

**Service Level Agreement (SLA)**

**Homes Tasmania and the Department for Education,  
Children and Young People (DECYP)**

**Effective Date: upon signature of the CEO for Homes Tasmania and the Secretary  
for DECYP**

**Document Owner:**

Homes Tasmania and DECYP

# Contents

<b>Background</b>	<b>4</b>
<i>Agreement Overview</i>	4
<i>Purpose</i>	4
<b>1. Organisational and legislative framework</b>	<b>5</b>
1.1. <i>Delegates</i>	5
1.2. <i>Ministerial Statement of Expectations for Homes Tasmania – Accommodation for Children and Young People 5</i>	5
1.3. <i>Legislative framework</i>	6
1.4. <i>Related documents</i>	6
1.5. <i>Related projects</i>	7
<b>2. Service level agreement</b>	<b>8</b>
2.1. <i>Agreement scope</i>	8
2.2. <i>SLA guiding principles</i>	8
<i>Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy and Framework</i>	8
2.3. <i>Roles of parties to the agreement</i>	10
2.4. <i>Outcomes</i>	12
<b>3. Current programs and services</b>	<b>12</b>
3.1.1. <i>Housing Connect</i>	15
3.1.2. <i>Crisis accommodation</i>	15
3.1.3. <i>Youth at risk centres</i>	15
3.1.4. <i>Youth2Independence</i>	16
3.1.5. <i>Social Housing</i>	16
3.2.1. <i>Ashley Youth Detention Centre (AYDC)</i>	17
3.2.2. <i>Salaried and Therapeutic Residential Care</i>	17
3.2.3. <i>Many Colours 1 Direction (MC1D)</i>	17
3.2.4. <i>Family based care - Foster/Kinship Care</i>	17
3.2.5. <i>Under 16s Lighthouse</i>	18
3.3. <i>Agreement to achieve outcomes for young people</i>	18
3.4. <i>Prioritising housing for children and young people</i>	18
3.5. <i>Support, safety and wellbeing</i>	19

3.6.	<i>Exit planning</i>	21
3.7.	<i>Provision of Homes Tasmania assets</i>	22
<b>4.</b>	<b>Agreed priorities</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>5.</b>	<b>Governance and working together</b>	<b>24</b>

## **Background**

Homes Tasmania provides housing products and funds services for Tasmanians in housing need. Services and products are tailored for people in different life stages with varying needs. The safety and wellbeing of unaccompanied young people aged 12 to 17 years old including those on a Care and Protection or other Statutory Order are a priority cohort for Homes Tasmania.

Homes Tasmania works closely with Department for Education, Children and Young People (DECYP) to maximise opportunities for unaccompanied children and young people to be safely housed, particularly those on a Care and Protection or other Statutory Order.

## **Agreement Overview**

The Agreement represents a Service Level Agreement ('SLA' or 'Agreement') between Homes Tasmania and DECYP.

The Agreement does not supersede current processes and procedures unless explicitly stated herein.

The Agreement remains valid until superseded by a revised agreement mutually endorsed by the stakeholders.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of the SLA is to outline the housing and support available for unaccompanied young people in Tasmania aged 12 to 17 years old who are on a Care and Protection or other Statutory Order, and the roles and responsibilities of Homes Tasmania and DECYP in providing that support.

## **Objectives**

The objectives of the SLA are to:

- improve the housing outcomes of young people being supported by DECYP
  - strengthen the collaboration between Homes Tasmania and DECYP services
  - provide an overview of the accommodation and support available for unaccompanied young people aged 12 to 17 years in Tasmania
  - agree children and young people on a Care and Protection or other Statutory Order are a priority for both Homes Tasmania and DECYP including those exiting Statutory Orders
  - outline timeframes (where possible) for the provision of support and accommodation for unaccompanied young people aged 12 to 17 years old in Tasmania

- outline the mechanism(s) for dealing with issues and risks.

## **1. Organisational and legislative framework**

### **1.1. Delegates**

Homes Tasmania – Eleri Morgan-Thomas, CEO

Department for Education, Children and Young People – Tim Bullard, Secretary

### **1.2. Ministerial Statement of Expectations for Homes Tasmania – Accommodation for Children and Young People**

Homes Tasmania must provide supported accommodation for young people at risk of homelessness and needs to align its programs and projects with the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy.

The Secretary of the Department for Education, Children and Youth (the Department) may specifically request support for young people at risk or young people transitioning from Out-of-Home Care or youth detention. In these circumstances, Homes Tasmania will prioritise the request from the Secretary and work collaboratively with the DECYP to provide appropriate accommodation, manage tenancies and support transitions for young people consistent with their needs and the Department's obligations under the *Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1997* and the *Youth Justice Act 1997*.

