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Chief Executive Officer

REPORT ON OPERATIONS

June 2023



**Hobsons
2.0**

Issue 73

Published July 2023

Presented at the Council Meeting of Council on 11 July 2023

The CEO Report on Operations is a regular report that is published by the Hobsons Bay City Council.

The purpose of this report is to inform Council and the community of recent issues, initiatives and projects undertaken across Council. The report is provided on a monthly basis.

CEO update

During June, the Chief Executive Officer participated in a number of events, meetings and discussions about a range of matters relevant to Hobsons Bay and the local government sector.

Many of the events and meetings attended by the CEO during this period were related to regional initiatives and collaboration such as:

- attendance at a meeting with The Hon. Minister Sonya Kilkenny MP, The Hon. Melissa Horne MP, Pene Winslade, Director Sustainable Communities, Celia Haddock, CEO Maribyrnong City Council and other joint Council executives to discuss the implications of recent changes to the WorkSafe Major Hazard Facility guidelines.
- attendance at a meeting with Wetlands Centre stakeholders, Sanjay Manivasagasivam, Director Infrastructure and City Services and Council officers to discuss an interim proposal for the Wetland Centre;
- attendance at the Western Region CEOs meeting, hosted by Maribyrnong Bay City Council;
- attendance at the LeadWest Joint Delegated Committee meeting, hosted by Brimbank City Council;
- attendance at a meeting with executives from Level Crossing Removal Authority (LXRA), Sanjay Manivasagasivam, Director Infrastructure and City Services and Council officers to discuss the new level crossing projects within the municipality;
- attendance at a site tour of IFC Global Logistics to view the new distribution centre;
- attendance at the Hobsons Bay Community Fund lunch;

- attendance at a meeting with Sarah Connolly MP, Member for Laverton together with Mayor Cr Antoinette Briffa to discuss Councils advocacy priorities;
- attendance at the M9 meeting of CEOs;
- attendance at a LeadWest Parliamentary event together with Mayor Cr Antoinette Briffa and Cr Matt Tyler; and



Image: Cr Matt Tyler, The Hon. Melissa Horne MP, Mayor Cr Antoinette Briffa and Aaron van Egmond, CEO

- attendance at a book donation event by the Maltese Consul General in Melbourne, Chirelle Ellul Sciberras together with Mayor Cr Antoinette Briffa, Andrew McLeod, Director Corporate Services and Council officers;
- attendance at the Mayoral Reception for the 2023 Anjo Student delegaton.



Aaron van Egmond
Chief Executive Officer

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Delivering for our community

Library services



Libraries

June 2023

Physical loans (books etc.): 25,391
eLibrary loans (eBooks etc.): 8,221
Renewals: 7,933
Total: 41,545
Library visits: 43,358

Loans have decreased 1.9 per cent compared to May 2023.

Year to date loans have decreased 2.3 per cent compared to June 2022.

eLibrary loans have decreased 2.31 per cent compared to May 2023.

Year to date eLibrary loans have decreased 2.0 per cent compared to June 2022.

Community Hubs and Centres



Maltese Consulate Book Donation

On 28 June 2023, Mayor Cr Antoinette Briffa, welcomed a donation of books from the Maltese Consul General in Melbourne, Chirelle Ellul Sciberras. Cr Briffa, who is of Maltese heritage, welcomed the generous donation from Consul General Ellul Sciberras.



Image: Mayor Cr Antoinette Briffa, Maltese Consul General Melbourne Chirelle Ellul Sciberras and Council representatives

Council+ Launch at Newport Community Hub

On 28 June 2023, Newport Community Hub welcomed Council+ services with a Twilight Wonderland community event. This event saw activities across six spaces at the community hub, including a: Cooked Chook Puppet Show, Camp Fire Story Time, glow in the dark sensory zone, digital drawing workshop, musical performances, neon UV face painting and more.



Image: Council+, Community Engagement and Substation



Image: Council+, Urban Forest and Early Years

Laverton Community Hub

There were 407 bookings in June.

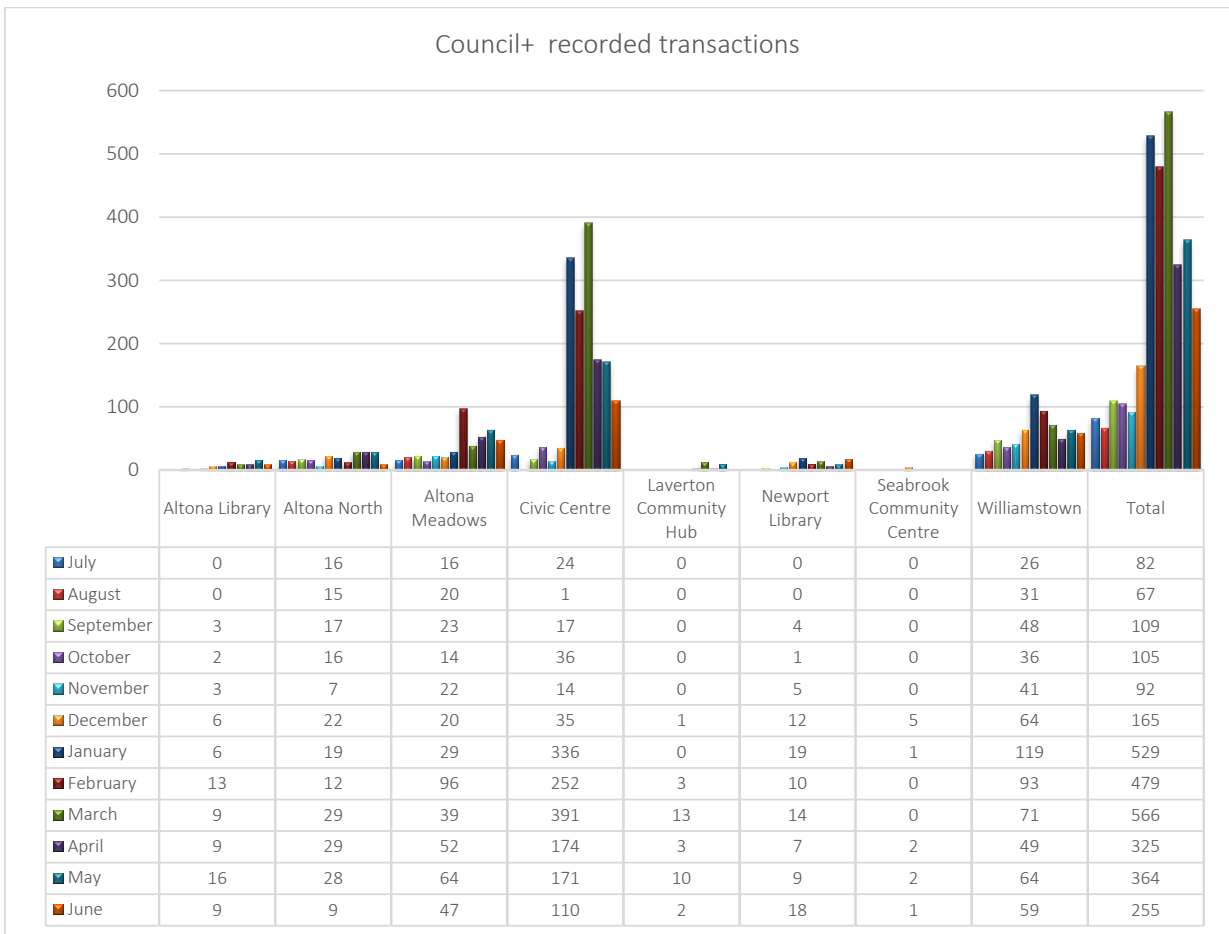
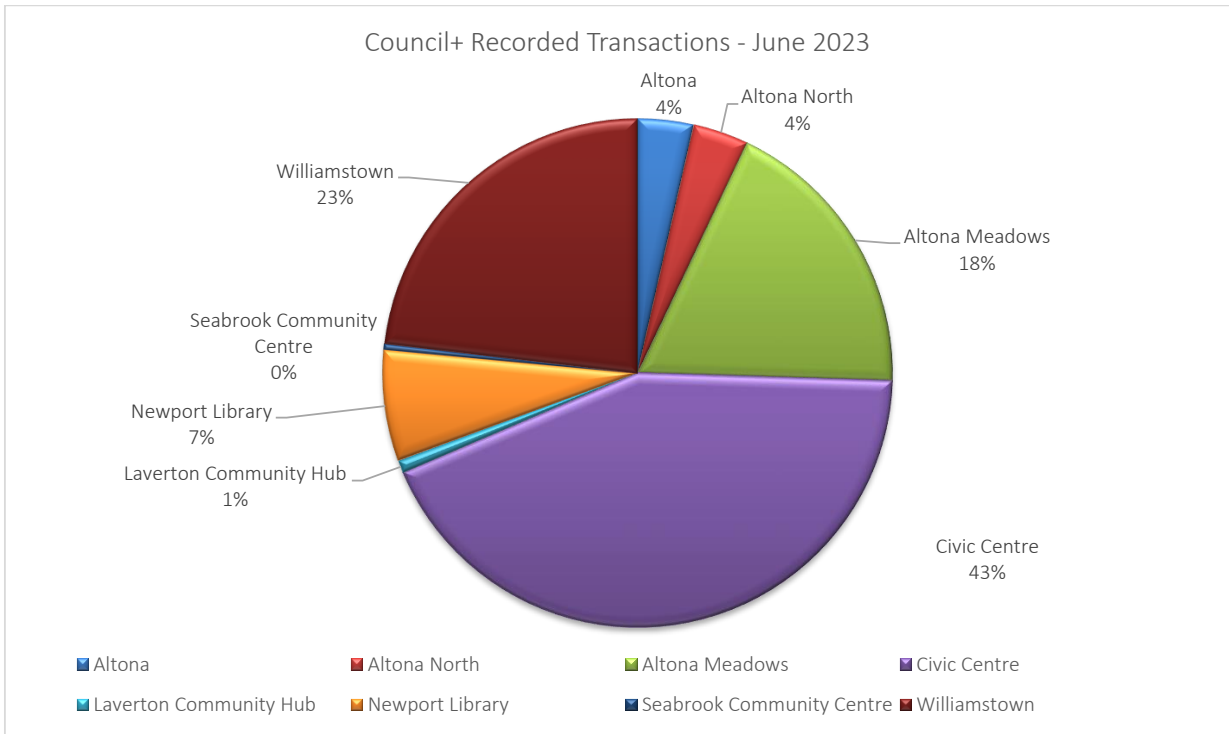
Newport Community Hub

There were 196 bookings in June.

Seabrook Community Centre

There were 92 bookings in June.

Council+



Youth services



Youth Counselling

Council's generalist youth counselling service delivered 44 face-to-face and online counselling sessions this month to 41 young people. Due to an increase in demand, at the end of the month there was an eight-week waiting period for a young person to access youth counselling services. To alleviate staffing and waiting list pressures, Council will be securing a locum.

Youth Programs and Activities

Council ran 18 program and activity sessions, with 147 contacts with young people. This included the FReeZA Committee, Young Ambassadors Group and Youth Change Makers Challenge and the Newport drop-in program.

Youth-Focused Capacity Building Programs

Four sessions were held for 44 parents and stakeholder contacts to support and empower young people, including the Tuning Into Teens program, Youth Mental Health First Aid and Parent webinars.

Immunisations



Immunisations

In June, Council's immunisation team held 16 immunisation sessions plus four home visit sessions and administered 1,086 immunisations to 535 clients. These sessions were held at Williamstown Town Hall and Laverton Community Hub.

