



The Secretary
Legislative Council Select Committee – Short Stay Accommodation in Tasmania
Legislative Council
Parliament House, Hobart 7000
ssa@parliament.tas.gov.au

2 August 2018

Dear Committee Members,

YNOT appreciates the opportunity to respond to the Legislative Council Select Committee Short Stay Accommodation in Tasmania inquiry. ,

Young people are a cohort that is disproportionately affected by a lack of appropriate and affordable housing. Increasing house and rental prices in Tasmania are making it more difficult for young people on low incomes, and increasingly middle incomes, to enter the housing and rental markets.

While housing affordability is a concern for many Tasmanians, we know young people can face additional barriers to entering the market and are further disadvantaged by this. For example, young people may be on lower incomes, such as training wages or Youth Allowance, which makes it more difficult to save for a bond and afford rent than if they were on an adult wage or Newstart payments. Young people can also be seen as a less attractive prospect compared to other rental applicants and experience discrimination because of their age, lower incomes and lack of previous rental history, making it difficult to enter a highly competitive rental market.

Young people who cannot secure appropriate and affordable housing may face living in overcrowded housing or experience homelessness. These situations have a significant impact on a young person's health and wellbeing. If they are living in overcrowded housing or couch surfing, it can also place additional pressure on friends or family they may be staying with. Young people are also less likely to secure social housing tenancies with less than 1 in 200 tenancies held by young people in Tasmania¹.

There are many factors that influence the availability and affordability of housing, including the rise of short stay accommodation. There has been some research to show short stay accommodation has benefits for small business and tourism². However, YNOT is concerned about the impact of whole properties being utilised for short stay accommodation and exiting the rental market.

There is limited data on the impact of short stay accommodation on the rental market but we do know there has been an increase in the number of properties listed on short stay accommodation websites.

¹ Shelter Tasmania 2018, *Shelter TAS 4 2018 Election Priorities*, Shelter Tasmania, <<http://www.shelbertas.org.au/news/tas-election-2018/>>

² Gimmer, L, *The Airbnb Effect: The Impact of Increased Tourist Visitation to Small Businesses in Tasmania*, 13th Biennial Conference: Leisure for Social Change, December 4-7, 2017, Hobart, Tasmania.



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For example, data on Airbnb listings shows that in Tasmania in July 2016 there were 1198 entire homes listed as available. This has risen to 3491 entire homes in January 2018. This increase has also coincided with a decrease in rental properties advertised³. These listings do not include properties listed where a single room may be advertised. YNOT believes this does not have the same level of impact on the rental market as single rooms are unlikely be long-term rental options.

Further data is required to understand where the increase of short stay accommodation has had a significant impact on the rental market and what responses may be required to address this. YNOT believes this will require better monitoring of the type, location and number of properties available for short stay accommodation, at a minimum.

This data and evidence base will assist the development of long-term planning for housing, including priority areas and the types of housing required. Increasing the amount of housing in any area will take time so it is important that policies developed are proactive and can address current and future needs.

YNOT believes this will create a better balance between the needs of people who are struggling to find affordable housing with those who benefit directly from short stay accommodation.

YNOT would also like to emphasise that while it is important to understand the impact of short stay accommodation, it is not the only issue that needs to be addressed in order to increase the amount of affordable housing. There needs to be a multifaceted approach to addressing the lack of affordable housing and ensuring that particularly disadvantaged cohorts, such as young people, have appropriate support.

YNOT understands there are benefits of short stay accommodation; however, we need to ensure this is balanced with meeting the needs of local Tasmanians and ensuring young people have the opportunity to grow and thrive in this State.

Due to our limited capacity, we are only able to provide this brief response. YNOT thanks the Committee for the opportunity to provide a response to the inquiry and looks forward to seeing the final Report.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tania Hunt', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Tania Hunt
CEO
Youth Network of Tasmania

³ Eccleston, R, Warren, N, Verdouw, J and Flanagan, K 2018, 'A blueprint for improving housing outcomes in Tasmania', *Institute Insights: Insights Three*, Institute for the Study of Social Change, University of Tasmania, <http://www.utas.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/1074609/Insight-Three-Housing-Web-Version.pdf>.