Homes Tasmania will also work with the Department to provide accommodation solutions and timely support and through-care models for youth accommodation facilities and services that reflect the intent of the Government's Strong Families Safe Kids and Youth Justice Reforms. In line with the Overarching Expectations to provide for the needs of individual cohorts, Homes Tasmania must not reject any reasonable request when made in a timely manner.

If a request is rejected, the Chief Executive Officer must advise the Minister for Housing including the reason it was rejected. The Minister for Housing retains the power to direct the Chief Executive Officer to implement the request.

### **1.3. Legislative framework**

The SLA is guided by the following legislation and acknowledges the statutory requirements of both Parties:

- *Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997*
- *Homes Tasmania Act 2022*
- *Community Housing Providers National Law (Tasmania) Act 2013*
- *Residential Tenancy Act 1997*
- *Youth Justice Act 1997*
- *Family Violence Act 2004.*

### **1.4. Related documents**

The SLA has been developed with consideration of, or reference to, the following related documents:

- Children Wellbeing Governance Framework
- Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy
- Under 16s Homelessness Policy Framework and Practice Guidelines
- The Tasmanian Housing Strategy and Action Plan

The SLA upholds the vision of the Under 16 Homelessness Policy Framework for Tasmania:

*We seek a community where it is rare for an unaccompanied child under the age of 16 to experience homelessness, and where they do, the right supports are available at the right time to foster wellbeing and ensure the period of homelessness is brief, safe and nonrecurring.*

The SLA adopts the recommendations of Under 16 Homelessness Taskforce and their report for Homes Tasmania to:

- establish clear processes and strong accountabilities to ensure actions or decisions are in the best interest of the child
- provide a range of effective supports including medium to longer term accommodation to keep children safe and well
- ensure our partners are compliant with the relevant legislation and requirements such as Working with Vulnerable People.

## 1.5. Related projects

- Youth Justice Reform
- Tasmanian Housing Strategy and Action Plans
- Youth2Independence (Y2I) model learnings
- Housing Connect Reform
- Sure Start project
- Under 16s Lighthouse Project
- Youth at Risk Working Group.

### 1.5.1. Level of need for accommodation

Each day the number of young people on Care and Protection Orders with complex needs requiring accommodation fluctuates, the average number is around 70-80 children each day (as at November 2023). The option for accommodating this cohort of young people within the Child Safety system is through Salaried Care. Those in the Youth Justice system with high and very high level of needs and requiring accommodation may have other options including supported accommodation, youth shelters and Ashley Youth Detention Centre (AYDC) as a detention facility.

### Out of Home Care

Table 1 provides the number and proportion of children in care in 2021-22. All children and young people residing in Salaried Care (Referred to as residential care in Table 1) are classified as having high to very-high needs.

**Table 1 – Children in Care (daily average) by placement type 2021-22**

Placement type	Number	%
Foster care	542	52
Kinship care	442	42
Residential care	59.2	6
Other placement types*	6.3	<1

Source: [Monitoring Report No. 2 \(second Ed.\) Out-of-Home Care Monitoring Program 2023](#)

## **Youth Justice**

In 2020-21 the daily average number of young people in custody in AYDC was eight ((ROGS), 2022). It should be noted there have been increases in AYDC above the daily average with the number in custody increasing up to 19 in 2023. Most of these young people would be assessed as high or very high need. However, a significant number of these young people would not be in custody if they had a safe and acceptable accommodation option.

The number of young people involved with Youth Justice who are homeless or risk of homelessness is not recorded in current data collections. It is important to acknowledge that it is not only homeless young people who need access to accommodation and supported accommodation. For many young people their current living situations can be unstable, unaffordable, or unsupportive.

## **2. Service level agreement**

### **2.1. Agreement scope**

This Agreement applies to the provision of housing, accommodation, and associated support for unaccompanied young people between the aged 12 to 17 years who are on a Care and Protection or other Statutory Order.

### **2.2. SLA guiding principles**

#### **Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy and Framework**

The SLA will align with the [Tasmanian Child and Youth Wellbeing Framework](#) and support achievement of the [Tasmanian Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy](#) “It takes a Tasmanian Village”.

The Child and Youth Wellbeing Framework and Strategy outline the key ingredients of children and young person’s wellbeing along with policies, programs and initiatives to achieve them. The aim of these strategic approaches is for all children or young people to:

1. feel loved and safe
2. have access to material basics
3. have their physical, mental and emotional health needs met
4. be learning
5. be participating
6. have a positive sense of culture and identity.