Early years and family services



Maternal and Child Health (MCH)

In June, there were 79 infants born to Hobsons Bay families. The highest numbers of infants born were in Altona Meadows and Altona North. The Universal MCH Service completed 1,006 consultations/appointments. The Enhanced MCH Service received 13 new referrals and provided 90 ongoing consultations for vulnerable families. Eighteen families received support packages from either St Kilda Mums or the Victorian Government Nursery Equipment Program for vulnerable families. Council continued to provide families with welfare phone calls due to babies affected by COVID-19.

Parenting Programs

The following parenting support programs were delivered:

- 21 first time parenting groups
- 6 sleep support groups
- 41 sleep support outreach appointments
- 9 breast feeding support sessions
- 3 baby makes three sessions
- 3 Circle of Security sessions

Family/Social work support (MCH)

Council's MCH social worker responded to five new Family Violence referrals. Eight further consults were conducted in relation to family violence.

Preschool Field Officer

The Preschool Field Officer (PSFO) Program supports Kindergarten Educators to develop capacity and skills in delivering inclusive programs to all children and those with additional needs. The PSFO program provided 27 consultations to educators.

Kindergarten Registration

Sixty-two three-year-old and 56 four-year-old registrations for kindergarten were processed.

Occasional Care

Fourteen children (between 0-5 years) attended Council's Occasional Care program on Thursdays and Fridays totalling 54 sessions.

Supported Playgroups

Twenty smalltalk groups, nine supported playgroups and five one-to-one sessions were provided to vulnerable families in June.

Services for older residents and residents with disabilities



Planned Activity Groups (PAG)

Thirty-four Planned Activity Group sessions were provided to 76 clients.

Community Transport

Seniors transport provided 25 return trips to 31 clients. Two social transport trips were provided to 11 clients.

Aged Assessment

The Assessment team undertook 65 assessments and 97 support plan reviews for services required by older residents.

Delivered Meals

One hundred and forty-three residents received a meal delivered to their home. In total 1,983 meals were provided to eligible residents.

Home Maintenance

Nine residents received a service through Council's Home Maintenance program.

Arts, Culture and Events



Through the Artist's Eyes Exhibition

Hobsons Bay Arts Society launched their annual *Through the Artist's Eyes* exhibition in the Civic Centre Foyer on 30 June 2023. The free exhibition featured works from society members and is on display until 27 July 2023.



Image: *Through The Artist's Eyes* exhibition



Image: Artwork by Vicki Tyrell



Image: Mayor Cr Antoinette Briffa, launching the exhibition

Anjo Student Delegation

On 28 June 2023 Council welcomed the student delegation from our Japanese sister city, Anjo. The event was attended by the Consul-General of Japan, Mr Junji Shimada, along with members of the Hobsons Bay International Friendship Association and host families. This year marks the 35th anniversary of Council's sister city relationship, which enables us to share ideas, stories and experience each other's cultures.

As part of the event, Council gifted the delegation copies of *Life on A Plate*, a collection of recipes collected from the families of Hobsons Bay.



Image: Mayor Cr Antoinette Briffa, Cr Matt Tyler, CEO Aaron van Egmond, Consul-General of Japan Mr Junji Shimada, members of the student delegation, Hobsons Bay International Friendship Association and host families



Image: Mayor Cr Antoinette Briffa and attendees of the Anjo student delegation event



Image: Anjo and Hobsons Bay students teaching each other games

Creative Exchange Lab's 'Recollection' Program

Council's Creative Exchange Lab is calling for local artists to participate in a new *Wunder Gym* program as part of the Melbourne Fringe Festival 2023.

Through mentorship from Elvis Richardson, workshops and shared resources, participants will create work for multi-venue exhibitions across Wyndham and Hobsons Bay.

Expressions of interest opened on 12 June 2023 and will close on 12 July 2023.



Image: Wunder Gym and Melbourne Fringe Festival's 'Recollection'

Creative City 2030

On 2 June 2023 an internal Council consultation allowed 29 staff members to contribute to the plan via a workshop. In conjunction with the workshop, an online survey was conducted with 87 people submitting feedback.

Spark Strategy will consolidate consultation feedback and conduct benchmarking against other municipalities to allow the Arts and Culture unit to develop a draft plan to present to Council.

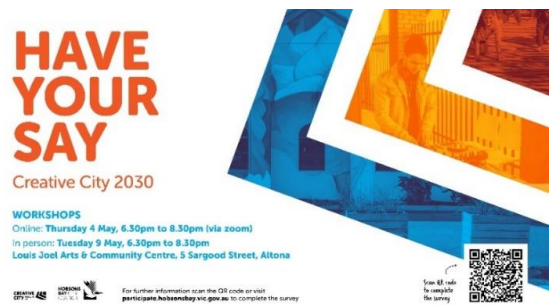


Image: Creative City 2023, have your say

Pier Street Pearls Exhibition and Book Launch

On 8 June 2023, Mayor Cr Antoinette Briffa launched the *Pier Street Pearls* exhibition and book at Altona RSL.

Pier Street Pearls celebrates the 120-year history of Altona’s main shopping strip, Pier Street, through photographs, memorabilia and stories from the community.

The project was supported through a Make It Happen Grant.

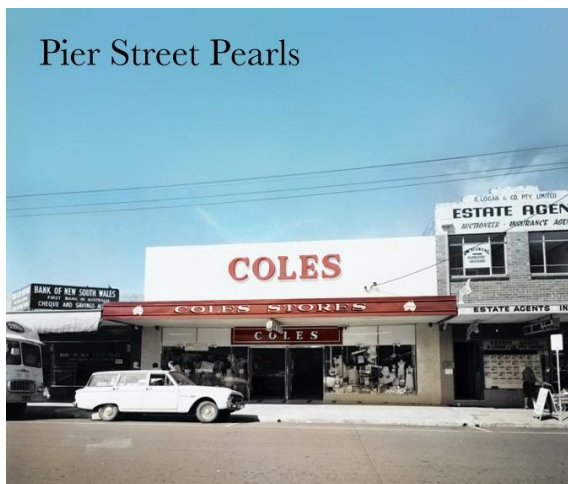


Image: ‘Pier Street Pearls’, promotional image



Image: Mayor Cr Antoinette Briffa and participants at ‘Pier Street Pearls’ launch

Old Laverton School

June user groups included Laverton Community and Education Centre, Altona Brooklyn Kyokushin Karate, Sound Spa Yoga and El-Shaddai Samoan group.

Altona Theatre

During June the Altona City Theatre Company entered their exclusive use period in preparation for their July opening of *Beautiful - The Carol King Musical*. The company held multiple rehearsals each week as well as running their Youth Arm ACTION Youth Theatre classes on Saturday mornings.

Williamstown Town Hall

Bookings during June included a cultural concert by Orioz Inc., two workshops for LGBTIQ+ advocates and the Australian Red Cross Lifeblood blood donor service.

During June the Williamstown Literary Festival celebrated its 20th Anniversary, with a three-day program across various locations including Williamstown Beach, Williamstown Town Hall Louis Joel Arts and Community Centre, Yarraville and Footscray. Council provided attendees of the festival with a plant giveaway and information on sustainability initiatives.

Regular immunisation sessions were held at the Town Hall as well as meetings by The Williamstown Toastmasters, All Aboard Club with the Williamstown Film Society.



Image: ‘Williamstown Literary Festival’ 20th anniversary



Image: 'Stereo Stories' at the opening night of Williamstown Literacy Festival

Woods Street Arts Space

During June, Woods Street Arts Space hosted 34 creative workshops including Western Edge Youth Arts, *Laverton Edge*. *Laverton Edge* is a weekly workshop program aimed at people 18 to 30 years of age, especially those experiencing structural disadvantage. Workshop outcomes will culminate in a public live performance at Woods Street Arts Space in September 2023.

Woods Street Arts Space called for Expressions of Interest (EOI's) for its August to December 2023 program. Eight EOI's were received, resulting in over one hundred workshops and events. The proposed program encompasses various artistic forms including dance, music, art, exhibitions and community engagement initiatives. Submitted applications hold promise for creating a vibrant and inclusive community space that caters to the diverse interests and needs of community members.

The August to December 2023 program will be launched in mid-July 2023.



Image: 'Laverton Edge'

Brooklyn Community Hall

Capital works in Brooklyn Hall have been completed, with the keys being handed back to Council on 15 June 2023. The new facility will encourage a broad range of users across different rooms, while also activating the outside deck facing the reserve and gardens.

Event Applications and Permits

Nine Event Expressions of Interest applications were received and four Event Permits were issued during June.

Filming

Five Filming Permit applications were received and four Filming Permits were issued during June which were low impact filming permits.

Markets

During June the Altona Lions Club Cherry Lake Market was well attended and Altona Beach Market went ahead as scheduled. Regional Farmers Markets took place in Altona Meadows and Williamstown on 4 June and 11 June 2023, respectively. The Williamstown Craft Market took place on 18 June 2023 at Commonwealth Reserve. The Spotswood Slow Food Market took place on 24 June 2023.

Street banners

Womindjeka flags designed by Aretha Brown were installed at the gateway flagpole sites on Melbourne Road (Spotswood), Millers Road (Brooklyn), Kororoit Creek Road (Altona) and Queen Street (Altona Meadows). *Womindjeka* is a Kulin Nation word used as a welcome, translating as ‘Come, with purpose’.

Airtime

To celebrate World Environment Day on 5 June 2023, Airtime showcased the artwork of seven students from Williamstown High School in *What Matters*. The new artwork explores the environment and things that matter to young people in our community. *What Matters* is on display until late July 2023.

During May, Council called for young people aged 12 to 25 years of age to submit Expressions of Interest (EOI’s) for Airtime’s August 2023 to July 2024 program. Seven young people applied with four successful applications aligning with Youth Fest, International Women’s Day and World Environment Day. The program will be launched in mid-July 2023.



Image: ‘What Matters’ at Airtime in Altona Meadows

Laneway Gallery

June saw the launch of Laneway Gallery’s *Intertwine* by Yu Fang Chi. The exhibition explores the understanding of material, processes of making; and the relationship between human and environment. The exhibition will be on display from 1 June to 27 July 2023. The exhibition is presented as part of Plastic Free July running from 1 June to 31 July 2023.

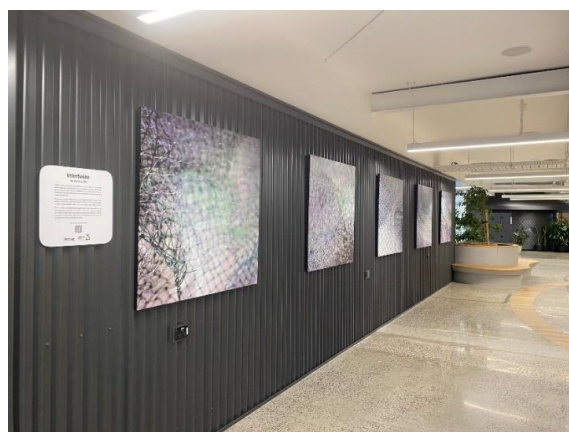


Image: ‘Intertwine’ by Yu Fang Chi at Hobsons Bay Civic Centre

The Outside Gallery

On 30 June 2023, *Urban Threads* by artist Cara Jones was launched at Outside Gallery in Newport. Cara’s work re-imagines the unique characteristics of local industrial landscapes and creates a new perspective that honours the history of these unique spaces. *Urban Threads* is on display until November 2023.

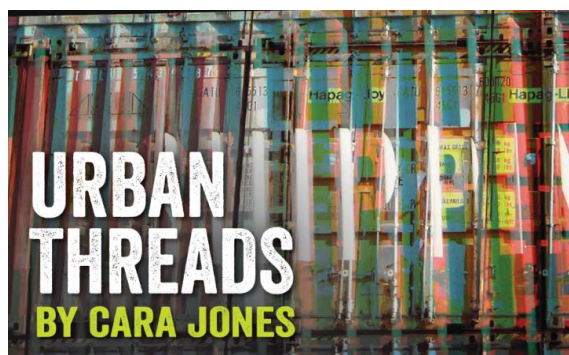


Image: ‘Urban Threads’ by Cara Jones

Hobsons Bay Visitor Information Centre (VIC)

A total of 1,010 visitor contacts were made, 54 per cent were visiting from Victoria, 13 per cent were international visitors, 12 per cent were from interstate, and 21 per cent were locals.

