

Social Housing

— An Anglicare Perspective —

Anglicare has increasingly become engaged in providing a range of accommodation and related tenancy support services as it has recognised the links between housing and homelessness. While acknowledging that personal circumstances, disability and illness as contributing factors in homelessness, Anglicare endorses the position that a principal cause of homelessness is a housing market which has become increasingly unaffordable and inaccessible.

Anglicare recognises that a major source of poverty and demand for welfare services is insecure and unaffordable housing. Within this context the provision of secure and affordable housing is a significant anti-poverty strategy and an appropriate activity for an agency committed to promoting community wellbeing and meeting the needs of the marginalised in the community.

In keeping with this, Anglicare's approach to the provision of social housing is founded on the following principles:

- Affordable and secure housing provides a stable base from which people can maintain their health and well being and helps support them to make a positive contribution to the community.
- Affordable and secure housing helps to break the cycle of poverty and homelessness.
- A good housing service is one that values its tenants, respects their dignity and provides opportunities for them to participate in or receive services that enhance their quality of life.
- A good housing service is one that operates on sound business principles while balancing the needs of vulnerable clients.

Over the past decade, Anglicare has increasingly developed a range of accommodation projects, and related tenancy support services.

The Anglicare housing model separates housing and support so that we can use a philosophy of 'No Retreat'.

This means support workers' contact is maintained with clients throughout cycles of relapse into challenging behaviour, even when this means they have had to leave their accommodation.

The 'No Retreat' model has contributed significantly to many people successfully becoming housed.

A key element of our support is to work collaboratively with Anglicare housing staff to ensure accommodation is properly maintained.

Anglicare commits to house those most in need of social housing. In many cases, this means tenants who are at risk of chronic homelessness or who face significant personal/ social barriers preventing them from accessing private rental accommodation. This includes those with mental illness and people from Indigenous and different ethnic backgrounds.

Our Position Statement
Anglicare SA acknowledges and actively promotes the right of all people to safe, affordable and secure accommodation which is appropriate to their needs and circumstances.
The prevention of homelessness through the provision of social housing options, intervention to prevent eviction, and support for people to secure or sustain accommodation, are central planks of Anglicare SA's response to upholding this right.

Anglicare's social housing model for people with complex needs includes:

- social inclusion – based on client's needs
- partnerships between relevant agencies and people in the community
- harm minimisation and managing client behaviour
- cultural awareness and sensitivity
- Respect in all interactions, and
- Peer support.

For groups with special needs, good housing outcomes often require housing support, therefore, all Anglicare's housing services ensure links are made for tenants with a diverse range of services through Anglicare programs to ensure advantage is taken of the opportunities available eg: specialist drug and alcohol rehabilitation, gambling rehabilitation, youth, employment and training and family relationship assistance programs.

A story of hope...

An Aboriginal single parent with three children of primary school age was referred to Anglicare's Supported Tenancies Program (STP) as she was facing eviction from her Housing SA property due to debt and poor property condition.

The tenant had experienced many years of domestic violence, depression and severe financial difficulty. She lacked the skills to attend to her children's emotional and developmental needs and ability to maintain her property to an acceptable hygienic level.

The STP worker got to know the woman, and developed a support plan with the family, addressed her debt issues and negotiated payment plans.

Together they developed a plan to clean up the house, room by room and the tenant would sometimes work through the night to complete the tasks assigned to her for that week.

In collaboration with the school the STP worker found the children out of school hours' activities and the school offered extra assistance to the children to increase their ability to complete their school work.

These efforts made a major positive impact on the children's behaviour at home.

After 12 months on the STP program, the tenant had managed to pay off her debt to Housing SA and the majority of her other debts.

She had increased her self esteem, established social contacts and returned to TAFE College to further her community services study to help other people.

Anglicare and advocacy

Anglicare speaks out on issues affecting people in need of housing through participation in the following organisations:

- Shelter SA
- Homelessness SA
- South Australian Council of Social Service (SACOSS)
- Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS)

How can you help?

- Through donations: monetary, food, clothing, household items
- Volunteering to help in an Anglicare program
- If you are interested in becoming involved in Anglicare's advocacy work, contact us

For more information

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