Using case studies from Ireland and Denmark, she will explore how financing structures impact social housing growth, offering insights applicable to Victoria and Australia.</p> <p>Professor Norris will close the session with an interactive live Q&A, where you can ask your questions directly and engage in a lively discussion.</p> <p>Professor Michelle Norris, University College Dublin</p>		
5:00pm – 6:00pm	Networking drinks		

Wednesday 2 April 2025

Time	Session information			
8:30am	Registration			
9:00am	Welcome			
9:00am	Opening address The Hon Clare O’Neil , Federal Minister for Housing			
9:30am	Plenary 6 Funding the future Join a panel of experts as we explore the potential for different funding and procurement models to grow the community housing sector. Hear about the UK approach to a program-based funding model and get insights into the perspectives of key funding bodies Homes Victoria and Housing Australia. Scott Langford , CEO, Housing Australia Simon Newport , CEO, Homes Victoria Additional speaker TBC			
10:30am	Morning tea			
11:00am	<table><tbody><tr><td>Concurrent 8 Collaborative partnerships: workshopping a key worker housing model Join us for an interactive workshop on creating a key worker housing model through partnerships between local councils, employers, and community housing organisations. Kick off with dynamic presentations from council, employer, and CHO perspectives, then dive into collaborative group discussions to brainstorm and refine the key elements of a key worker housing model. Be part of shaping the future of key worker housing in Victoria! Speakers: Jim Spillane, Principal Policy Officer – Affordable Housing, City of Melbourne Bess Nolan-Cook, CEO, Tourism Northeast Charlie Souma, Group GM Affordable Housing Services, Evolve Housing</td><td>Concurrent 9 Housing the continuum: co ops, co-contributions and collaborations Solutions to Australia's housing crisis are needed across the housing spectrum. This session covers three innovative solutions from home ownership to solving homelessness. Come and learn how new program models, alternative funding sources, innovative design and partnerships can help improve the supply of safe, stable and affordable housing. Speakers: Liz Thomas, CEO, Common Equity Housing Limited Fiona Herman, Chair, Common Equity Housing Limited Nicola Foxworthy, Imagine Housing Meron Tierney, Beyond Housing Facilitator: Tanya Davidge, Open House Melbourne</td><td>Concurrent 10 Safe at Home: reducing homelessness for family violence victim-survivors With affordable housing becoming increasingly hard to find, responses to family violence that require the victim-survivor(s) to relocate can ultimately lead to them becoming homeless. Gain critical insights into the benefits of taking a ‘safe at home’ approach when supporting victim-survivors of family violence and how you can make a difference to the experience of your renters with presentations from family violence practitioners as well as a survivor advocate. Speakers: Liz Ratcliffe, Safe and Equal Rachel Zbukvic, Safe and Equal Safe and Equal Survivor Advocate</td></tr></tbody></table>	Concurrent 8 Collaborative partnerships: workshopping a key worker housing model Join us for an interactive workshop on creating a key worker housing model through partnerships between local councils, employers, and community housing organisations. Kick off with dynamic presentations from council, employer, and CHO perspectives, then dive into collaborative group discussions to brainstorm and refine the key elements of a key worker housing model. Be part of shaping the future of key worker housing in Victoria! Speakers: Jim Spillane , Principal Policy Officer – Affordable Housing, City of Melbourne Bess Nolan-Cook , CEO, Tourism Northeast Charlie Souma , Group GM Affordable Housing Services, Evolve Housing	Concurrent 9 Housing the continuum: co ops, co-contributions and collaborations Solutions to Australia's housing crisis are needed across the housing spectrum. This session covers three innovative solutions from home ownership to solving homelessness. Come and learn how new program models, alternative funding sources, innovative design and partnerships can help improve the supply of safe, stable and affordable housing. Speakers: Liz Thomas , CEO, Common Equity Housing Limited Fiona Herman , Chair, Common Equity Housing Limited Nicola Foxworthy , Imagine Housing Meron Tierney , Beyond Housing Facilitator: Tanya Davidge , Open House Melbourne	Concurrent 10 Safe at Home: reducing homelessness for family violence victim-survivors With affordable housing becoming increasingly hard to find, responses to family violence that require the victim-survivor(s) to relocate can ultimately lead to them becoming homeless. Gain critical insights into the benefits of taking a ‘safe at home’ approach when supporting victim-survivors of family violence and how you can make a difference to the experience of your renters with presentations from family violence practitioners as well as a survivor advocate. Speakers: Liz Ratcliffe , Safe and Equal Rachel Zbukvic , Safe and Equal Safe and Equal Survivor Advocate
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12:30pm	Lunch			