Experience Hobsons Bay information stalls were provided at Williamstown Literary Festival and Seaworks Winter Solstice Festival.



Image: Experience Hobsons Bay stall at Seaworks Winter Solstice Festival

The Substation

During June, The Substation called for babies of pre-crawling age and their carers to take part in the beginnings of a new artwork, *The Composers*. Created by artist group I/O, *The Composers* uses motion tracking software to translate babies' movement into music. Admission was free and sessions ran from 19 June 2023 and will conclude on 20 July 2023.

On 24 June 2023 the Newport Folk Festival returned to The Substation with a program of concerts, workshops and join-in sessions for all music lovers.

The Substation also hosted the Newmarket Primary School exhibition, comprising of works completed by 23 grade six students. The exhibition focused on the theme of identity and featured sculptures, prints and poetry readings. The free exhibition was opened to the community between 16 and 17 June 2023.



Image: The Composers

Capacity Building Workshops

Council hosted a second workshop to support the skills development of local community groups and event organisers. Facilitated by Emily O'Brien, the focus of the workshop was Risk Management. Thirty-three people attended the session.



Image: Risk Management workshop, facilitated by Emily O'Brien

Cherry Lake Cultural Series

Funded by a Council Make it Happen Grant, the Cherry Lake Cultural Series took place at the Cherry Lake Market on 4 June 2023.



Image: Cherry Lake Cultural Series

Sea Shepherd Community Event

On 4 June 2023, Sea Shepherd hosted a community event in Commonwealth Reserve and a beach clean-up in Williamstown.

Kite Festival

Cloud 9 Creations presented the first edition of the Kite Festival on 11 June 2023 at Apex Park, Altona.

Newport Folk Festival

Between 23 and 24 June 2023, members of the Newport Fiddle and Folk Club joined the local community to participate in a packed program of performances. The event was supported by a Make it Happen Grant.



Image: In Her Shoes performing at Newport Folk Festival

Winter Solstice

On 23 June 2023 Seaworks Winter Solstice Festival, supported by a Make it Happen Grant, took place with an evening of art, music, giant puppets, maritime heritage, food, and wine.



Image: Seaworks Winter Solstice Festival

Inter-Agency Network

In June Orange Door and Council were guest presenters at The Hobsons Bay Inter-Agency Network. The Inter-Agency Network promotes awareness of the community sector and a collaborative approach to service delivery. New to Melbourne’s west, Orange Door provides help for families needing support or experiencing family violence.

Community Leadership Summit

Council officers joined neighbourhood houses and other local community sector stakeholders at the Community Leadership Summit, celebrating the graduation of 15 local participants in the Hobsons Bay Leads the Way program.



Image: Fahrana and Janine from Hobsons Bay Leads the Way, speaking to the South Kingsville Community Centre proposed mural community engagement project

National Reconciliation Week

In response to National Reconciliation Week's (NRW) 2023 theme 'Be a Voice for Generations' Council celebrated at Laverton Hub with dancers from Yarrabah, Council's sister city, sharing their culture and dance with a multicultural audience across all ages.

Council also hosted the *Reconciliation Week: A History in Posters* exhibition and *The Colours and Sound of My Totem* film and sculpture installation at the Hobsons Bay Civic Centre. *The Reconciliation Week: A History in Posters* exhibition displayed the history of NRW week through the last thirteen years of posters. *The Colours and Sound of My Totem* film and sculpture installation presented artwork created in 2022 at Woods Street Arts Space via creative workshops with local children and local creatives: visual artist Frances Loriente, Wiradjuri Soprano Shauntai Batzke, Kokatha/Mirning musician Bart Willoughby, Yvonne Rigney Ngarrindjeri/Kokatha dancer and guest Taungwurrung Yorta Yorta elder Maxine Briggs.

Make it Happen Grants

Applications submitted in the final round of the Make it Happen Grants program in April were assessed with funding administration completed during May and June. The April round received 53 applications, 35 of these were funded with an allocation of just over \$173,000.

The 2023 Make it Happen Grants program (February to April) attracted a total of 121 eligible applications, 87 grants were funded with a total allocation across all three rounds of just over \$535,000, including 35 community projects or initiatives, 31 events and festivals and 21 Toyota equipment and resources.

Toyota Australia contributed \$30,000 to an equipment and resource grant.

Grant applicants estimate leveraging a total investment of \$1,900,000, reaching approximately 84,000 participants and engaging over 1,600 volunteers in 21,000 volunteer support hours.



Image: Yarrabah dancers at Laverton Hub for National Reconciliation Week



Image: Film still from 'The Colours and Sound of My Totem'

2023 Pride Program

During June the Community Liaison Group, Mayor and members from the Pride Squad workshopped the program of activities that will make up the Pride Program in 2023. Workshops explored the values of the Pride Program and how it can complement the existing community-led calendar of activities – further strengthening the joy, inclusion, sense of connection and community throughout the year.

World Refugee Day

World Refugee Day was acknowledged on 20 June 2023. In honour of the day, 100 English language students with diverse migrant histories came together in celebration of their journey to Australia, their belonging and life here, and in reverend respect for those that are refugees, former refugees, and struggling with their current migration journey.

Community Partnerships Spotlight



Council provides funding to a number of community organisations that support and strengthen community. This section highlights these partnerships and provides information about one each month.

Deadly Western Connections –Reconciliation Week award winner

Hobsons Bay City Council, as part of the western region councils' 'Deadly Western Connections' project, received an Award at this year's inaugural Reconciliation Week Maggolee Awards.

Deadly Western Connections is a suite of services and a [website](#) to promote civic participation and provide access to employment opportunities, culturally safe programs and services and raise awareness of upcoming events for the First Nations communities living across Melbourne's west.



Image: Deadly Western Connections

Strategy, Economy and Sustainability

Economic development



Business Workshop – Introduction to Instagram Reels

Council held a free business workshop at the Civic Centre on 20 June 2023. Facilitated by Maree Sortino from the Social Secret, the highly anticipated reels workshop taught 35 attendees the hints, tips and little tricks to getting Instagram reels right.



Image: Attendees of a business workshop, focusing on Instagram reels

Sustainability and Business Networking Event

Held at Louis Joel Arts and Community Centre on 6 June 2023 and attended by over 35 local businesses, the evening featured a panel of local businesses who shared the various ways their business has a focus on sustainability.

The event was also a great opportunity for local businesses to promote their business and share ideas while meeting business professionals from a range of different industries.



Image: Participants at June's business networking event



Image: Participants at June's business networking event

Hobsons Bay Mayoral Business Visits

On 9 June 2023 the Mayor and Council representatives visited local businesses to learn more about their achievements and current challenges. The businesses visited this month included Treehab Tiny Houses, Urban Salvage, Symal, Wamarra, Altona North Training, Super Movement, Go Bella Beauty and Just Sweets. Council intends to conduct another business visit later in the year.



Image: Treehab Tiny Homes (Williamstown North) founder Riley Skeene with Mayor Cr Antoinette Briffa and Council representatives



Image: Symal's CEO Nabeel Sadaka and Wamarra's Managing Director Hayden Heta (Spotswood) with Mayor Cr Antoinette Briffa and Council representatives



Image: Urban Salvage (Spotswood) owner Andy Mineur with Mayor Cr Antoinette Briffa and Council representatives



Image: Owners at Super Movement and Altona North Training (Janis Wilson and Gabriel Leutz) with Mayor Cr Antoinette Briffa and Council representatives

Environmental sustainability



Image: Go Bella Wellness & Skin Therapy's Jennifer Carey with Mayor Cr Antoinette Briffa, Cr Pamela Sutton-Legaud and Council representative

Driver shortage impacting waste and recycling kerbside collections

The driver shortage whilst continuing to have a small impact throughout June has improved significantly in comparison to previous months. A small number of residents experienced some delayed bin collection for their waste and recycling kerbside service, however, the majority of bins were collected on the scheduled days including:

- all rubbish bins were collected on scheduled days
- FOGO bins were collected as scheduled 19/22 days. The bulk of makeup collections occurred the next day
- glass was collected as scheduled 20/22 days with makeup collections occurring one day later
- Recycling was collected as scheduled 18/22 days, with makeup collections occurring a maximum of two days later

Council continues to work with our contractor to deliver services with bins collected on scheduled days and if collection schedules are impacted, to ensure makeup collections are scheduled as soon as possible.

World Environment Day

To celebrate World Environment Day, Council ran a series of free eco-friendly activities. Approximately 150 people joined in, with events held in four locations, over four days. Activities included BYO bottle to claim free product refills, sewing repair workshops and opportunities for children to learn ways to respect and care for the environment.



Image: Just Sweet's (Altona) owner Enzo Amato with Mayor Cr Antoinette Briffa, Cr Pamela Sutton-Legaud and Council representatives

Waste education school program

Council continues to deliver free, curriculum-aligned waste education incursions to local primary schools. Five Beyond the Bin waste education sessions were delivered in June, engaging approximately 170 students on the topics of waste, recycling and the environment.



Image: Beyond the Bin, educating school students on waste, recycling and the environment

Early Years Clothes Swap

Sixty-six residents attended Council’s Early Years Clothes Swap event, preventing pre-loved kids wear from going to waste while helping families save money on kids' apparel. Attendees also had the chance to learn about reusable nappies and sanitary items at the event with Council’s pop-up reusables stall.



Image: Early Years Clothes Swap event

Big Group Hug/E-Waste Drop-Off Day

Seventy-three vehicles came through to drop off donations of new and pre-loved children’s gear and/or unwanted electronic waste at our joint Big Group Hug and E-Waste drop-off Day.

[Big Group Hug](#) is a not-for-profit organisation committed to helping our community’s most vulnerable children. By partnering with them, Council enabled residents to donate their unwanted items to families living in financial crisis.

Simultaneously, residents could drop off their unwanted e-waste, which contain toxic and hazardous materials, meaning it cannot go in the kerbside bins. E-waste also has valuable resources and materials that can be reused and made into new products.



Image: Residents dropping of pre-loved childrens gear as part of Big Group Hug/E-Waste drop-off Day

Low Waste Council+ launch at Newport

Residents who attended Council’s Twilight Council+ launch event at Newport Community Hub were treated to winter warmers served in reusable mugs. Two hundred and thirty-five mugs were washed and reused on-site, saving single-use cups from landfill.

Reusables Rebate

The 2022/23 Reusables Rebate program has now closed with 443 residents having claimed the rebate since the program launched in February 2023. The rebate gave residents up to \$130 back when they purchased reusable nappy products, sanitary products and/or incontinence products, saving them money and reducing their environmental footprint.

The Reusables Rebate is the result of the 2022/23 community Pitch your Project program.

Upcycle in Style

Council ran three varied hand sewing events in June as part of the free Upcycle in Style workshop series. Fifty-three participants registered to learn the practical and creative art of hand stitching, to mend and upcycle pre-loved textiles. Hand sewing is a life-long skill that will save residents money and help to fight fast fashion.

Upcycle in Style is the result of the community 2022/23 Pitch your Project program.

Olives to Oil Festival

Approximately 800 residents attended the Olives to Oil harvest day festival, where the community was invited to bring down their backyard olive harvest to have them pressed into fresh olive oil. Four hundred and fifty-six people provided olives for pressing, resulting in 650L of oil being created. The retail value of oil created at the event was \$6,500-\$13,000. The popular festival also included live music, face painting and gardening workshops.

