

MY HOME NETWORK



APRIL 2024



TOGETHER AS

Dhelkaya Health

OUR NEW BRAND LAUNCHES 2023

To learn more visit dhelkayahealth.org.au

TENANT'S RIGHTS WORKING GROUP

Thanks to Frankie, Liz, Deborah, Mellita, Delphine and Wade who are the tenants' rights working group and currently assisting the West End Resilience Network (WER) in bringing their rental expertise to codesigning and delivering a local workshop on improving household energy efficiency and reducing electricity bills targeting tenants.

It is hoped this workshop will happen sometime late May - watch this space.

They are also meeting with Housing Justice and the Residential Tenancies Commissioner to build on local tenants rights advocacy.

Thanks to Liz Scanlon for [interviewing Alistar and Kaz about the workshop on MAIN fm.](#)



*Tenant's rights working group
with Alistar Robertson from
WER*

HOMESHARE



See attached promotional flyer -please share with your networks.

We are looking for homeseekers and homeproviders. Homeseekers will be over 18, can benefit from affordable housing, work or study locally, provide support and company for 10-12 hours a week to a home provider and have the skills needed to share a house. Homeproviders will have a spare bedroom and other facilities to share, need practical support or and companionship to live independently, and can share a house.

Homeshare Mount Alexander will provide comprehensive assessment matching and support for homeshare so it works for all parties. Interviews of homeseekers and homeproviders have started!

If you are interested, please contact Di Cox the Homeshare coordinator:
Homeshare@castlemainehealth.org.au Phone: 0499309418

COLLECTIVE HOUSING MODELS CONVERSATION UPDATE

Next collective housing model conversation Monday 29th April 6-7.30pm Northern Arts Hotel
Will probably focus on finance models, planning and legal structures. Please RSVP to Kaz
cneilson@castlemainehealth.org.au

Secondary dwelling

Victorian State Government housing statement [Secondary dwellings planning](#)

A secondary dwelling less than 60 ms square and with no overlay no longer needs a planning permit.
To check about overlays see-[Planning property report](#)

Planning

You can check what planning is required for a particular piece of land via:

[Mount Alexander Planning Scheme - Maps](#) It really depends on the piece of land, zoning, area and size of land.

Visits to Murrnong, collective housing body corporate

There were three visits to Murrnong, thanks to those who came along. Anyone interested in visiting see Kaz cneilson@castlemainehealth.org.au

<https://theconversation.com/im-home-how-co-operative-housing-could-take-pressure-off-australias-housing-crisis-225561>

Participants in the collective housing models conversation hear Clare Richards talk about the MAAHT



MOUNT ALEXANDER COMMUNITY LAND LTD

*Notice from Jacqueline Brodie Hans and Doug Falconer of Mount Alexander Community Land Ltd
The Community Land Trust model - which separates ownership of the land from ownership of the house and thereby significantly reduces the cost of home ownership - is very successful in many countries throughout the world. It really warrants further investigation. MACLL has been involved in several academic research projects and have previously had investment opportunities to pilot the model, but we do not have a functioning Board to bring these to fruition.*

Doug and I have been holding MACLL in order to keep the model alive, in the hope that other community members will step into the space and take the reins. As you would be well aware, our lives are pretty full with a big expansion underway for the brewery, alongside major personal commitments. We have been reluctant to let the organisation fall over, but we are also very mindful that it is entirely stagnant at the moment.

We are hosting an SGM / AGM for MACLL on Monday 6th May from 6pm at the Taproom. We would like to hand over responsibility for MACLL at this stage, and if we are unable to recruit a new Board to assume this responsibility, we will take steps to wind up the organisation.

Doug has a lot of knowledge about the model and is involved in CLT think-tank initiatives so he is more than happy to speak to people and answer questions about the potential for the CLT model to help address affordable housing. You can email him direct at doug@falconer.net.au

You will find more information including a link to the Australian Community Land Trust Manual on the MACLL website at www.macll.org.au

MOUNT ALEXANDER AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST (MAAHT)

See attached for more information.

Clare Richards our Council Housing Solutions Broker is talking to Jacqueline and Doug about their respective housing trust models.

We are organising a group meeting with Clare for anyone who wishes to discuss the MAAHT further.