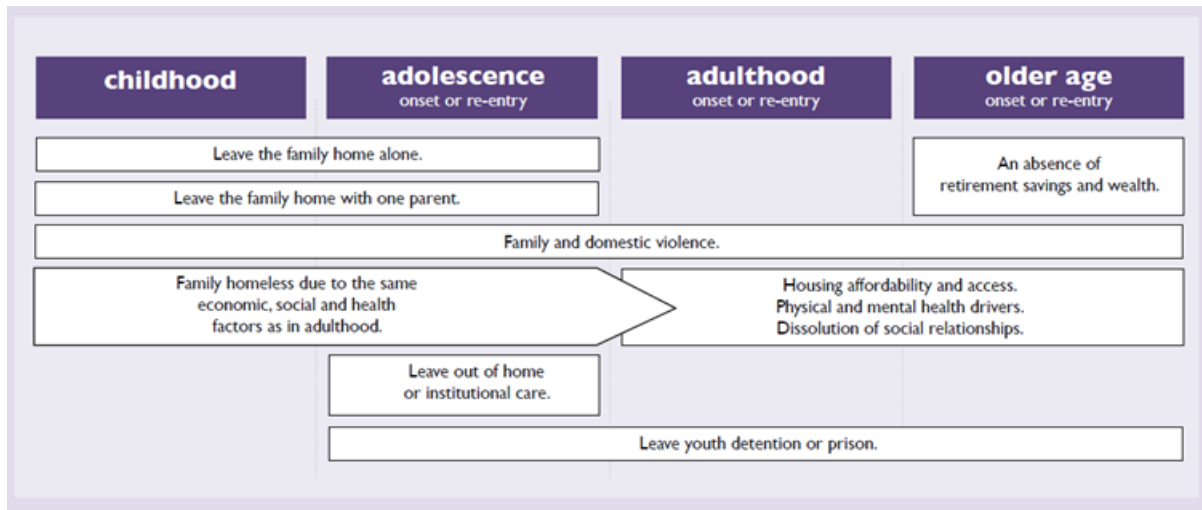


This is based on six 'domains' inspired by the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth's 'The Nest'. The 'domains' were informed by direct consultation with young people and key stakeholders.

## The Tasmanian Housing Strategy

The SLA will also align with policy initiatives and commitments under the [Tasmanian Housing Strategy](#). The Tasmanian Government, through Homes Tasmania, developed the Tasmanian Housing Strategy (the Strategy), a 20-year whole-of-system strategy with a vision of ending homelessness by 2043. The Strategy sets an aspirational vision to end homelessness in Tasmania by providing safe, appropriate, and affordable housing for all Tasmanians, including children and young people. During 2020 and 2021, there were 1,467 children and young people aged between 15 and 24 who presented alone to specialist homelessness services largely due to family violence<sup>1</sup>. Family violence continues to be a primary driver of homelessness through all life stages.

Figure 1: Causes of homelessness over the life course<sup>2</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Department for Education, Children and Young People (2022). Under 16 Homelessness: A Policy Framework for Tasmania

<sup>2</sup> Source: Tasmanian Housing Strategy, Based on a diagram from 'Homelessness in Western Australia: A review of the research and statistical evidence' by the Centre for Social Impact at the University of Western Australia, on behalf of the Department of Communities, Western Australia, 2018.

The Strategy is underpinned by four key priorities with a mission to deliver a well-functioning housing system that provides safe, appropriate, and affordable housing for all Tasmanians, throughout their life:

1. Deliver more quality homes, faster
2. Support people in need
3. Improve private market affordability and stability
4. Enable local prosperity

Priority Two specifically places people at the centre of housing policy to ensure Tasmanians have access to housing regardless of their circumstances. A person-centred approach means the Tasmanian Government will continue to engage with the Tasmanian community to ensure our responses are fit for purpose as their housing needs change.

Action 2.2 of the Strategy's first Action Plan (2023-2027) commits to improving Continuing to improve access to, and the availability and quality of, housing and homelessness services for Tasmanians seeking housing support. This SLA aims to deliver on this action for children and young people who are exiting institutional care.

\*\* Department for Education, Children and Young People (2022). Under 16 Homelessness: A Policy Framework for Tasmania

## **2.3. Roles of parties to the agreement**

### **2.3.1. The role of Homes Tasmania**

Homes Tasmania, as the designated Tasmanian agency responsible for housing services, will play a key role in the provision of housing and homelessness services for unaccompanied young people aged 12 to 17 years old, including those on a Care and Protection or other Statutory Order and those exiting a Statutory Order.

A Ministerial Statement of Expectations (MSoE) tabled in the House of Assembly on 1 March 2023, outlines the required goals and principles to the Homes Tasmania Board and the housing authority. Under the MSoE, Homes Tasmania must provide accommodation for young people at risk of homelessness and needs to align its programs and projects with the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy.

