

Social and Affordable Housing Program Overview

August 2020

Background

St Vincent de Paul Housing is building 502 new low-cost rental homes across NSW as part of the Social and Affordable Housing Fund (SAHF) administered by the NSW Government. Rents for these homes are much lower than private market rents. Tenants pay either 25% of total household income if registered on the NSW Priority Housing Register or up to 75% of private market rent (income criteria apply).

The SAHF Program is run by the St Vincent de Paul Society and Amelie Housing and aims to assist tenants and their family members to achieve better life outcomes.

About the Program

The SAHF Program offers tenants specific supports and in return tenants must participate in the program.

Tenants are offered long term leases of 12 months, which are renewed every year if the tenant continues to participate in the program.

Other key features of the program are:

- Dwellings are all located close to community services and transport
- All homes are designed to 7 Star energy ratings and Silver Level accessibility standards
- Tenants and household members are supported with tailored support coordination plans through the Tailored Support Program. Plans are individualised to assist tenants to achieve their goals and aspirations
- Tenants may also be supported by Conference Members where a local Conference has capacity to provide support, and where housing tenants need support.

Eligibility

Prospective tenants are required to make their application in writing and sent via email to sahfapplications@amelie.org.au. Applications must include the applicant's name, names of family members, and contact details.

There are two housing options for people who want to live in the dwellings and participate in the SAHF Program.

Social Housing – the applicant must be registered at Priority Status on the NSW Housing Register. If they are registered, they are eligible to pay the low rent of 25% of household income plus all of their Commonwealth Rent Assistance.

Affordable Rental Housing - if an applicant's total household income is less than NSW Government eligibility limits, they can pay up to 75% of market rent. In addition to the income limits, applicants must be in housing need and unable to resolve this need in the medium to long term without assistance.

Status in August 2020

The locations of the 12 developments are:

- Albury (two developments; 18 units and 38 units)
- Burraneer (36 units)
- Campbelltown (48 units)
- Cardiff (94 units)
- Dubbo (21 units)
- Jordan Springs (36 units)
- Katoomba (26 units)
- Lilyfield (22 units)
- Maitland (17 units)
- Merrylands (78 units)
- Penrith (68 units)

408 of the 502 units are available and already fully or partially tenanted. The one remaining development to be completed is at Cardiff and it is expected to be ready by the end of October.

Conference Involvement

A member contact person has been nominated for each property by the Central Council President and each Conference or Regional Council will determine what, if any, support they are willing and able to provide to tenants who are referred to them by the local Tailored Support Coordinator.

While the mix of types of housing varies from property to property (social or affordable), most tenants will not require a much support from Conferences. Most have been living in permanent or semi-permanent accommodation for some time; many are working; and all receive support from their Tailored Support Coordinator.

This is, however, a wonderful opportunity for Vincentians to add further value in ways that are appropriate for both the tenant/s and the Conference. Some examples of kinds of things the local Conference could be involved in include:

- Visiting with people experiencing loneliness or social isolation
- Hosting social gatherings such as morning teas or barbeques
- Liaising with Tailored Support Coordinators to identify anyone in need of general Conference care and support.

Further Information

If a prospective tenant would like to talk more generally to St Vincent de Paul Housing about the SAHF Program, they should send an email to sahf@amelie.org.au or call the Manager of the SAHF Program, James Newell, on 0435 317 111.

Conference members can find out more by talking to their Regional Council or Conference President or calling James on the number above.