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WINTER | 2021

Words from the CEO, Paul McDonald

Welcome to the Winter Edition of 2021.

Our special report this issue features Anglicare Victoria's annual Rental Affordability Snapshot, which shows a rental affordability crisis across regional Victoria. In this issue we also feature a heart-warming Kinship care story, a thank you for those who contributed to our recent donor survey, and some good news for our agency after the progress of our Home Stretch campaign – an award for us all.

We have also launched the Winter Appeal, raising funds in response to the concerning number of mothers and children escaping family violence. I thank you for your ongoing support as we bring help and support to those who need it most.

Stay warm and well this winter.

Paul McDonald.



SPECIAL REPORT: The impacts of COVID on rental affordability

The rental affordability situation in regional Victoria is at crisis point as inner-city Melbourne couples and families head for the countryside in search of room to breathe after last year's COVID lockdowns.

Anglicare Victoria's 2021 Rental Affordability Snapshot (RAS) was conducted as part of the national Snapshot undertaken by Anglicare Australia. The Snapshot is an annual survey of the affordability of rental properties for people living on low incomes in Victoria.

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The most notable trend in the 12 months to March 2021 was the sharp decrease in the affordability and availability of rental properties in regional, rural and coastal Victoria. Many individuals and families chose to abandon Melbourne after the second COVID-19 lockdown, creating a squeeze on rental properties in the regions. Along with the increased interest in the regions, landlords in many areas are taking their homes out of the rental market and putting them on Airbnb to take advantage of the boom in domestic holidaymaking.

Overall, the number of rental listings increased to 33,710 from 19,435 in 2020. However, only 1422 (4%) of these listings were in regional Victoria, less than half the figure from 2020. The 9261 rental listings available in the CBD were more than 2.5 times last year's total of 3320.

Single people (with and without children) on income support or pension continue to be the most disadvantaged group. And only 0.2 per cent (53) of the listings were suitable for a couple with two young children getting by on JobSeeker.

Options to address the situation include a rise to income support payments beyond the \$25/fortnight announced in 2021, improved mental health and family violence support, Commonwealth rent assistance and innovative funding models such as social impact bonds.



LEADING INNOVATION: Anglicare Victoria's CEO recognised for leadership

CEO Paul McDonald has been recognised in the 2021 Pro Bono Impact 25 Awards for his years of dedication to improving the lives of vulnerable young people through the national Home Stretch campaign. After a year in which the Andrews Government in Victoria adopted the Home Stretch reforms in full and most other states and territories have adopted or committed to them, Paul won the Pro Bono Judges' Choice award for Influence, as well as being named as one of the top 25 Australians working for social change over the last 12 months.

Anglicare Victoria Deputy CEO Sue Sealey said everyone at the organisation was proud of the Home Stretch campaign to extend care to the age of 21, a simple reform that halves youth homelessness rates and doubles employment rates and higher education among this group.

Pro Bono recognised Paul for "his role leading a campaign that brought together over 100 organisations to advocate for governments to remedy legislation that sees vulnerable young people in out-of-home care being turned out of their homes when they turn 18".

"In less than five years of campaigning, five state and two territory governments have committed to introducing The Home Stretch policy, extending support for vulnerable young people in state care," the Pro Bono judges said.

Mr McDonald said he was humbled by the award and will continue to work towards the adoption of the Home Stretch reforms in Queensland and New South Wales because of the positive impact it would have on generations of young people in these states.



Putting their needs first

Thanks to the love and support of their Grandma Ali, three young brothers – Nick (11), Sean (8), and Harry (5)* – will be able to stay together under the same roof.

Home had become violent and unsafe for the three children. Their parents had fallen into drug addiction, and the children were often left to fend for themselves. Nick would pour out cereal for dinner for his brothers; they would eat out of Tupperware containers as there was no crockery.

When it became clear their parents weren't ready to do something about their addiction, child protection intervened.

AV was contacted, and our case manager Elizabeth began working with the children initially to support their education. She attended school support meetings, checked in with them at kinder, provided practical support for the family. She provided funds for their uniform, school books and resources for playtime, such as a play mat and trampoline. Shortly after, the children were moved to temporary care with their Grandma.

"Nick and Sean were struggling with school. We were able to link them into extra educational services. We built long term rapport with the children, and the school to ensure they receive the support they need. We are aiming to get them to a self-sufficient place."

– Elizabeth, Case Manager

This year Ali decided she would be able to provide permanent care for her grandchildren. Elizabeth has supported her in this lengthy process and will soon deliver official certificates to each of the children – along with a teddy bear.

Ali is relieved that she has care and permanent support for the kids and said she "couldn't bear to see them go into the foster care system. I want to be the person to put their needs first. Nick was jumping up and down with excitement when he found out that he could stay with Grandma Ali full time."

*The story is true, but the children's names have been changed.



Thank you, Carey Grammar Students

A special thank you to the primary school students of Carey Grammar.

The students made a donation of non-perishable food in the shape of a huge heart, arranged on their basketball court at Easter time. Contributions by the students were kindly donated to the Homeless Support Program at St Mark's Community Centre and will go to those in need.



LISTENING BACK: AV'S DONOR SURVEY

AV's expertise and experience in frontline work uniquely places our organisation to understand the needs of our clients. This knowledge supports the programs we create, the way we inform local, state and federal government, and the specific needs we fundraise for. But it's also important to understand the needs, interests and hopes of our supporters. Through thick and thin, it's our loyal supporters who show up and keep our services going. So, in October 2020, AV made contact and welcomed their feedback.

"We are impressed with the genuine dedication, commitment, professionalism and Christian care shown by all Anglicare personnel in responding to the complex needs of today's communities"
– AV donor

Supporter feedback was encouraging and constructive, with their satisfaction rating high across many metrics. Topics close to the hearts of our donors include Family Service, Homelessness Support Services and Emergency Relief.

Thank you to all who shared their valuable feedback.

"I admire Anglicare's approach to new challenges that arise from time to time. Innovation seems to be in-built into the organisation" – AV donor

ESTATE PLANNING & WILLS INFORMATION SESSION

With guest presenters, lawyer David Whiting and financial adviser Bruce Brammall, this information session will cover retirement and estate planning, gifting, wills, probate and practical tips. David and Bruce will answer your questions to help prepare you for the future.

Thursday 12 August , 2021 from 10am

RSVP IS ESSENTIAL BEFORE 5 AUGUST 2021

RSVP NOW to Mary Croxford on 9412 6006

or email eps@anglicarevic.org.au



Anglicare
Victoria

FREE at Melbourne
Town Hall