Homes Tasmania is committed to providing safe and appropriate accommodation for children and young people. Whilst Homes Tasmania may prioritise housing for individuals or families, all requests are subject to the availability of suitable accommodation. Suitability includes, location, size, proximity to services or neighbours and property design.

Homes Tasmania will:

- work with DECYP to maximise the availability of suitable accommodation options for young people
- ensure that accommodation options consider the needs and circumstances of individual young people
  - collaborate with DECYP to explore alternative housing options and leverage community partnerships to maximise accommodation opportunities for young people
- regularly review and adapt its strategies and procedures to address emerging challenges and ensure the provision of accommodation is sustainable and can adapt to the changing needs of young Tasmanians
- provide support to DECYP to develop and implement housing programs for young people.

Homes Tasmania acknowledges the importance of ongoing communication and collaboration with stakeholders, including young people and their families, service providers, and advocacy groups.

### **2.3.2. The role of the Department for Education, Children and Young People**

As the Tasmanian Government agency that helps to keep children and young people safe particularly where they are on a Care and Protection or other Statutory Order or exiting a Statutory Order. DECYP can provide support to young people to access and maintain housing services provided by Homes Tasmania.

Care and support services for children and young people are delivered by DECYP through a range of programs and services including:

- Strong Families Safe Kids Advice and Referral Line (ARL)
- Child Safety Service (CSS)
- Ashley Youth Detention Centre (AYDC)
- Intensive Family Engagement Service (IFES)
- Out of Home Care (OoHC)
- Adoption and Permanency Services, including After Care Support.

DECYP will assess the safety and wellbeing of young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, and respond accordingly, including providing support and/or making referrals to other services.

Care and support for young people is provided through a range of services and programs. in DECYP often occurs through CSS who work together with the child or young person, and their family, to find ways to solve problems affecting the safety and wellbeing of a child or young person. Access to stable housing can play a vital role in a child's well-being.

DECYP will provide Homes Tasmania with guidance and support for the development and implementation of policies and procedures relating to housing for young people.

## **2.4. Outcomes**

The Tasmanian Housing Strategy (2023-2043) outlines four outcomes, that is, that Tasmanians:

1. live in quality, sustainable and durable homes that meet their needs
2. have access to housing regardless of their circumstances
3. have access to affordable housing options
4. have a greater choice of homes where they want to live.

The DECYP Strategic Plan (2024-2030) states every child and young person is:

1. known, heard and included
2. safe in all environments
3. well and thriving
4. learning more every day.

Homes Tasmania's Corporate Plan (2023-2026) sets out an ongoing priority to work closely with the DECYP to improve housing pathways for young people at risk or young people in transition from out-of-home care and youth detention.

## **3. Current programs and services**

Several programs already contribute to achieving the accommodation outcomes outlined in this SLA.

Figure 2 (below) illustrates accommodation and support services for children and young people administered by either Homes Tasmania or DECYP.

Due to responsibility of care, DECYP typically administers accommodation services for children and young people who are subject to a Care and Protection or other Statutory Order.

DECYP manages the following services:

- Ashley Youth Detention Centre (AYDC), a detention facility for children and young people in custody