Olives to Oil is the result of the 2022/23 community Pitch your Project program.



Image: Locally grown olives at Olives to Oil Festival

Strategic Planning



Consultation on the Draft Industrial Land Management Strategy & Design Guidelines

Public consultation on the Draft Industrial Land Management Strategy (ILMS) and Design Guidelines was undertaken throughout June. The draft strategy sets out a vision, objectives and a future direction for key industrial precincts in Hobsons Bay and will inform a future planning scheme amendment.

Council held drop-in sessions on 31 May, 3 June and 7 June 2023 to provide community members and key stakeholders an opportunity to speak directly to Council staff about the draft strategy. In addition to drop-in sessions, Council officers have been meeting directly with affected landowners and businesses.

Council is seeking feedback on the draft documents until 2 July 2023.



Image: ILMS drop-in session at Hobsons Bay Civic Centre

Draft Gambling Harm Prevention Policy Statement: Consultation

Consultation on the draft Gambling Harm Prevention Policy Statement closed on 9 June 2023. Residents and key stakeholders were able to have their say during the consultation period by visiting Council's [Participate Hobsons Bay](#) website. Council also sought feedback via a targeted community organisation survey to understand the level and types of sponsorship arrangements provided by the gambling industry to local community organisations.

A report is now being prepared summarising the key feedback. The feedback will be used to inform an updated policy statement that will be brought back to Council for adoption later this year.

A Fair Hobsons Bay for All: Preliminary Engagement

Preliminary engagement to inform Council's integrated social policy framework, A Fair Hobsons Bay for All, wrapped up in June. The policy aims to achieve greater fairness and inclusion for everyone who lives, works, studies, visits and plays in Hobsons Bay. The 2019 framework is being updated to take account of changes to policy and funding contexts and respond to new or emerging issues for priority populations.

During preliminary engagement, Council received over 150 responses to our community and stakeholder survey. Focus groups were also held with every priority population supported by the policy, providing an opportunity to highlight key challenges, discuss responses and suggest ideas for Council.

Community input through this preliminary engagement stage will be used to develop an updated draft, which will be made available for community feedback later this year.



Image: Participants in women's focus group



Image: Participants in children's focus group (Altona College)

Planning, Building and Health Update

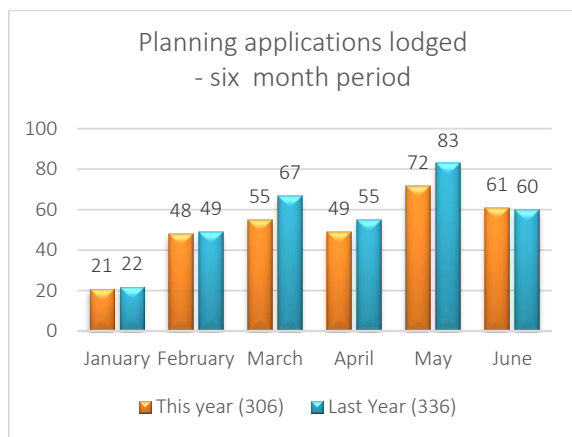
Planning



Planning applications received

Council received 61 planning permit applications for the month of June.

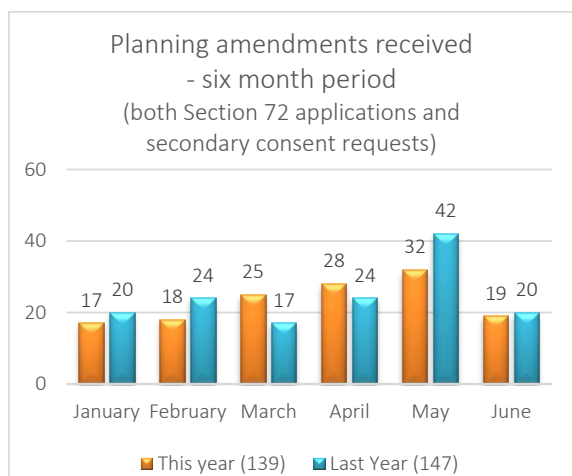
For the six-month period from January to June 2023, 306 planning permit applications were received, a nine per cent decrease from the same period last year.



Amended permit applications lodged

Council received 19 planning permit amendment applications for the month of June.

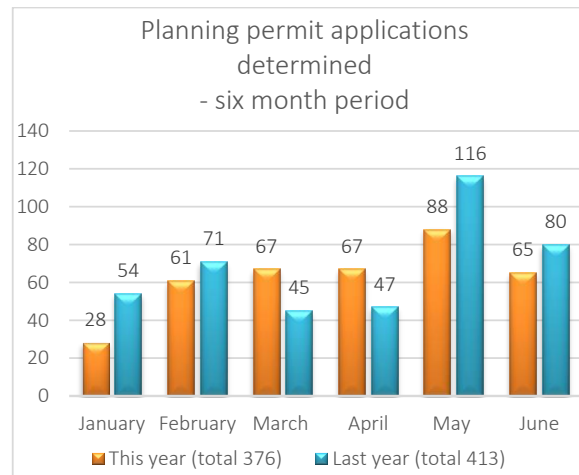
For the six-month period from January to June 2023, 139 planning permit amendment applications were received, a five per cent decrease from the same period last year.



Planning applications determined

Council completed 65 planning permit applications for the month of June.

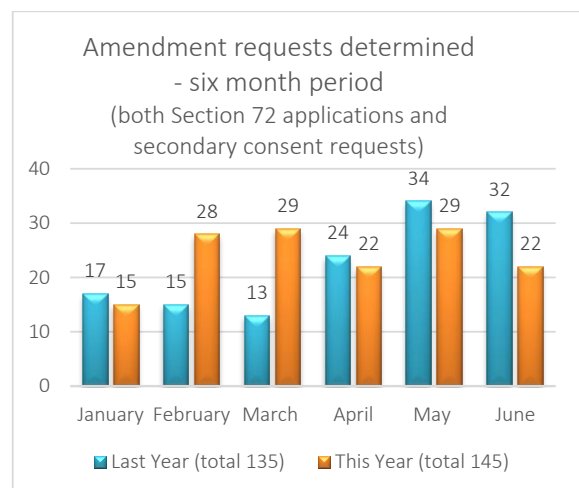
For the six-month period from January to June 2023, 376 planning permit applications were completed, a nine per cent decrease from the same period last year.



Planning amendment requests determined

Council completed 22 planning amendment applications for the month of June.

For the six-month period from January to June 2023, 145 planning amendment applications were determined, a seven per cent increase from the same period last year.



VCAT

The Town Planning department received the following appeal decisions:

Application Number: PA1839892-1A
Address: 144-150 Hall Street, Spotswood
Proposal: buildings and works including demolition and construction of warehouses, use of the land for office and warehouse, reduction in the statutory car parking requirement and construction and display of signs in accordance with the endorsed plans
Delegate Decision: permit issued
DPC Decision: N/A
VCAT Decision: approval (Varied)
Made by consent order? yes

Application Number: PA220004
Address: 16 Derham Street, Spotswood
Proposal: construction of three, attached two-storey dwellings
Delegate Decision: permit issued
DPC Decision: N/A
VCAT Decision: approval (Varied)
Made by consent order? no

Application Number: PA1533178-4
Address: 31-69 McLister Street, Spotswood
Proposal: amendment to a permit to include use and development of the land for a childcare centre and restricted recreation facility (gymnasium and yoga studio) within the approved development and a reduction in the statutory parking requirement
Delegate Decision: permit refused
DPC Decision: N/A
VCAT Decision: refused
Made by consent order? no

Application Number: PA210437
Address: 32 Waratah Drive, Altona Meadows
Proposal: construction of two, double-storey, side-by-side dwellings
Delegate Decision: permit refused
DPC Decision: N/A
VCAT Decision: refused
Made by consent order? no

Delegated Planning Committee (DPC)

There were no applications considered at the Delegated Planning Committee in June 2023.

Planning applications of interest

There were no applications of interest to report this month.

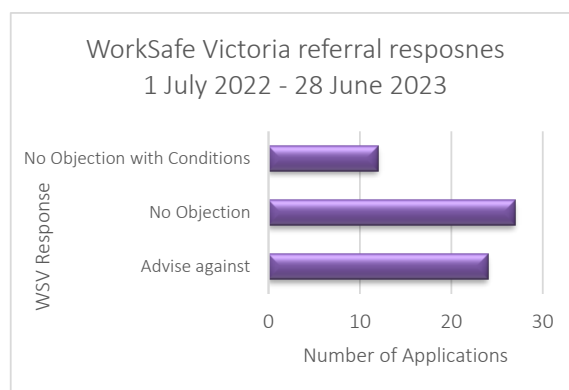
Major Hazard Facilities

There are nine Major Hazard Facilities (MHF) in Hobsons Bay. WorkSafe Victoria (WSV) are the authority that provides advice to Council on planning applications for use and development in proximity to an MHF.

Council developed and adopted the Interim Management of Land Use Planning Around Major Hazard Facilities Guidelines (the Guidelines) to guide planning decisions. The Guidelines outline the Inner and Outer Advisory Areas around MHFs to determine whether an application should be referred to WSV.

Since 1 July 2022, Council's Statutory Planning team have referred 63 planning permit applications to WSV. WSV have provided the following responses:

- opposed 24 applications
- support 12 applications (subject to conditions)



An analysis of these responses has confirmed that WSV has requested either the removal of any use that proposes a significant attraction of people or have requested placing significant limits on the number of people that can work at or visit these sites.

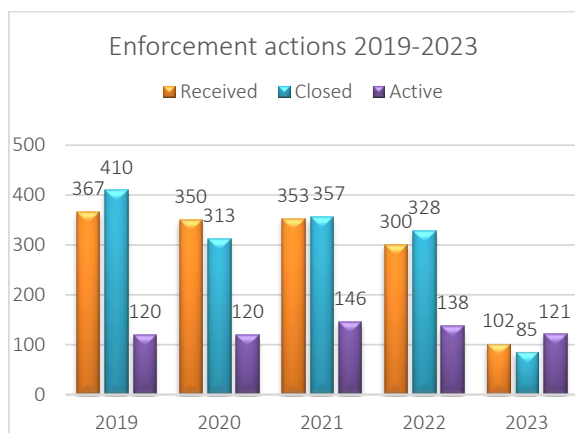
Of the 63 Applications referred to WSV, 23 involve warehouses or other low intensity industrial uses. There is a very small population expectation at these properties.

Whilst it appears that WSV in raw statistics supports development, the analysis of the response has confirmed that WSV generally oppose any use which seeks to significantly increase population growth and population attracting uses around MHF's.

The expansion of the Inner and Outer Advisory Areas would favour MHF operations.

Active and significant enforcement matters

Council received 10 planning enforcement issues for the month of June.



Corporate landowner found guilty and fined for clearing native vegetation

Council has successfully prosecuted a corporate landowner who allowed the premature clearing of two hectares of native vegetation in Harcourt Road, Altona before the required planning permissions were issued.

The Magistrate found the property owner guilty of the charge and fined them \$70,000 without conviction. This magnitude of fine means it is deemed to be of state significance; there has been only one other fine higher.

The property owner pleaded guilty in the Sunshine Magistrates Court to the criminal charge of breaching a planning permit and working without endorsed ecology, weed management and construction management plans.

The unlawful April 2021 clearing works were stripping the topsoil and vegetation without first checking for the presence of any legless lizards, or installing fence screens or truck wash bays to retain any noxious weed seeds. Had works waited until the plans were endorsed and the preventative actions taken, the company would not have been prosecuted. As a result, the works have destroyed the habitat of the nationally rare legless lizard (Delma impar) and may have destroyed some animals. The works also resulted in the likely spread of bad weed seeds (eg Chilean needle grass) that have the potential to impact the rare spiny rice flower growing adjacent to the land.

