



**Dhelkaya
Health**

MY HOME NETWORK



JULY 2024

HOMESHARE



We continue to connect people through housing and have observed the profound impact a homeshare can have on two or more lives.

Homesharing is a two-way exchange without rent. More people who can share their home are needed. The only requirements are; a spare bedroom, a kitchen and bathroom to share, a willingness to get to know someone and some ideas of what someone else can do for you.

Does that sound like you?

If so give Di a ring or send a message and enquire further about what a Homeshare can do for you. Di's work is to screen for suitability and safety. Sharers are introduced and they consider together if the foundations of a mutual exchange-based relationship are present. An introduction and matching can lead to a whole new world of connections for both parties. We commence with a one-month trial, then contract for 6 months at a time. Contact Di on 0499309418 and leave a message.

Recognition of the value and need for homesharing is building across Australia. There is an Australian homesharers community of practice with members from Queensland, Western Australia, NSW, South Australia, Victoria and of course New Zealand. Everyone has a slightly different set of circumstances but enough similarities to learn from each other. The COP is supported by Homeshare Australia and New Zealand Association (HANZA).

The work we are doing here in Mount Alexander to build a Homeshare community from the ground up, has been recognised by HANZA as an outstanding example of how communities can work together to meet local needs. We have been invited to participate in a study of local homeshares, so that others may learn good practice from us and build their own.

If you are in a community group and would like to discuss the benefits of homesharing for your group members contact Di on 0499309418 or homeshare@castlemainehealth.org.au

TENANTS WORKSHOP ON HOW TO CREATE COMFORTABLE, COST EFFECTIVE HOMES THIS WINTER

A big thank you to [West End Resilience Network](#) for inviting the MHN tenants' rights working group into assisting them with an energy efficiency/literacy workshop for tenants.

Thanks too to Frankie, Wade and Deborah of our tenants' rights working group for sharing their expertise at the workshop.

TENANTS WORKSHOP ON HOW TO CREATE COMFORTABLE, COST EFFECTIVE HOMES THIS WINTER (CONT.)

The workshop was well received –

- *I think these workshops are a wonderful way to engage and transfer knowledge*
- *Thank you, more please, lovely, friendly, encouraging vibe, great knowing this knowledge sharing is happening in our community*
- *Great information sharing and networking within the grass roots realm.*
- *It would be great to get this information out to other renters in the broader community. I walked away with energy saving tools. I felt inspired to research how to insulate my windows and keep the costs down.*

We are keen to roll out more workshops so watch this space...

A couple of links to great resources for energy efficiency for renters [Smart Renting](#)

[Home energy overview - Smart Renting](#)

Please see Liz Scanlon's MAINE fm interview on the workshop with myself and Frankie, thanks Liz.

[It's Still Life...\(with deference to Martin\) by mainFM | Mixcloud](#)



some of the participants in the energy efficiency workshop

TENANTS RIGHTS WORKING GROUP

We are planning a forum on tenants' rights to raise awareness of these rights, support tenants in ensuring these rights are complied with and to capture emerging issues/gaps for tenants regarding their rights and the rental systems to share with Consumer Affairs Victoria.

We are inviting Tenants Union Victoria, Housing Justice and our Rental Tenancy Commissioner to attend the forum.

Our next meeting Friday 19th July 2.15 pm -if you're interested in attending please get in touch cneilson@castlemainehealth.org.au and I'll send a cal invite.

Your rental minimum standards rights

All Victorians should have access to a fair and safe rental market. If your rental agreement started after 29 March 2021, your rental provider (landlord) **must ensure their property meets minimum standards before you move in.**

TENANTS RIGHTS WORKING GROUP (CONT.)

If you've identified an advertised rental property that doesn't meet minimum standards, **report it**. If you've already signed the contract but haven't moved in yet, you can:

- end the agreement immediately, or
- move in and request **urgent repairs**.

If your home falls below the minimum standards during your agreement, request that your rental provider make urgent repairs. Your provider must also arrange regular **gas and electrical safety checks** and fix and pay for any broken **smoke alarms**.

Contact us using our **complaint form** if your rental provider or agent hasn't organised a timely repair.

Visit **our website** to learn about:

- **the 14 categories of minimum standards**
- **renters' rights**
- **rental providers' responsibilities**
- **repairs**
- **gas and electrical safety**
- **smoke alarms and fire safety**

TINY HOMES ON WHEELS (THOW) WORKING GROUP

Currently we are:

- Supporting those interested in buying/building a THOW
- Exploring options for a THOW cluster
- Assisting matching THOW owners with those interested in placing a THOW next to their home

A big thanks to Shannon Schultz of Fred's Tiny Houses for setting up this database and listings page (a bit like an online community notice board) to help people:

- **find a place to park their Tiny Homes On Wheels (THOW) or**
- **find a THOW to be parked on your land next to your home or**
- **find someone to occupy your THOW.**

Database page: <https://fredstinyhouses.com.au/tiny-house-and-land-offers-in-mount-alexander-shire-vic-database/>

Make a listing page: <https://fredstinyhouses.com.au/make-a-listing-of-you-tiny-house-on-wheels-or-land-offer-in-mount-alexander-shire/>

Please spread the word!