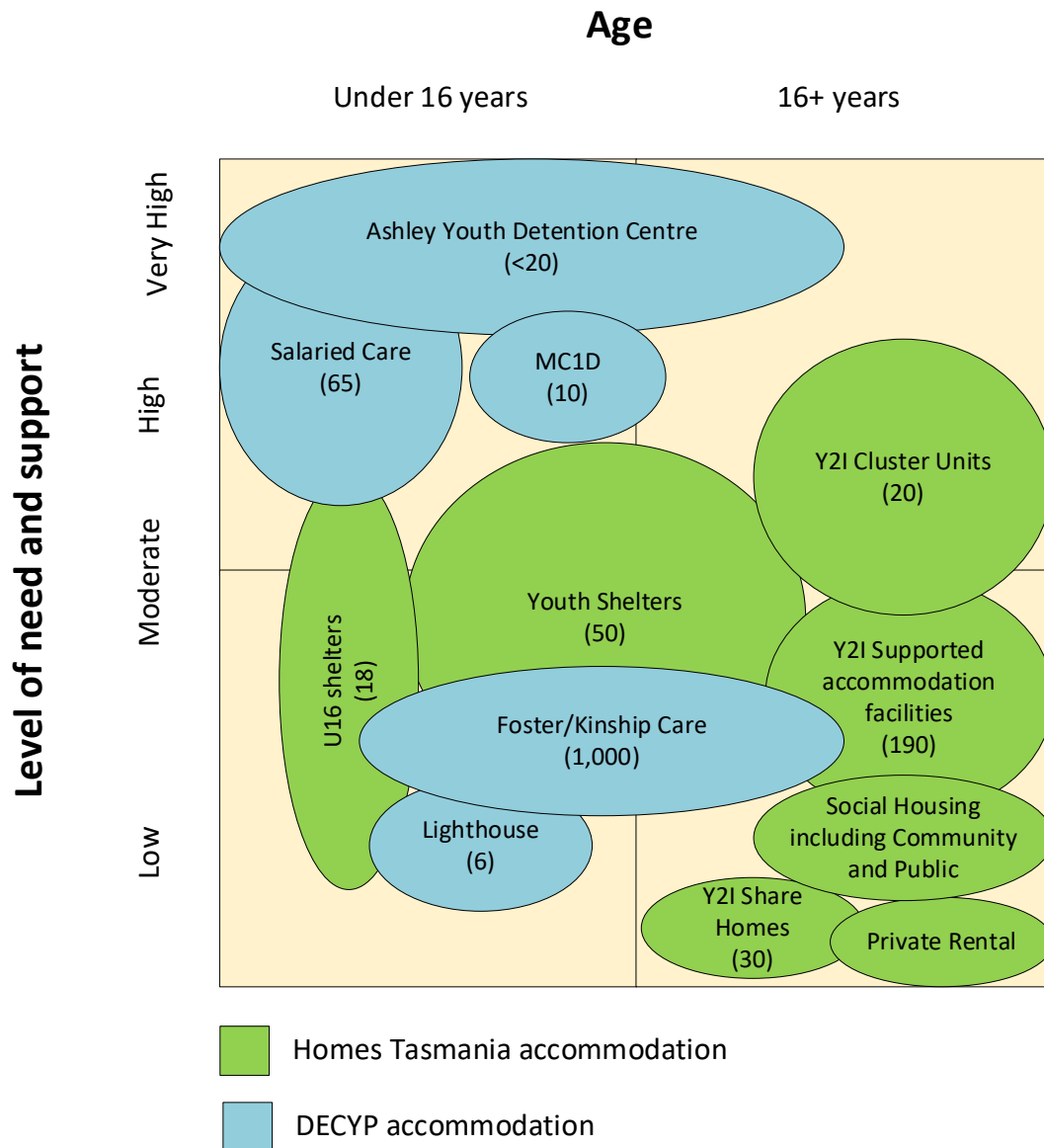
- Salaried Care, a placement for high needs children on Care and Protection Orders
- Many Colours One Direction (MC1D), a program that is subject to re-establishment in Tasmania and is not currently available, and
- The Lighthouse model, a recently established pilot project in the state's South.

As the statutory authority for housing, Homes Tasmania has a stronger focus on providing accommodation for young people, from the age of 12 years old, who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness and not subject to a Care and Protection or other Statutory Order.

Homes Tasmania funds multiple options for low to medium needs children and young people including youth shelters, small and larger unit complexes and some share homes. The recently established Y2I 'cluster homes' are available for some higher needs young people aged 16 years and over.

Figure 2.

## Homes Tasmania and DECYP Accommodation Services Level of need vs age



\*Note – brackets (xx) indicates approximate children and young people accommodated per night

## **3.1. Programs and services administered by Homes Tasmania**

### **3.1.1. Housing Connect**

Housing Connect is a key component of the housing system in Tasmania, supporting people to access appropriate housing solutions including:

- crisis accommodation and support including shelters and transitional housing
- social housing including supported accommodation, social housing and specialist accommodation for people in exceptional circumstances
- affordable housing including private rentals and home ownership.

Housing Connect front door services are the principal referral point for Tasmanians aged 16 years and over who need housing support or assistance. Housing Connect front door services connect people to the support they need to find and keep a home. Housing Connect provides services tailored to the circumstances of each person and works with people to strengthen their connections to family, friends, community, and services to promote their wellbeing and opportunities. Housing Connect will notify ARL if a young person under 18 years of age presents to the service and is homeless or at risk of homelessness. Housing Connect will undertake an assessment of the young person and may support them to access:

- short term supported accommodation (shelter)
- Youth2Independence (Y2I) transitional housing
- social housing.

Housing Connect can also provide information on other housing options such as NDIS.

### **3.1.2. Crisis accommodation**

Homes Tasmania funds services across the state to provide crisis and transitional accommodation for unaccompanied young people aged 12 years and over who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Short term supported accommodation services provide housing for the duration of need for young people in crisis. These settings also provide on-site support 24 hours a day.

### **3.1.3. Youth at risk centres**

Youth at risk centres provide crisis accommodation and care tailored to the specific needs of unaccompanied children who are 12 to 15 years of age. The Youth at Risk Centre and the Advice and Referral Line will work collaboratively to support the care team approach during the term of accommodation.