Please get in touch with me, Kaz cneilson@castlemainehealth.org.au if you want to participate in this meeting.

MY HOME NETWORK WEBSITE

The new MHN webpage is now live but still under development.

[My Home Network - Dhelkaya Health](#)

OPENING DOORS RENTING FOR ALL

Opening Doors Renting For All photography exhibition is created for people with a disability, led by people with a disability that will guide you through the process of renting and connect you to information about the world of Real Estate. See attached information for more details

The exhibition listing is here:

<https://lot19.au/event/home-paul-dunn-lawrence-johnston/>

The Facebook event is here:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/386225164299910/?ref=newsfeed>

The opening is at 2pm on 13th April.

Mount Alexander Shire Accommodation Respite Group (MASARG) representatives are speaking at the launch about their work.

ROUGH SLEEPER ACTION GROUP

Organisations on the action group include, Council, Vic Pol, Salvation Army, Dhelkaya Health housing team, Loddon Campaspe Community Legal Centre.

This action group is improving integrated services for those sleeping rough and have expressed high interest in the Advance to Zero initiative of the Australian Alliance to End Homelessness (AAEH) that supports local collaborative efforts to end homelessness, starting with rough sleeping - one community at a time.

DONATIONS FOR HOMELESS PEOPLE SLEEPING ROUGH IN MOUNT ALEXANDER SHIRE – HOW TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

A huge thankyou to Jacqueline Brodie Hans of Shedshaker Brewery, Mount Alexander Community Land Ltd, and other community initiatives, who led a spontaneous gesture of support for rough sleepers at an event a couple of weeks ago at the Phee Broadway which raised \$2,000 in donations for Dhelkaya Health Housing Team to provide equipment and services to homeless people sleeping rough in Mount Alexander. Thanks to everyone at the event, including Kate Ceberano, for the support and inspiration!

Dhelkaya Health has a Housing Support team who work directly with homeless people living in our local shire. We connect them with support services and provide equipment such as swags, sleeping bags and phones to help them stay safe and connected. Dhelkaya Health is part of the Rough Sleeper Action Group, including Castlemaine Police, Mount Alexander Shire Council, Salvation Army, and ARC Justice, who work together to map out the scope of the problem and plan a coordinated approach to offer the most effective service to rough sleepers.

If you want to help online donations are now possible through the Dhelkaya Health website: <https://dhelkayahealth.org.au/donate/community-wellbeing-donate/>

HOUSING FOR REFUGEE FAMILY

Help Mount Alexander Refugee Support (MARS) (see attached flyer) welcome a refugee family (or 2 individuals) to Australia, and to Castlemaine.

We estimate that we need to raise at least \$16,000 to supplement their living expenses for the first few months. Can you make a small donation? Please click on the Shout for Good link. Every dollar counts. Donations over \$2 are tax deductible.

This project is part of a national community refugee sponsorship program called Community Refugee Integration and Settlement Pilot (CRISP). We don't know yet which country they will be from. We will get matched with refugees when we have raised half the funds, and our application is accepted.

HOUSING FOR REFUGEE FAMILY (CONT.)

For Castlemaine friends, if you know of any rental properties that might be available later in 2024, please get in touch. Also for Castlemaine friends, there will be a Baroque concert on Saturday April 27th and a special film screening at Theatre Royal on May 2nd.

TINY HOMES ON WHEELS WORKING GROUP

The working group has increased with interest and ideas coming from the collective housing models conversation.

Currently they are:

- Looking for land for a THOW village/cluster
- Developing idea of supporting people building their THOW, with salvaged materials, looking for a site under cover for building and sharing building skills
- Matching THOW owners with those interested in placing a THOW next to their home

Four families are interested in hosting a THOW next to their home/permanent dwelling-please see Kaz cneilson@castlemainehealth.org.au if you or someone you know has a THOW and is looking for a place to put it.

Sue Edmonds info@sueedmonds.com.au has kindly offered to assist in developing an arrangement/agreement between owner of the THOW and those hosting the THOW next to their permanent dwelling.

Next THOW meeting is Tues 16th April 7-8.30pm at the Castlemaine Community House, please RSVP and I can send you a calendar invite.

For more information on THOWs see [Australian Tiny House Association – Supporting the Tiny House Sector in Australia](#)
And [Fred's Tiny Houses & Trailers](#) (fredstinyhouses.com.au).



