

**Submission
No 61**

**OPTIONS TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO EXISTING AND ALTERNATE
ACCOMMODATION TO ADDRESS THE SOCIAL HOUSING SHORTAGE**

Name: Mr Gerry Bailey

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Wendy Lindsay MP

Committee on Community Services Inquiry

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Young is one of the three areas which make up the Hilltops Council. It currently has a town population of some 9000 people.

For a variety of reasons, there is a critical shortage of accommodation available in the town. There is a list of 127 people who require crisis accommodation. The waiting time for public housing is years long; there are only 7 listed rental options and sadly, some of the homeless are young children.

However, there are a large number of vacant properties standing idle in the town, in particular, there are 5 with room to cater for a significant number of those needing a safe haven.

It seems almost criminal that these possible accommodation options are standing empty when there is such a need by such a large number of people, especially as all these facilities have not been put to any use for a long period of time.

Surely there must be a way for councils or State Government agencies to require owners after a reasonable period of time, to put buildings to some use or to sell them so that they can be used productively.

If this proposal seems too extreme then at least a vacancy tax surely would be a viable alternative.

Any community group involved in trying to fix the needed accommodation short fall will require a large injection of funds. These funds would need to be a State Government grant for a specific detailed project that would demonstrably ease the housing shortage in Young.

Gerry Bailey [REDACTED]

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