If safe and appropriate, Youth at Risk Centres will support children to return to the care of parents, guardians and/or family as soon as possible. Where this is not achievable, they will be helped to transition to a safe and stable place to live.

The centres uphold the vision of the Tasmanian Child and Youth Wellbeing Framework, which recognises the need to work in partnership with families, community services and the broader community to improve the wellbeing of vulnerable young people in Tasmania.

### **3.1.4. Youth2Independence**

Homes Tasmania provides transitional accommodation for young people aged 16 to 24 years through the Youth 2 Independence (Y2I) program. Y2I provides on-site support such as life skills training, education and employment assistance, and mental health support.

#### **Y2I Cluster Homes**

Y2I Cluster Homes provide accommodation and support for young people who are not ready to live independently or in a communal setting. Young people accommodated in cluster homes have higher support needs that benefit from an onsite manager and outreach support.

#### **Y2I Share Homes**

Y2I Share Homes provide accommodation to young people in a communal setting with other young people, shared facilities and without 24/7 onsite support. Young people accommodated in Y2I share homes are provided with outreach support.

#### **Y2I Supported Accommodation Facility (SAF)**

Y2I SAFs are based on the international Education First Youth Foyer model. SAFs provide young people with self-contained units and access to communal areas for group activities and recreation. On-site support is available 24/7.

### **3.1.5. Social Housing**

Social housing provides secure homes for young people aged 16 years or over on the Housing Register and includes independent social housing for individuals and families as well as supported housing and specialist accommodation options.



## **3.2. Programs and services administered by DECYP**

### **3.2.1. Ashley Youth Detention Centre (AYDC)**

AYDC provides secure care and custody for young people aged 10-17 years who are detained or remanded by the courts.

When young people are in AYDC they are supported by trained Youth Workers, they attend Ashley School, and are supported by Professional Services staff as well as Health staff.

The AYDC is located in the North, near Deloraine.

The Tasmanian Government has committed to close AYDC and a move to new contemporary therapeutic facilities and model of care.

### **3.2.2. Salaried and Therapeutic Residential Care**

Salaried care is provided by non-government organisations for children and young people with complex needs which (for a short or longer period) can make it too challenging for them to live in a family home with foster or kinship carers. Salaried Care is in a home setting with care provided by staff on a rostered basis.

Therapeutic interventions are provided to children and young people in care who have experienced trauma. The Australian Childhood Foundation provides this service together with training and supports to carers and staff.

Therapeutic residential care is group-based accommodation and support to older children and young people who have high or challenging needs and where foster or kinship care is not available or appropriate. It is provided by CatholicCare Tasmania. Young people in Residential Care are often supported to learn the skills they need to live independently as they transition to becoming young adults in their own homes.

### **3.2.3. Many Colours 1 Direction (MC1D)**

MC1D was a trauma informed, integrated treatment program with accommodation provided in a rural location. It provided services for up to 10 young people aged 10-18 years of age. MC1D was reviewed in 2020 and has now ceased. A similar program is planned to commence in the future.

### **3.2.4. Family based care - Foster/Kinship Care**

Family Based Care gives children and young people a place to live in a family home when they are unable to live with their own families. Family Based Care includes foster care and kinship care.

Family based care provides children with a family who can care for them for as long as needed until they can return to their natural families or until they exit care as young adults.

### **3.2.5. Under 16s Lighthouse**

The Lighthouse Service is a non-crisis, medium to longer term transitional care and accommodation service for young people that are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless aged 12-15 years. There is currently one Homes Tasmania property in the South provided for this service which is being delivered by Mission Australia.

## **3.3. Agreement to achieve outcomes for young people**

### **3.3.1. Children and young people in out of home care**

Homes Tasmania is the landlord for some properties to accommodate children and young people and their guardians in residential out of home care. Homes Tasmania also leases properties to DECYP to accommodate children and young people in out of home care where the Secretary is the guardian.

See Section 3.9 Provision of Homes Tasmania assets.

### **3.3.2. Children and young people exiting institutional settings**

Homes Tasmania will prioritise access to housing services and supports for eligible children and young people who have been on a Care and Protection or other Statutory Order and are exiting from institutional care (such as custodial arrangements, out of home care including foster care, child safety residential placements, hospitals and mental health facilities). This extends beyond the provision of properties to include priority access for eligible children and young people to existing services, where practical and appropriate. Some of these young people may be exiting institutional care as part of the transition to adulthood when turning 18 years of age.

See Section 3.7 Provision of Homes Tasmania assets.

## **3.4. Prioritising housing for children and young people**

### **3.4.1. Prioritising placements in housing and homelessness services**

Homes Tasmania can prioritise placements into housing programs by:

- supporting applications for children and young people who require accommodation outside the usual referral processes; and
- directing contracted housing services to use all reasonable endeavours to accommodate and support children and young people who require accommodation outside of the usual referral processes.