Kathryn Mcgoldrick's THOW on the road!

VACANT DWELLINGS

Vacant blocks of land not being used are now hitting the market due to the recent reduction in the land tax threshold to zero. Investors used to get a free hit for the first \$250,000, paying zero land tax until the land value raised above that price. That means they now have to pay \$1350 instead of \$400.

Accompanying this is the expansion of the Vacant Residential Land and dwelling tax, or the signposting of this beginning in Jan 2025. The Greens are keen to escalate the tax from 1 to 2% in the second year, then 3% in the 3rd year. So investors are throwing sites on the market before that tax hits. We're seeing more dwellings and sites hitting the market.

Our discussions with owners of vacant dwellings have resulted in seven vacant dwellings released as affordable rentals and three as transition housing.

If anyone knows someone who owns one or more of the 1,100 vacant dwellings in our Shire and thinks they may be up for a conversation regarding their release them as transition housing or affordable rentals please get in touch!

cneilson@castlemainehealth.org.au

We have approached landlords of or real estates responsible for the leasing of 23 vacant shop tops in Castlemaine to see if any could be released as affordable rentals or transition housing:

- 3 shop tops are now being rented
- We are having ongoing conversations with 6 landlords
- The remaining 15 are deemed not suitable because:
 - a. They are being used for storage
 - b. They have had negative experiences before renting the shop top
 - c. Cost of renovating/upgrading to comply with the new Tenancy Act standards introduced last year
 - d. Heritage overlay that prevents renovation
 - e. Lack of separate entrance/exit and fire exit

HOME UPGRADES FOR CLIMATE RESILIENCE

A great new resource has been developed for households in the Loddon Mallee region to help make homes and properties ready for extreme weather events. The resource was launched this week in Mount Alexander Shire - watch this space.
[Home Upgrades for Climate Resilience Guide](#)
(cvga.org.au).



HOME UPGRADES FOR CLIMATE RESILIENCE (CONT.)

The Home Upgrades for Climate Resilience Workbook aims to help households, including rentals, to assess how their home may perform in climate events such as fires, floods, storms, and extreme temperatures. The workbook identifies priority upgrades that households can undertake to make their home more resilient when these events occur.

PRESENTATIONS TO ROTARY AND MOUNT ALEXANDER SHIRE EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT NETWORK (MASEETN)

Di and Kaz presented on Homeshare and the MHN to Castlemaine Rotary and MASEETN both of whom have interest and agency in increasing affordable housing in our Shire.

WINC - OLDER WOMEN IN COHOUSING

WINC will have 31 small homes – 4 or 5 for social housing, 4-6 for ‘middle women’ – those who have too many assets for social housing but not enough to buy in, and the remaining 20 or so for women who can fully purchase a home. The smallest homes are 50m² one bedroom, a slightly larger 65m² one bedroom, and an 80m² two bedroom home.

We are working with a potential developer-builder and following up on the many details needed to make this happen. Our local lawyer, Ian Bracken, is keeping us well versed on the infinite number of moving parts required to build a new community.



WINC members in planning mode

COUNCIL UPDATE ON AFFORDABLE HOUSING

See [Let's talk about affordable housing | Shape Mount Alexander](#)

SOLAR BANK

There are around 1,500 renting householders in Mount Alexander who are suffering cost of living stresses because they can't access state subsidised rooftop solar energy. The risk and unfairness of this situation will increase as dangerously hot El Nino summer conditions require more power to keep homes cool.

Mount Alexander Net Zero Working Group (MANZWG) is proposing that a local Solar Bank be built, owned and operated by the new State Electricity Commission (SEC) and installed on suitable State Government School, Hospital, Prison and Council roofs in our Shire.

Local renters could then lower their energy bills by buying a subsidised share in the SEC Shared Solar Bank and pay for it over time at no up-front cost.

In exchange for the energy generated by their leased solar panel shares, participating renters would receive discounts on their SEC electricity bills.

We are gathering support for their proposal and have spoken with State Government MP for Bendigo West Maree Edwards who is organising a meeting with the Victorian State Government Minister for Climate Action, Energy and Resources and State Electricity Commission, Lily D'Ambrosia, to discuss the proposal.