

## Media release

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For immediate release

Monday, 21 October 2019

### **Response to the South Australian, Homelessness, Housing & Support Strategy**

Common Equity Housing South Australia Ltd (Common Equity), a not-for-profit organisation, believes that housing cooperatives (co-ops) have demonstrated globally a range of benefits for tenants, governments and the broader community.

A recent study by Western Sydney University reinforces that the Common Equity umbrella model, allows the housing co-ops to have the time and energy to focus on building strong communities, social networks and better health and wellbeing outcomes.

Common Equity believes that housing co-op under the umbrella model, can effectively respond two key reform drivers.

#### **1) Reactive not preventative solutions**

Growth of the co-op housing model can be one of the ways to provide a sustainable solution to homelessness. We need to focus on ways to reduce people falling into homelessness and also need more sustainable ways to transition people out of homelessness.

By creating social networks and community involvement housing co-ops reduce social isolation which can be directly linked to improving people's health and wellbeing outcomes. Members feel like they are receiving a hand up, not a hand out.

Housing co-ops are run by members who volunteer their time, and develop skills accordingly, improving job opportunity, improving self-worth and also reducing the operating costs.

#### **2) Culture of business as usual**

Many innovative ways are needed to address the current gaps and issues in housing, homelessness and support services. An example of which, the City of Sydney held a competition for alternative and affordable housing ideas. One of the projects selected was **The Third Way: A Co-operative Affordable Rental Model**.

This is creating a 'third way' between unaffordable market rental and social housing models. Adapting this approach on Federal/State/City-owned land would increase the affordable housing supply, make long-term renting a viable option, and give back to the community in the form of shared amenity and an ecology of supporting creative uses.

The full report is available at <https://web.cehsa.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Response-to-SA-Housing-Homelessness-and-Support-Strategy.pdf>