Council charged the property owner for breach of Section 126 (Contravention of Planning Permit) of the Planning and Environment Act 1987.

The accused stated they were poorly advised by their planning consultant, a claim rejected by the courts as the company was an experienced property developer. The court found the company saved money and time by "jumping the gun". The court confirmed Council's actions as being the proper course.

The accused has 28 days to appeal the decision.



Image: A striped legless lizard found in adjacent land

Building



Permits and consents

- Council's Municipal Building Surveyor issued 3 building permits
- 3 building permits were issued by private building surveyors
- 22 report and consent dispensation requests were determined

Inspections and enforcement

- 9 building notices/orders were issued
- 14 notices/orders were resolved/completed/cancelled
- 107 inspections occurred during the month

Building information requests

Council processed 196 requests for information during June.

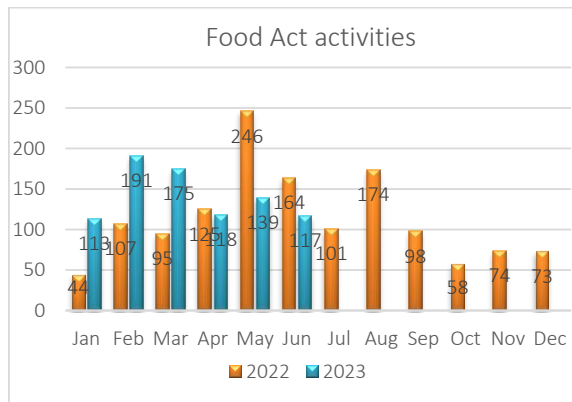
Health



Food Act activities

The following activities were recorded in June 2023 with the main activities being:

- 78 mandatory food assessments and inspections (Class one = 0, Class two = 71, Class three = 7)
- 8 new food premises registration inspections
- 8 plans assessments
- 5 progress inspections
- 0 transfer of food registrations



Client managed premises

Council has 24 client managed premises.

Food sampling

No samples were taken from Class two premises during June.

Food recalls

No food recalls were received in June 2023.

AccuPoint samples

In June, no AccuPoint samples were taken from client managed premises.

Outbreaks

No outbreak investigations were conducted in June 2023.

Foodtrader

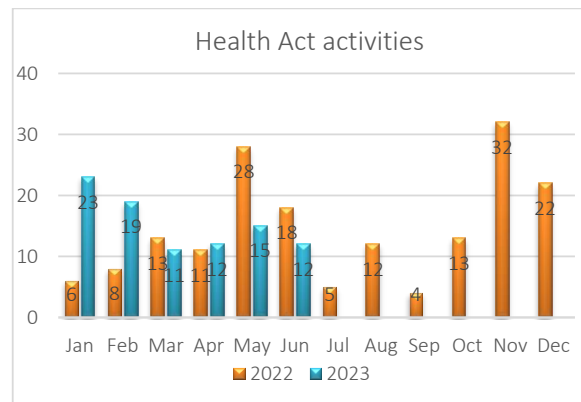
On 19 June 2023, Foodtrader officially replaced Streatrader. Customers have continued to apply for registrations and Statements of Trade.

- 67 Statements of Trade lodged with Council
- 7 new registrations issued

Public Health and Wellbeing Act activities

The following activities were recorded during June 2023:

- 7 mandatory public health inspections
- 0 new premises registration inspections
- 1 progress inspection
- 3 assessment of plans



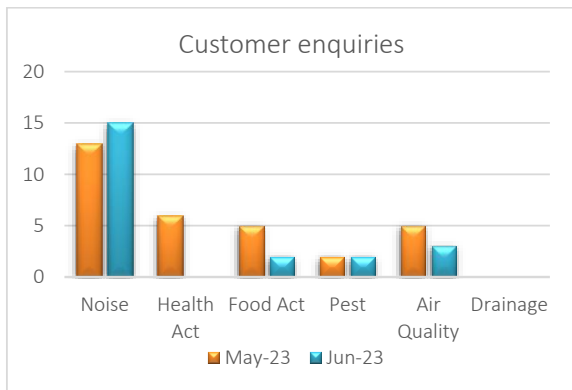
Tobacco Act activities

During June 2023, 20 tobacco education/complaint visits were conducted.

Customer Enquires

During June 2023, 22 customer requests were received relating to:

- noise (15)
- Health Act (0)
- Food Act (2)
- pest Control (2)
- air quality (3)
- drainage (0)



Governance

Governance



Councillor delegates to Council and Community Committees

Councillors attended the following meetings of Council and Community Committees held between 1 June and 30 June 2023:

- Cr Jonathon Marsden attended the meeting of the Metropolitan Transport Forum held on 7 June 2023
- Cr Matt Tyler attended the meeting of the LeadWest Joint Delegated Committee held on 8 June 2023
- Cr Peter Hemphill attended the meeting of the Hobsons Bay Community Fund held on 14 June 2023
- Cr Peter Hemphill attended the meeting of the Substation Board held on 22 June 2023

Record of Meetings attended by Councillors

Councillors attended the following meetings held between 1 June and 30 June 2023:

- 6 June 2023 Councillor Briefing Session attended by Cr Antoinette Briffa, Cr Diana Grima, Cr Peter Hemphill, Cr Daria Kellander, Cr Jonathon Marsden, Cr Pamela Sutton-Legaud and Cr Matt Tyler. No conflicts of interest were disclosed.
- 20 June 2023 Pre-Council Meeting Agenda Briefing attended by Cr Antoinette Briffa, Cr Diana Grima, Cr Peter Hemphill, Cr Daria Kellander, Cr Jonathon Marsden, Cr Pamela Sutton-Legaud and Cr Matt Tyler. No conflicts of interest were disclosed.
- 26 June 2023 Councillor Briefing Session attended by Cr Antoinette Briffa, Cr Diana Grima, Cr Peter Hemphill, Cr Jonathon Marsden, Cr Pamela Sutton-Legaud and Cr Matt Tyler. No conflicts of interest were disclosed.

Documents for Sealing

There were no documents that required sealing during the period.

Local Laws



Permits

- issued 0 disabled parking permits
- issued 237 residential permits
- issued 104 visitor permits
- issued 1,146 ticket machine permits
- logged 124 CHARM assignments
- impounded 0 derelict/abandoned vehicle
- issued 21 local law infringements

Parking

- 194 logged CHARM assignments
- issued 1,634 parking infringements
- issued 128 warnings
- percentage of warnings issued were 8 per cent

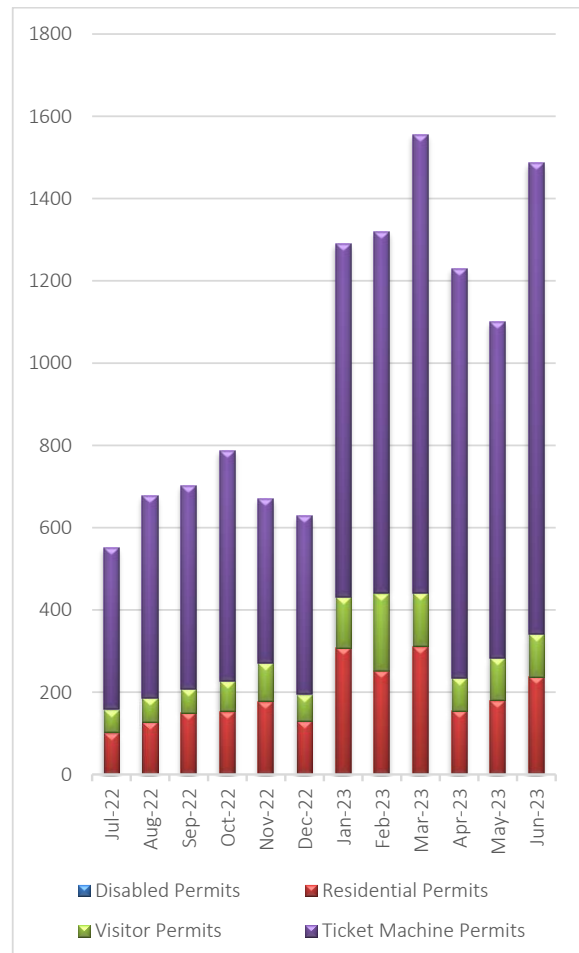


Image: The graph above illustrates the number of permits issued for June 2023

Animal management

- logged 189 CHARM assignments
- 14,912 animals registered
- impounded animals at Lost Dogs Home for (as at 31 May 2023)
 - dogs – 10 dogs impounded, 4 released
 - cats – 36 impounded, 0 released
- 9 animals returned to their owners by Council officers
- issued 24 animal infringement notices

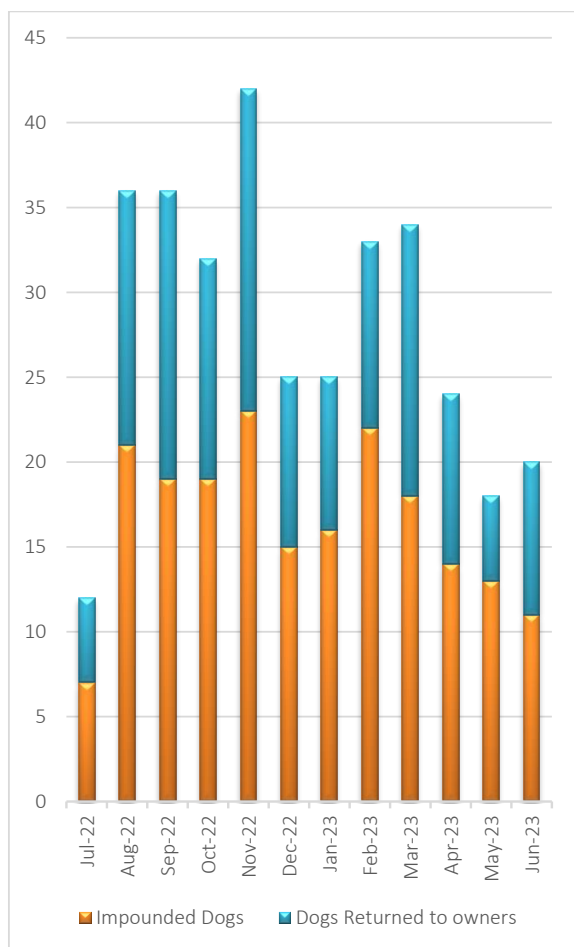


Image: The graph above reflects the number of dogs impounded and the number of dogs returned home by Council Rangers

Communications and Engagement



Communications

June 2023

Council manages corporate social media accounts on Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram.

Social media is measured as below:

- Reactions: like, love, angry, haha, wow, sad



- Impressions: number of times our content is displayed in someone’s newsfeed
- Reach: total number of people who saw that content
- Engagement: number of times someone engaged with our content through clicks, reactions, shares comments

Total performance summary across all corporate social media accounts

Performance Summary

View your key profile performance metrics from the reporting period.