TINY HOMES ON WHEELS (THOW) WORKING GROUP (CONT.)

The MHN THOW working group are working to optimise the appropriate uptake of THOW as affordable housing in our so please get in touch if you wish to discuss anything further.

cneilson@castlemainehealth.org.au

Candid Tiny House Podcast - The Advocacy Season

A five part documentary series on how our local community rallied together and successfully changed tiny house local laws.

- Hear in-depth interviews with Kaz Neilson and Kathryn McGoldrick from the My Home Network as they led the community campaign in the second attempt at changing tiny house laws.
- Find out about what happened inside council from Councillors Rosie Annear, Matthew Driscoll and Christine Henderson, including reflections on the first attempt to change tiny house laws for the better in 2020, and the obstacles that got in the way of initial success.
- We address the Housing Statement and the possibilities offered by secondary dwellings.
- Hear from members of the community who are taking up the local laws and offering land for different reasons.

Every episode features a set of instructional tips on how the successes from this campaign can be used as a case study and a play book for neighbouring communities who are also mounting grass-roots campaigns to change tiny house laws in their local communities.

There are 6 Episodes in total:

- 1 Intro (3 mins) Out now
- 2 First Attempt at Changing Local Tiny House Laws (32 mins) Out now
- 3 New Campaign, New Strategies (35 mins) Out now
- 4 Insights from Inside the Council (30 mins) Out now
- 5 How To Change Tiny House Laws in Your Area (25 mins) Release date 5 July
- 6 Uptake, Obstacles and the Future (23 mins) Release date 12 July

Listen wherever you get your podcasts.

Popular platforms are [Apple Podcasts](#) and [Spotify](#). Subscribe to Candid Tiny House in your app so you get a new episode every Friday.

Look for this logo:



Many thanks,
Shannon Schultz
(03) 5472 2130 9am - 3pm weekdays
shannon@fredstinyhouses.com.au

TINY HOMES ON WHEELS (THOW) WORKING GROUP (CONT.)

Next Tiny Homes On Wheels meeting Tues 16th July 6-7.30 pm Northern Arts Hotel. Please RSVP cneilson@castlemainehealth.org.au

*Another affordable THOW in
Mount Alexander Shire*



ROUGH SLEEPER ACTION GROUP AND SUPPORTING OTHERS IN HOUSING CRISIS

The rough sleeper action group (Dhelkaya Health Housing Team, MASC, Vic Pol, Arc Justice, MHN, Salvation Army) works together to improve the integrated supports for the 38 people sleeping rough in our Shire.

We are encouraging local accommodation providers to release more of their accommodation as crisis and transition housing.

The MHN is also trying to find more affordable long-term rentals for local community members (mostly women) who are currently in month-to-month unaffordable leases which is very stressful. We have found a few more affordable longer-term rentals for a few of these women but if anyone knows of options for the others-please get in touch cneilson@castlemainehealth.org.au

FUNDRAISING FOR HOMELESS HAS IMMEDIATE IMPACT

Dhelkaya Health is continuing to fundraise for essential items, such as phones to enable those living rough to stay in touch with us and other service providers, and of course for more Backpack Beds.

If you want to make a difference for the most vulnerable in our community please follow the link here [Donate Homelessness Support](#)

Thank you everyone for your support – this cannot happen without you!

COLLECTIVE HOUSING MODELS CONVERSATION UPDATE

We have held four conversations on collective housing and some of the actions emerging from conversations:

- Building on Homeshare, Community Land Trust (see MACLL and MAAHT) and THOW
- Interest in secondary dwellings - 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

Those interested in committing to developing a collective housing model and developing a vision and looking for land get in touch with Louise cooktonkin@gmail.com

MOUNT ALEXANDER COMMUNITY LAND LTD (MACLL)

The new MACLL Board is John Shone Chair, Karl Fitzgerald Public Officer, Delphine Laboureaux-Ormansey Secretary, Tim Hurley Treasurer and Doug Falconer Immediate Past Chair.

We welcome more directors and members joining us to create Community Land Trusts in Mount Alexander Shire.

We have hit the ground running by being publicly very supportive of Mount Alexander Shire Council resolving to establish Mount Alexander Affordable Housing Trust and a \$500,000 startup fund. Congratulations to everyone involved in this milestone initiative. MAAHT is an important validation and umbrella for all of us seeking affordable cooperative housing in the Shire.

Furthermore, we have begun researching land for Community Land Trusts for different target audiences.

We will announce in September an October public meeting to share our vision and to invite people to Express an Interest for CLT campaigns we will launch. We will have an updated website by then as well.

In the meantime, please join via our website www.macll.org.au; or email info@macll.org.au

MOUNT ALEXANDER AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST (MAAHT)

As you know the trust deed for the MAAHT was approved at the recent MASC meeting.

Please see attached MAAHT update.