### **3.4.2. Special allocations**

Where a child or young person with exceptional needs is identified and the usual housing options have been exhausted, DECYP can approach Homes Tasmania for a special housing allocation.

A special housing allocation may be made to provide housing to children or young people where:

- the child or young person has exceptional needs that cannot be met in the current housing system, and
- all other housing options have been exhausted.

## **3.5. Support, safety and wellbeing**

### **3.5.1. Case management for young people**

Homes Tasmania services for young people will develop personalised support plans and regularly review progress towards personalised goals, including housing outcomes. Support plans will be completed with the young person and may include support being provided by DECYP services. Support will:

- be developmentally appropriate, tailoring services to address the different developmental ages of the young person
- strengthen family connections, supporting the young person with the goal of remaining or returning to the care of family where possible and safe, or building the capacity of the young person to transition to alternative safe and stable accommodation
- provide a coordinated service response, working with key allied services to deliver a connected and integrated service system that achieves best outcomes for the young person
- create opportunities for young people to participate in decisions that affect them, including being able to have a say and have their opinion heard and valued
- be culturally responsive and inclusive of diversity
- adopt the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations to:
  - create an environment where children's safety and wellbeing are at the centre of thought, values and actions

- place emphasis on engagement with and valuing of children and young people
- create conditions that reduce the likelihood of harm to young people
- create conditions that increase the likelihood of identifying any harm
- respond to any concerns, disclosures, allegations, or suspicions of harm.

### **3.5.2. Care teams**

Care Teams are an open collaborative group of key people identified by a child or young person as being important in their life. This could include their family members, caregivers, professionals, and others. Care team meetings occur where a child or young person being supported by DECYP has been placed in a service such as a Youth At Risk Centre. The Advice and Referral Line establish Care Teams which include a key worker for the child or young person.

Child Safety Service (CSS) may also invite representatives from Homes Tasmania Tenancy Services to Care Team meetings as appropriate, to promote early and continuing engagement. Practice Leaders should discuss this with Tenancy Services Team Leaders to identify an appropriate contact. Providers of services funded by Homes Tasmania may also be invited to join the Care Team.

Care Teams and associated policies and procedures for young people under 16 are outlined in the [Under 16 Homelessness Policy Framework](#) for Tasmania and [Practice Guidelines for Specialist Homelessness Services](#).

### **3.5.3. Wellbeing and safety**

An adult who knows, believes or suspects on reasonable grounds, that a child is suffering, has suffered or is likely to suffer abuse or neglect has a responsibility to take steps to prevent the occurrence or further occurrence of the abuse or neglect.

Any person who volunteers or works for an organisation that receives government funding and provides health, welfare, education, childcare or residential services to young people is a mandatory reporter under the *Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997*.

Homes Tasmania and services funded by Homes Tasmania will report any safety and wellbeing concerns of children and young people to DECYP using the Strong Families Safe Kids Advice and Referral Line on 1800 000 123. Information provided may include:

- concerns about physical abuse or unexplained injury to a child
- a disclosure of sexual abuse
- concerns about emotional abuse impacting on the wellbeing of a child
- neglect or lack of appropriate supervision

- where a child's behaviours may place them 'at risk' and the parents are unwilling or unable to support or protect the child
- where a child appears to have been abandoned and the child has no appropriate caregiver.

#### **3.5.4. Child Safety Service clients in properties managed by Homes Tasmania**

Where risk has been identified and DECYP seeks to remove children from a family residing in Homes Tasmania properties, CSS should inform the relevant Tenancy Services Team Leaders as early as possible so that planning can occur for:

- re-housing children from families who are tenants in Homes Tasmania properties
- placements (including self-selecting) in Homes Tasmania properties, as permission is required for additional people in houses
- reunifications relating to children or families on the Housing Register as these will be treated as a priority.

### **3.6. Exit planning**

Where a young person is subject to a Care and Protection Order or other Statutory Order, then Homes Tasmania, DECYP and housing support providers are collectively responsible for developing strategies to support a safe and appropriate exit for a young person from a housing program. This should be planned and implemented through the relevant Care Team. This can include where a young person is exiting institutional care as part of the transition to adulthood when turning 18 years of age.

#### **3.6.1. Age-related eligibility**

Some housing provided for children and young people has age-related eligibility criteria such as Youth at Risk centres (12 to 15 years) and Y2I services (16 to 24 years).

Children and young people who are reaching their age limit for eligibility for the service will be provided with exit planning support to find stable, safe affordable housing.

For children nearing 16 years of age, this may include exit into a Y2I service or independent living (social housing or private rental) with the necessary supports.