<u>Impressions</u> 221,279 ↘ 52.2%	<u>Engagements</u> 12,681 ↘ 50.9%	<u>Post Link Clicks</u> 4,104 ↗ 9.9%
--	---	--

Engagement Rate (per Impression)

5.7% ↗ 2.8%

Follower growth across all corporate social media accounts

Audience Metrics	Totals	% Change
<u>Total Audience</u>	35,091	↘ 1.2%
<u>Total Net Audience Growth</u>	-439	↘ 210.3%
<u>Facebook Net Follower Growth</u>	-553	↘ 403.8%
<u>Instagram Net Follower Growth</u>	35	↘ 65.3%
<u>LinkedIn Net Follower Growth</u>	79	↘ 31.3%

Total followers per social media accounts

Facebook

Audience Metrics	Totals	% Change
<u>Followers</u>	19,980	↘ 2.7%
<u>Net Follower Growth</u>	-553	↘ 403.8%
<u>Fans</u>	18,377	↗ 0.3%
<u>Net Page Likes</u>	39	↘ 56.2%
<u>Organic Page Likes</u>	51	↘ 52.8%
<u>Paid Page Likes</u>	0	→ 0%
<u>Page Unlikes</u>	12	↘ 36.8%

Instagram

Audience Metrics	Totals	% Change
Followers	7,561	↗ 0.5%
Net Follower Growth	35	↘ 65.3%
Followers Gained	81	↘ 40%
Followers Lost	46	↗ 35.3%

LinkedIn

Audience Metrics	Totals	% Change
Followers	7,550	↗ 1%
Net Follower Growth	79	↘ 31.3%
Organic Followers Gained	79	↘ 31.9%
Paid Followers Gained	0	→ 0%
Followers Lost	0	↘ 100%

Performance per social media account

Facebook

Performance Summary

View your key profile performance metrics from the reporting period.

Organic and Paid ▾

Impressions 140,810 ↘ 63.6%	Engagements 9,188 ↘ 60.5%	Post Link Clicks 1,949 ↘ 34%
---------------------------------------	-------------------------------------	--

Engagement Rate (per Impression)

6.5% ↗ 8.5%

Instagram

Performance Summary

View your key profile performance metrics from the reporting period.

Organic and Paid ▾

Impressions 66,910 ↗ 0.4%	Organic Engagements 1,007 ↘ 36.9%	Profile Actions 221 ↘ 53.3%
-------------------------------------	---	---------------------------------------

Engagement Rate (per Impression)

1.5% ↘ 37.1%

LinkedIn




Performance Summary

View your key profile performance metrics from the reporting period.

<u>Impressions</u> 13,559 ↗ 40.8%	<u>Engagements</u> 2,486 ↗ 159.2%	<u>Post Clicks (All)</u> 2,155 ↗ 175.9%
<u>Engagement Rate (per Impression)</u> 18.3% ↗ 84.1%		

Highest engagement posts for 1 to 30 June 2023

Facebook

Post	Total Engagements
<p>Hobsons Bay City Council Tue 6/27/2023 5:11 pm PDT</p> <p>🐱 Introducing Ferrari, Prada and Luna 🐱 These three are all on a mission to find their forever family! Your lucky home could be...</p> 	<p>1,376</p> <p>Reactions: 90 Comments: 34 Shares: 29 Post Link Clicks: 1 Other Post Clicks: 1,222</p>
<p>Hobsons Bay City Council Wed 6/7/2023 9:50 pm PDT</p> <p>🌬️ Inhale. Exhale. Who doesn't love a breath of fresh air? If you're passionate about improving air quality in the inner west, join...</p> <p>Air Quality Forum</p> 	<p>863</p> <p>Reactions: 4 Comments: 4 Shares: 0 Post Link Clicks: 804 Other Post Clicks: 51</p>
<p>Hobsons Bay City Council Mon 6/5/2023 5:11 pm PDT</p> <p>🎁 Bring your own cup and be rewarded! ☕ You can earn FREE coffee when you bring your own cup to one of 10 cafes...</p> 	<p>814</p> <p>Reactions: 54 Comments: 21 Shares: 6 Post Link Clicks: 300 Other Post Clicks: 433</p>

Instagram

 **hobsonsbaycc**
Tue 6/27/2023 5:11 pm PDT

🐱 Introducing Ferrari, Prada and Luna 🐱
These three are all on a mission to find their forever family! Your lucky home could be...




Total Engagements	72
Likes	65
Comments	4
Saves	3

 **hobsonsbaycc**
Wed 6/28/2023 5:39 pm PDT


❤️ What an amazingly generous community we have 💜🙏 Thank you to all the kind residents who came to support Big Group...



Total Engagements	71
Likes	65
Comments	3
Saves	3

 **hobsonsbaycc**
Fri 6/23/2023 4:03 pm PDT


📣 You might have seen that there will be works on our train lines over the next couple of weeks. 🚆 Buses replace trains on the...




Buses replace trains on the Werribee and Williamstown lines

Total Engagements	61
Likes	49
Comments	8
Saves	4


LinkedIn

 **Hobsons Bay City Council**
Thu 6/8/2023 5:22 am UTC


🌱 Today our staff joined Council's Conservation team to get down in the dirt and plant vegetation for World Environment Day! 🌱 Approximately 70 staff from across the organisation...




Total Engagements	1,314
Reactions	99
Comments	2
Shares	3
Post Clicks (All)	1,210

 **Hobsons Bay City Council**
Wed 6/14/2023 12:11 am UTC


Some of our amazing businesses were treated to a visit by our team last week! As part of our business visits program, Mayor Tony Briffa and Cr Pamela Sutton-Legaud, visited local...



Total Engagements	594
Reactions	31
Comments	0
Shares	0
Post Clicks (All)	563

 **Hobsons Bay City Council**
Tue 6/20/2023 7:25 am UTC

Hobsons Bay City Council acknowledges the recent passing and significant contribution of the Bush Lawyer OAM, a Kuku Djungan Elder. On this day of his funeral and memorial servic...



Total Engagements	168
Reactions	59
Comments	0
Shares	0
Post Clicks (All)	109

Website top pages viewed

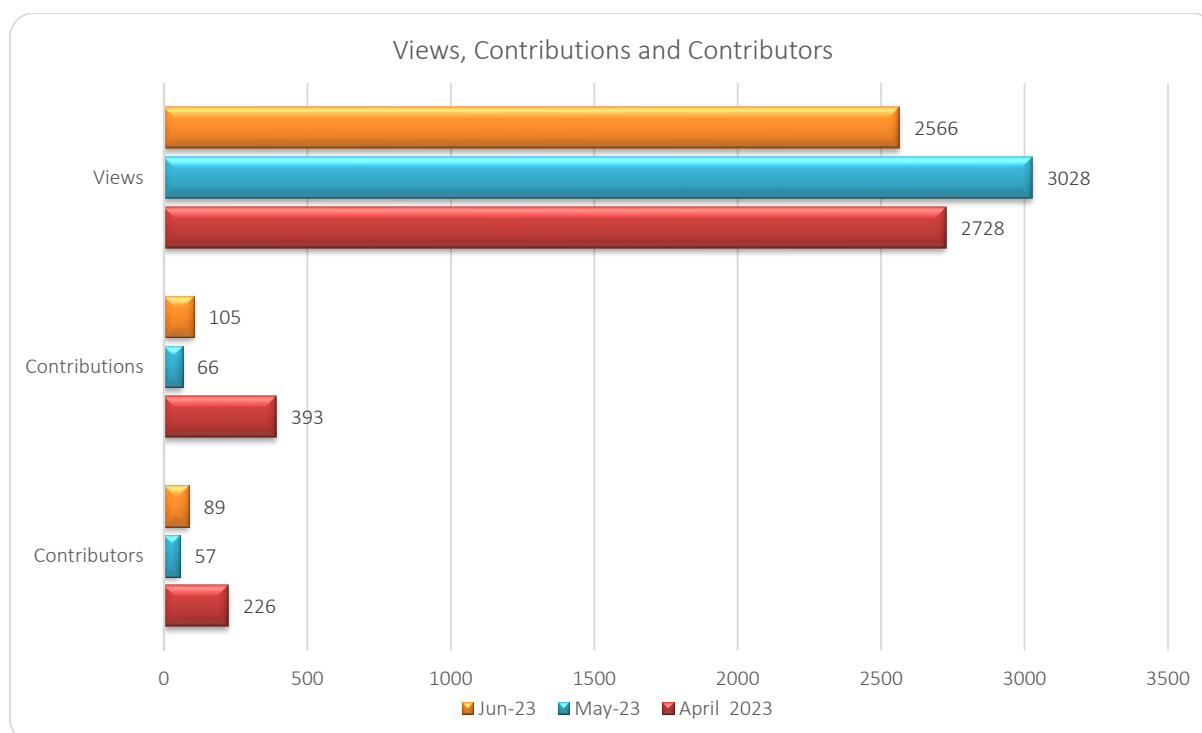
Page title and screen class	↓ Views	Users	Views per user	Average engagement time
	140,256 100% of total	42,722 100% of total	3.28 Avg 0%	0m 55s Avg 0%
1 Home - Hobsons Bay	20,384	12,219	1.67	0m 18s
2 Libraries - Hobsons Bay	9,472	4,251	2.23	0m 23s
3 Search Results - Hobsons Bay	6,464	3,228	2.00	0m 32s
4 Hard waste - Hobsons Bay	3,825	2,317	1.65	0m 52s
5 Find a planning application in Greenlight - Hobsons Bay	3,182	1,706	1.87	0m 22s
6 What's On - Hobsons Bay	3,074	779	3.95	1m 32s
7 When will your bins be collected? - Hobsons Bay	2,851	1,985	1.44	0m 27s
8 Parking permits - Hobsons Bay	2,637	1,657	1.59	0m 27s
9 Waste & Recycling - Hobsons Bay	2,512	1,773	1.42	0m 18s
10 Work Opportunities - Hobsons Bay	2,311	1,606	1.44	0m 07s