For more info and to ask your questions on MAAHT see

<https://shape.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/mount-alexander-affordable-housing-trust>

Clare Richards, the MASC Housing Solutions Broker, is developing a communications piece outlining the differences between MAAHT, Mount Alexander Community Land Ltd (MACLL) and the Castlemaine Community Co-operative and how they can align.

For more information on the MAAHT reference documents including the deed, ToR, EOI process for the trust community advisory group etc see:

[meeting-of-council-18-june-2024-supporting-information.pdf \(mountalexander.vic.gov.au\)](#) p 342-372 .



*MHN representatives meeting
with Clare Richards*

WHOLE OF HOME RESILIENCE ASSESSMENTS

From Lisa Merkestyn of the Castlemaine Institute,

Hi All,

Our EOI for Whole of Home resilience assessments has just gone live.

<https://shape.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/whole-home-resilience-project>

We'd appreciate if you share this with your networks within Mount Alexander Shire and encourage people to apply.

Here is project information you can share:

Find out how you can adapt your home for climate resilience

Castlemaine Institute and the Resilient Building Council are offering free energy efficiency and resilience home assessments to 150 households in Mount Alexander Shire. These assessments provide professional recommendations to enhance year-round comfort, reduce energy bills, and manage risks from natural hazards such as bushfires, floods, storms, and extreme heat.

WHOLE OF HOME RESILIENCE ASSESSMENTS (CONT.)

We invite applications from a range of house types - old and new, weatherboard, brick, brick veneer. We know communities are stronger when they work together and encourage you to get your neighbourhood involved.

The data collected will inform strategies to improve the resilience and energy efficiency of homes throughout the region. This will inform a cost benefit business case to support future policy and investment in whole of home retrofits.

Find out more and [register your interest](#) on Shape Mount Alexander before 31 July 2024. Assessments will take place between August and December 2024.

<https://shape.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/whole-home-resilience-project>

The project is co-delivered by the Castlemaine Institute and Resilient Building Council, in partnership with Mount Alexander Shire Council and the Victorian government Department of Energy Environment and Climate Action, with support from Emergency Recovery Victoria. The project is made possible by funding provided by the Australian Government in partnership with the States and Territories under the National Partnership Agreement for Disaster Risk Reduction.

For more info: see lisa.merkesteyn@castlemaineinstitute.org.au

VACANT DWELLINGS

Our discussions with owners of vacant dwellings have resulted in nine vacant dwellings released as affordable rentals, 3 shop tops 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

One property owner encourages others to join her, saying

“Offering this kind of affordable rental is just such a simple, but life-changing way to be part of a community. We reckon houses are for living in. And ours is lived in and cared for, while the reduced rent covers our outgoing costs. We worked all this out directly with the resident/tenant, who we connected with through the local grapevine. She’s fantastic and we really value the relationship we’ve got with her.”

AIR B'N'B'S

Great report by Grounded [Grounded Community Land Trusts](#) which looks at the impact of Short-Term Rental (STR) on communities in Australia's tier one tourism towns.

The report recommends an innovative cap 'n trade approach to rebalance the market towards long term trends.

[Airbnb Cap 'n Trade Explainer - Grounded](#)

The Airbnb cap n trade system is covered in [ABC article](#), [the Business](#) and NOW [CH9 news](#).

Thurs July 4th, 6pm is [an event discussing the policy](#) and how it can help reduce the rate of change in our communities, whilst adding resilience through Community Land Trusts.

Our Shire has a lower Air BnB percentage to long term rentals and occupied dwellings than some other shires but this report and advocacy is significant in an integrated approach to addressing the housing crisis.

We have 1300 rentals, approx. 330 air BnBs and 8,400 occupied dwellings.

STATE GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION ON PLANNING ACROSS HOUSING, TRANSPORT, INFRASTRUCTURE ETC

The State is indicating that this consultation and the subsequent policy and legislation will shape Statewide planning across housing, transport, infrastructure etc.

I would really encourage everyone, as groups and collectives, and individually, to have your say. They have a map-based system where your input is linked to location, so it should give a good picture of local issues and priorities if everyone gets online and submits.

<https://engage.vic.gov.au/project/shape-our-victoria/participate>

MHN SUPPORTING OTHER HOUSING NETWORKS

We are supporting the development and action of other housing networks in the Hunter Valley, Macedon Ranges Shire, Hepburn Shire, East Gippsland and City of Greater Bendigo

SALT GRASS PODCAST ON HOUSING

Local amazing podcaster Allie Hanly produced the following episodes on the housing crisis with interviews with various community members, community organisation representatives and Council representatives.

As Allie said It has been a big project, but wonderful to explore these issues and talk to so many wonderful people.

Thanks and congratulations to Allie for bringing it all together and crafting these podcasts.

Here are the links:

[Episode 1](#) - What's the Problem?

[Episode 2](#) - Building Together

[Episode 3](#) - Creative Solutions

These three episodes were supported by RMIT University's Strategic Impact Fund, which supports interdisciplinary research translation through projects that bring together RMIT researchers, industry and community.

You can also go to Ali's website saltgrasspodcast.com