

**Submission
No 74**

**INQUIRY INTO HOMELESSNESS AMONGST OLDER
PEOPLE AGED OVER 55 IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

Organisation: Full Stop
Date Received: 10 June 2022

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Chair
Standing Committee on Social Issues
NSW Parliamentary House
6 Macquarie Street,
Sydney NSW 2000
Via email: socialissues@parliament.nsw.gov.au

NSW Ageing on the Edge Forum submission

Full Stop Australia is an accredited, nationally focused, not-for-profit organisation which has been working in the field of sexual, domestic and family violence (SDFV) since 1971. We offer expert and confidential telephone, online and face-to-face counselling to people of all genders who have experienced sexual, domestic or family violence, and specialist help for their supporters and those experiencing vicarious trauma. We also provide best practice training and professional services to support frontline workers, government, the corporate and not-for-profit sector. Finally, FSA advocates with governments, the media and the community to prevent and put a full stop to sexual, domestic and family violence.

We understand that housing and homelessness related issues impact older people disproportionately. We support the submission and the recommendations made by NSW Ageing on the Edge Forum, a coalition of over 100 organisations and individuals advocating for the housing needs of older people in NSW.

We support the calls for NSW Government to:

- Fund a specialist older person's housing information and support service that comprises both an early intervention and crisis response, similar to the HAAG 'Home at Last' model in Victoria.
- Lower the priority age for social housing eligibility from 80 years as a matter of urgency.
- Build 5,000 social and affordable homes per year for 10 years, at least 20% of which should be dedicated to older people.

In addition, we are recommending that NSW government:

- Adopt concrete measures to address ageism, sexism, gender and disability discrimination in government services, finance institutions, including banks, and private rental markets.

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We acknowledge the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to elders both past and present.

- Remove unnecessarily burdensome requirements, such as, completion of 'seeker diaries' to maintain temporary accommodation imposed on older people who are already in challenging housing situations.
- Increase transparency and accountability by increasing availability of data including:
 - Social and priority housing waiting list data broken down by age, gender, disability status and geographic area,
 - The number of social and affordable housing dwellings available in NSW, including age and gender breakdown of allocations,
 - The number of dwellings assigned under State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing for Seniors and People with a Disability) (Seniors SEPP) and Public Housing Seniors Communities (PPOPH), and
 - The number of dwellings built under the commitments in different housing commitments including the *NSW Homelessness Strategy 2018-2023*, Social and Affordable Housing Fund (SAHF) and Community Housing Innovation Fund (CHIF).
- Provide exemptions to strict documentary evidence for housing applications, including identity documents, especially for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, older people from migrant and refugee backgrounds and older women escaping domestic and family violence to ensure equitable access for all older people.
- Adopt the new mandatory minimum accessibility standards contained in the revised National Construction Code for all future constructions in NSW.

Full Stop Australia strongly urges the committee to adopt these recommendations highlighted above. We welcome the opportunity to engage with the inquiry process and for any questions regarding this submission please contact

Sincerely

Hayley Foster
 CEO
 Full Stop Australia.