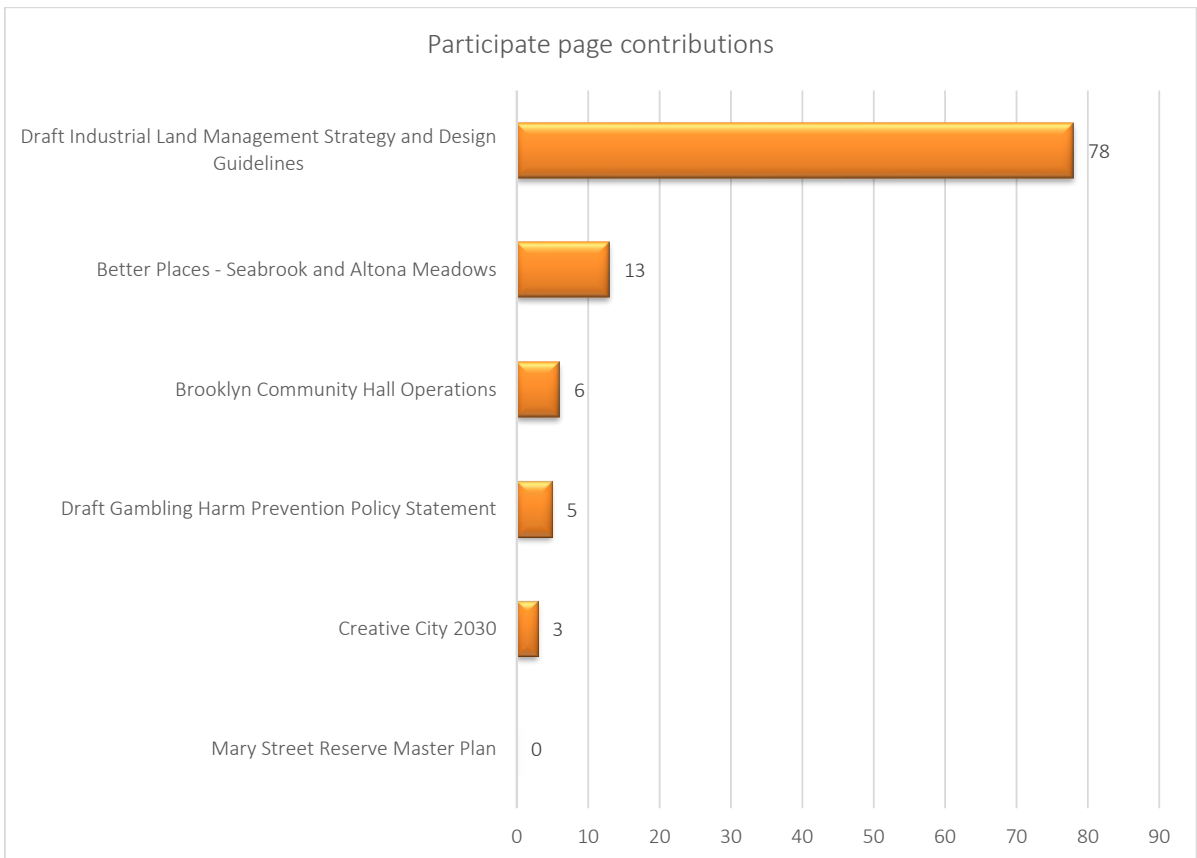
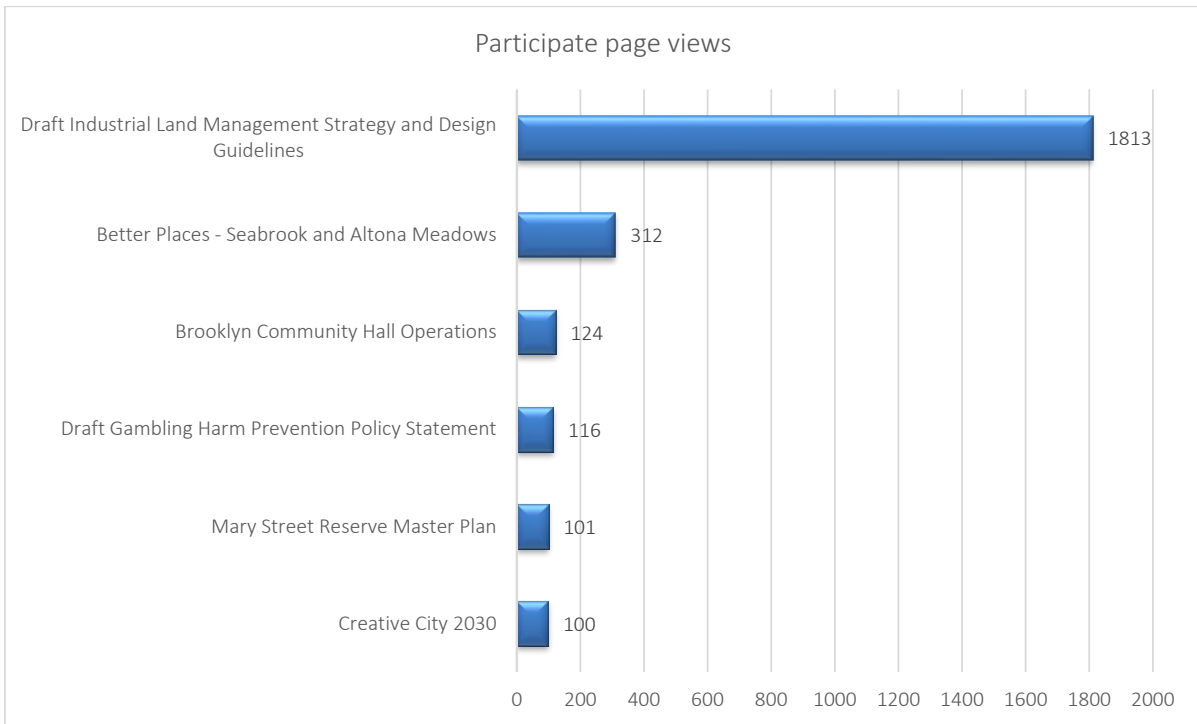


Engagement

Participate Hobsons Bay statistics

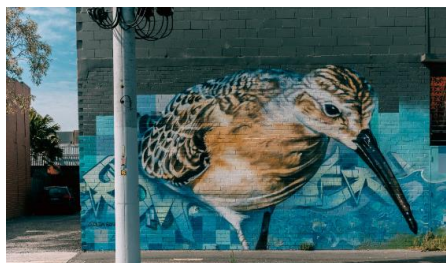
Participate Hobsons Bay, the online community engagement website participate.hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au received the below highlights for June 2023.





Current consultations – June 2023

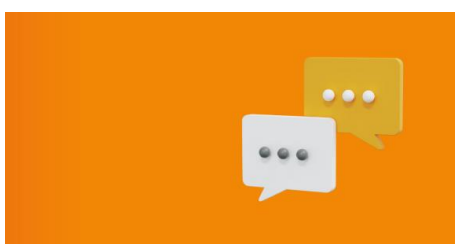
Creative City 2030



Council is developing a new Creative City plan to inform and guide its direction for arts and culture in Hobsons Bay. To contribute to the plan and have a voice, we invited the public to complete the Hobsons Bay Creative City 2030 survey. The survey was available on Participate until early June. Find out [what we heard here](#).

Consultation dates: 21 April - 2 June 2023

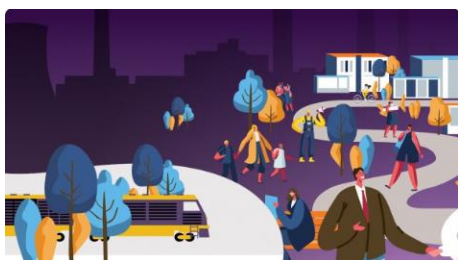
Draft Gambling Harm Prevention Policy Statement



Council developed a Draft Gambling Harm Prevention Policy Statement for Hobsons Bay. It updated our 2015 policy and took a public health approach. We encouraged input from the community on the priority areas, proposed commitments, and any missed aspects. Feedback could be shared on Participate until early June to shape the final draft for Council adoption. Find out [what we heard here](#).

Consultation dates: 11 May - 16 June 2023

Draft Industrial Land Management Strategy and Design Guidelines



Council sought feedback on the Draft Industrial Land Management Strategy (ILMS) and Design Guidelines. This strategy will shape the future of industrial land in Hobsons Bay, impacting landowners, businesses, workers, industries, and the community. Feedback could be shared on the Participate platform until early July to shape the draft ILMS. What we heard report coming soon on Participate.

Consultation dates: 22 May - 2 July 2023

Better Places – Seabrook and Altona Meadows



We invite the community to provide feedback on the draft Place Guide for Seabrook and Altona Meadows. Your feedback will directly impact the future of these areas. The draft Place Guide is [available on Participate](#), and you have until late July to share your input for a final opportunity to have your say.

Consultation dates: 21 June - 23 July 2023

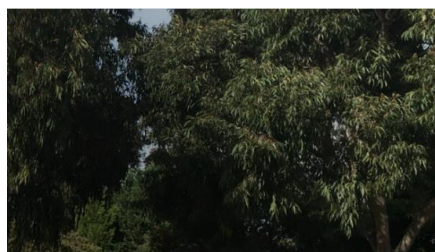
Brooklyn Community Hall Operations



Council is seeking a group of community members who have a vested interest in Brooklyn and the Brooklyn Community Hall to join the operations of this new facility. We will support the group as we establish sustainable management, administration, and financial security of the hall and gardens. Interested individuals can submit their expressions of interest until late July [on Participate](#).

Consultation dates: 20 June - 25 July 2023

Mary Street Reserve Master Plan



The draft Master Plan to upgrade Mary Street Reserve is now open for public comment. You are invited to view the Plan and share your comments with us [on Participate](#) platform until 28 July 2023.

Consultation dates: 28 June - 28 July 2023

In-person consultation sessions in June

Draft Industrial Land Management Strategy and Design Guidelines

When: 3 June 2023

Where: Hobsons Bay Civic Centre

When: 7 June 2023

Where: Zan Zanz Café

Council Plus Launch

When: 28 June 2023

Where: Newport Community Hub

Reports published from consultation – click links to view

Creative City 2030 – [What we heard report](#)

Draft Gambling Harm Prevention Policy Statement – [What we heard report](#)

Advocacy



Youth Mental Health Services

In June, while in Canberra for the ALGA Conference, Mayor Cr Antoinette Briffa and Andrew McLeod, Director Corporate Services visited Federal Parliament to meet with an Adviser from the office of the Assistant Minister for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention, The Hon. Emma McBride as part of Council's advocacy for more youth mental health services in Hobsons Bay.

Western Aquatic and Early Years Centre

While at Canberra, Mayor Cr Antoinette Briffa and Andrew McLeod also met with an Adviser from the office of the Federal Minister for Infrastructure, The Hon. Catherine King as part of Council's continued advocacy for the Western Aquatic and Early Years Centre project.

Hobsons Bay Wetlands Centre

Mayor Cr Antoinette Briffa and Andrew McLeod also had an opportunity to meet with an Adviser from the office of the Minister for Environment, The Hon. Tanya Plibersek in relation to our advocacy for the Hobsons Bay Wetlands Centre project.

Mayor Cr Antoinette Briffa, Cr Tyler and Aaron van Egmond also had the opportunity to promote the Hobsons Bay Wetlands Centre project at a Leadwest State Parliament Event attended by the Minister for Local Government, The Hon. Melissa Horne, the Minister for Tourism, The Hon. Steve Dimopolous, the Leader of the Opposition, John Pesutto and local western MPs.

Better Places

In June, Council briefed and provided updated information about the Better Places Guide projects in Laverton and in Seabrook and Altona Meadows to local MP for Point Cook, Mat Hilakari and MP for Laverton, Sarah Connolly.

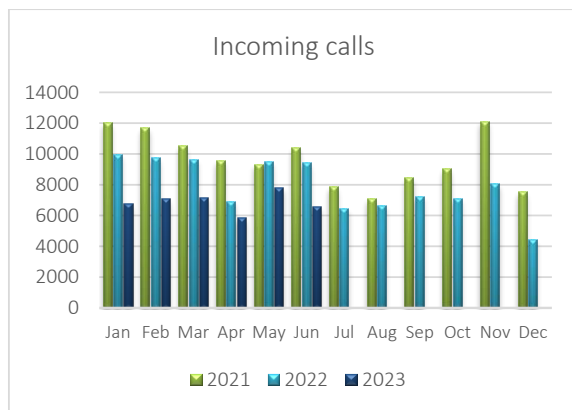
Our Performance

Customer Service



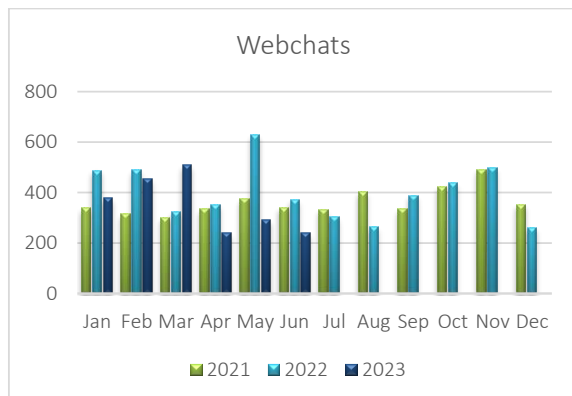
Hobsons Bay City Council is committed to improving our performance and better responding to our community needs.

One way in which we do this is to capture how our community approaches us to ensure we can make that process the best it can be to assist our customers with access to the information needed.