### **3.6.2. Long term housing solutions**

Service providers will work towards securing long-term housing solutions, including social housing, private rentals, and supported accommodation. Long term housing solutions may also include returning to the care of parents or other family where safe and possible to do so.

Homes Tasmania, DECYP and housing service providers will establish partnerships with housing providers and landlords to increase the availability of affordable and suitable housing options.

### **3.6.3. Unplanned exits**

Unplanned exits from Homes Tasmania housing programs should be a last resort and only occur after discussion with ARL/CSS. Where an unplanned exit is unavoidable, the young person will be supported by DECYP, the housing program and/or Housing Connect to secure alternative accommodation and not be exited into homelessness.

## **3.7. Provision of Homes Tasmania assets**

Homes Tasmania will provide assets as part of a dedicated portfolio of properties for DECYP to house unaccompanied children and young people.

### **3.7.1. Portfolio management**

Home Tasmania will allocate properties to DECYP for use based on DECYP need and the availability of housing stock. Requests for Homes Tasmania properties must include:

- locational requirements
- required asset features, such as the number of bedrooms
- required modifications
- any other special requirements.

Properties are provided to DECYP under a head lease arrangement and may be subleased by DECYP to partner organisations, families or directly to individuals to provide accommodation to children and young people.

### **3.7.2. Rent setting**

Homes Tasmania is introducing a policy for setting rents with providers that head lease properties owned by Homes Tasmania. When finalised, the policy and associated procedure will provide clarity about how rents will be set under head lease arrangements, in a manner that is sustainable and will support a viable service system.

*The SLA will be updated to include this information once finalised.*

### **3.7.3. Asset review**

DECYP will undertake six-monthly reviews of their housing portfolio to ensure it remains fit for purpose and is effectively utilising current housing stock.

The review will include:

- location of properties (suburb and region)
- number of bedrooms
- proximity to neighbours and other services
- suitability including property fixtures, outdoor areas such as backyard
- quality and safety standards.

DECYP will work with Homes Tasmania and relevant stakeholders (including young people) to inform their review. The reviews may result in changes to DECYP's housing portfolio, subject to the availability of properties.

## **4. Agreed priorities**

Agreed priorities of both Homes Tasmania and DECYP are provided in a Workplan in Schedule 1 to this SLA. It is agreed both parties will progress this Workplan in good faith. Both parties agree to monitor and report against actions in the Workplan quarterly using the agreed Governance in Section 5. The priorities in the Workplan will be an active and 'living' document which can be updated and changed with the agreement of both parties.

## **5. Governance and working together**

### **5.1.1. Sharing information**

Homes Tasmania and DECYP acknowledge the importance of sharing information and joint planning processes to ensure tailored and suitable housing outcomes are being achieved for young people and Homes Tasmania properties are being used effectively.

Information sharing between Homes Tasmania and DECYP ensures that both parties are well equipped to support unaccompanied children and young people.

Agencies and service providers must obtain client consent prior to sharing any personal information in line with the *Personal Information Protection Act 2004* and any relevant legislation outlined in this Agreement.

### **5.1.2. Contacts**

Contacts for each party are provided below:

#### **Homes Tasmania contact person**

David Mitchell

Manager – Specialist Accommodation Programs

0436 938 216

[SAS@homes.tas.gov.au](mailto:SAS@homes.tas.gov.au)

#### **DECYP contact person**

Tim Denby

Assistant Director – Strategic Policy and Projects

0429 423 930

[tim.denby@decyp.tas.gov.au](mailto:tim.denby@decyp.tas.gov.au)

### **5.1.3. Escalations**

Should any matters arise that cannot be resolved between the nominated contact people or other relevant staff of each agency then the matter is to be escalated to senior management at Homes Tasmania or DECYP (see below).



**Homes Tasmania**

Jessemy Stone  
Director, Housing Policy and Programs  
0439 634 989  
Jessemy.stone@homes.tas.gov.au

**DECYP**

Claire Lovell  
Executive Director, Children and Families  
Ph. (03) 6166 3802  
cys-dsecdrm@decyp.tas.gov.au

**5.1.4. Timeframe for agreement**

The agreement will be ongoing with no end date. The agreement can be ended by written notice by either party.

**5.1.5. Ongoing monitoring of agreement**

Quarterly meetings will occur between relevant staff from Homes Tasmania and DECYP. The meetings will monitor the operation of the agreement and address any issues or concerns of either agency. Terms of Reference for the meetings will be developed and agreed by both parties. Agreed targets or milestones for actions will be recorded and monitored through the quarterly meetings.

**5.1.6. Review of the agreement**

This Agreement is valid from the Effective Date outlined herein until further notice. This Agreement should be reviewed annually.

Next Review Date: one year after the signing by both parties