1:30pm

Concurrent 11

Empowering futures through training and employment pathways for renters

Discover how community housing can be a launchpad for training and employment opportunities! Get inspired as we explore three innovative models creating new pathways for renters. Hear about programs breaking down barriers for women and girls, and two unique employment initiatives for social housing residents. Leave with fresh insights on how your organisation can shape the future of employment in the not-for-profit sector.

Speakers:

Cara McDougall, CHIA NSW

Radhika Ittiel, Uniting VicTas

Mikaela Straface, WomenCan Australia

Concurrent 12

Can the Plan for Victoria deliver the affordable housing we need?

Housing affordability and choice are at the heart of Victoria's new planning strategy. Don't miss this exciting session where we'll unpack what this new plan means for the future of social and affordable housing.

Join a dynamic panel of experts from government, industry, and academia as they discuss the new Plan and how we can ensure that it creates a Victoria where everyone enjoys the dignity of a secure, affordable home.

Speakers:

Natalie Reiter, Deputy Secretary, Strategy and Precincts, Department of Transport and Planning

Patrick Fensham, President of Planning Institute of Australia Vic and Principal at SGS Planning and Economics

Stephen Glackin, Senior research fellow, Centre for Urban Transitions, Swinburne University

Oscar McLennan, CEO, Ys Housing

Concurrent 13

Embracing partnerships to deliver better housing support

Community housing and support organisations must join forces to provide high quality services to renters with diverse and complex needs. But how can they collaborate effectively while staying true to their roles?

Join us to explore the biggest challenges in this space, from funding and eligibility to the availability of support workers. Discover which issues have the most significant impact and learn about innovative models that can inspire new approaches to renter support.

Speakers:

Mark Heeney, Executive Director Housing Strategy, Mind Australia

Additional speakers TBC

2:45pm

Afternoon tea

3:00pm

Concurrent 14

How to deliver climate friendly property upgrades that work for renters

Discover innovative ways to retrofit existing properties to better withstand climate change while delivering what renters want most for their homes. This engaging session brings together a panel of experts to share insights on the impacts of various home upgrades, renter preferences, and how to maximise renter benefits when applying sustainable design principles to your projects.

Concurrent 15

Resilience strategies for housing workers

Learn how to manage the emotional impact of working with tenants who face mental health challenges. We'll focus on recognizing signs of compassion fatigue, implementing self-care practices, and seeking support to maintain well-being and effectiveness in your role.

This session will provide practical support and education to help housing workers manage these challenges effectively.

Concurrent 16

The community engagement journey: from concept to creating community

Discover ways that community housing organisations can engage with communities at every stage of a new housing development—from inception to ongoing engagement once renters have moved in. Through compelling case studies, our presenters will showcase how they've successfully fostered a sense of community by collaborating with renters, neighbouring residents, and the broader community.

Join us to learn how to create vibrant, connected communities!

Speakers:

Josh Danahay, Climateworks
Centre

Jacob Wallace, Homes Victoria

Trivess Moore, RMIT University

Speaker:

Ian Goodhardt, Goodhardt
consulting

Speakers:

Alicia Hooper, Strategic Initiatives
Coordinator, Surf Coast Council

Housing Choices development
team

Mubeen Hamza, Community Place
Manager, Haven Home Safe

4:00pm

Plenary

Closing keynote TBC

4:30pm

Conference close