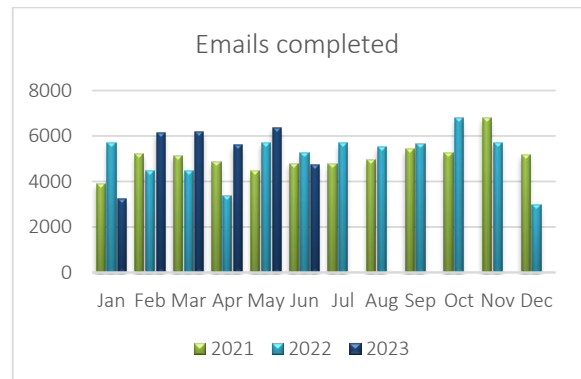
Top enquiries coming from incoming calls are for the following service areas:

- Rates (1,146)
- Local Laws (685)
- Waste (682)
- Assets (361)
- Animals (330)
- Community care (218)
- City Works & Amenities (185)
- Town Planning (102)



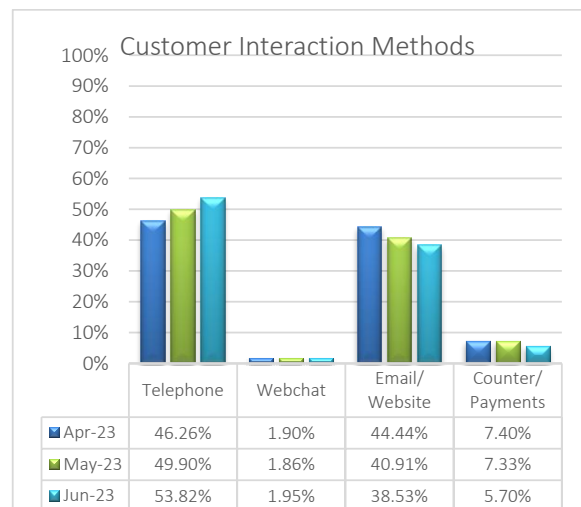
Top reasons our customers contacted Council via Web Chat related to the following service areas:

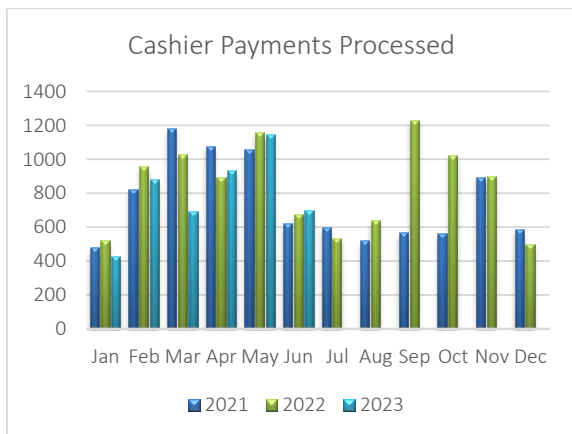
- Waste (45)
- Rates (33)
- Local Laws (19)
- Animals (17)
- Town Planning (17)
- Assets (13)
- City Works & Amenities (11)
- Parking Permits (7)



Top enquiries coming from emails are for the following service areas:

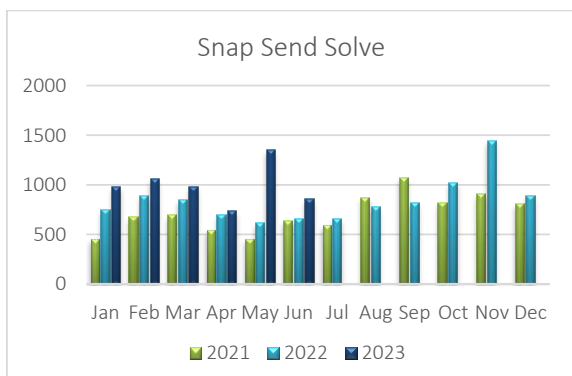
- City Works & Amenities (594)
- Waste (468)
- Local Laws (347)
- Cashier inbox (327)
- Rates (250)
- Animals (135)
- Facilities (68)
- Town Planning (64)



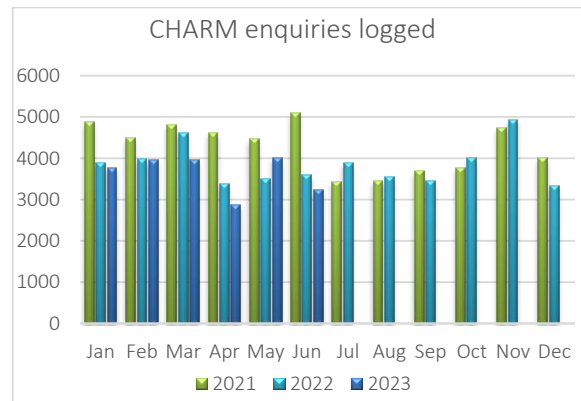


*A recent system change has resulted in a different form of counter statistics. Data has been slightly amended from total counter visits to payment interactions. We are working with Digital Services for an alternative solution.

Snap Send Solve is a free app for iPhone or Android devices that allows visitors and residents of Hobsons Bay to easily report issues to Council by capturing a photo of an issue and having this information sent directly to Council for review.

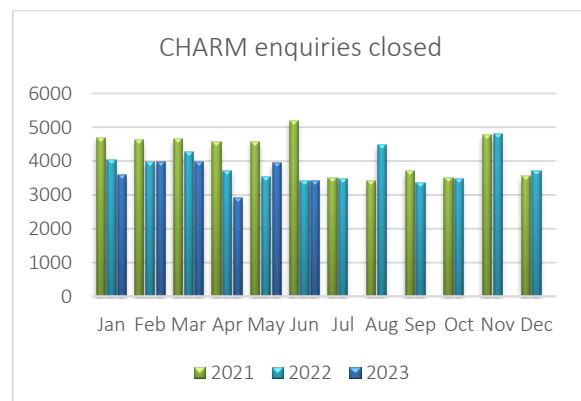


Council's Customer Help and Resolution Management (CHARM) system is used to record customer requests, which are primarily received via phone, Snap Send Solve and email.



Top CHARM requests logged related to the following service areas:

- Animals (390)
- Garbage (298)
- Parking (212)
- Recycling (208)
- Hard waste (186)
- Street trees (184)



Top CHARM requests closed related to the following service areas:

- Garbage (366)
- Council building maintenance (341)
- Parking (255)
- Animals (202)
- Green waste (193)
- Street trees (190)

Financial Management

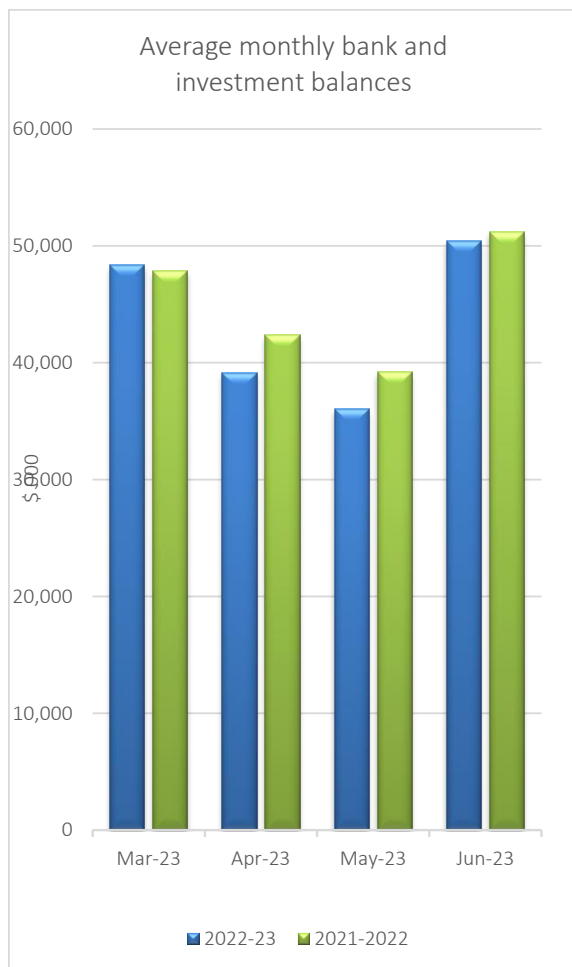


Financial statistics

The average balance of cash and investments during June 2023 was \$50.102 million. This compares to the average balance of \$36.072 million in May 2023 and an average balance of \$39.147 million in April 2023.

The closing balance of cash and investments at the end of June 2023 was \$45.832 million. Compared to \$47.314 million at the end of May 2023 and \$32.69 million at the end of April 2023.

Council investments at the end of June 2023 included cash and at call investments of \$8.832 million and term deposits of \$37.000 million, with an average date to maturity of 84 days and an average interest rate of 4.43 per cent.



The balance of outstanding debtors for June 2023 was \$2.052 million compared to an average balance of \$2.945 million over the last twelve months.

Amounts outstanding over 90 days at the end of June 2023 total \$621,000 representing 30.3 per cent of total debts.

The provision for doubtful debts at the end of June 2023 is \$645,000 or 31.3 per cent of total debts.

Hardship Policy



Any person who currently requires financial assistance can apply on-line and may be invited to enter into an interest free repayment plan and /or assessed for a waiver of rates if they provide evidence for consideration and meet the criteria as set out in Council's hardship policy.

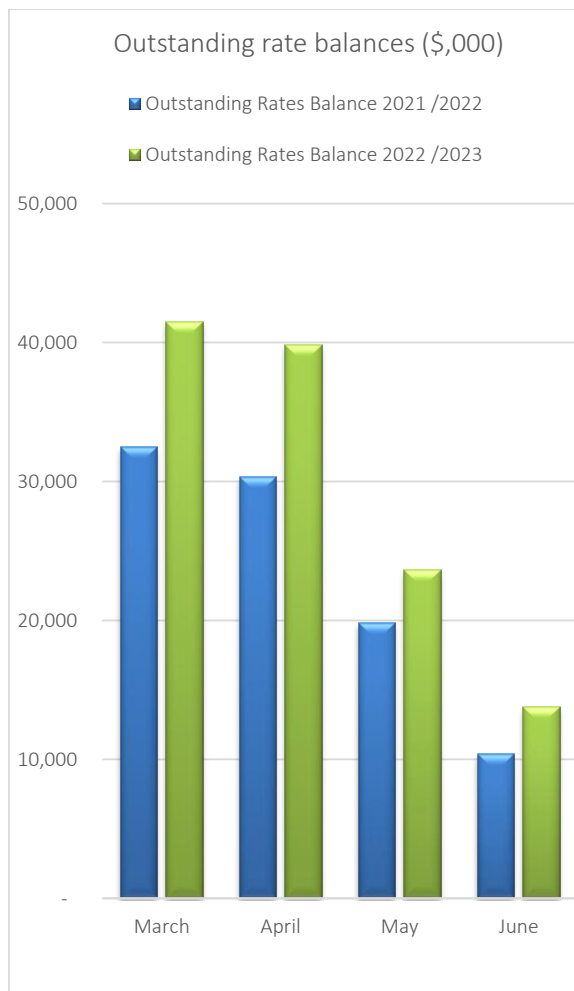
As of 30 June 2023, there is a total of 281 ratepayers, with arrears totaling \$1.6 million, listed on the Council's interest free repayment register. A review of the previous register occurred in June and a number of non-compliant or expired arrangements were removed. Council has waived over \$35,000 in interest charges since the start of the 2022-23 financial year. Council continued to receive regular payments in the month of June following reminding ratepayers of outstanding balances, and the total amount of arrears outstanding as of 30 June 2023 is just over \$13.7 million.

Revenue statistics



Rates income as of 30 June 2023 was \$125.812 million compared to the year-to-date budget of \$123.550 million. This is made up of general rates (\$111.719million), waste collection charges (\$12.069 million), supplementary income (\$891,000), including objections, payments in lieu of rates (\$733,000) and interest on rates (\$878,000). These are offset against the COVID-19 rate adjustment and rate waivers (\$17,000) and Council rebates (\$461,000).

The Outstanding Rates Balance as of 30 June 2023 was \$13.787 million. This is made up of general rates (\$12.979 million), pension rebates to be collected (\$.405 million) and hardship group (\$.403 million).



Procurement



Tenders have been called for the following:

- 2023.12 - Bruce and Cropley Street Reserves upgrades
- 2022.55a - Williamstown Tennis Club Lighting Upgrades
- 2023.25 - Microsoft Licence Uplift for Digital Transformation

The following tenders have been closed and are being evaluated:

- 2023.05 - Roads and Drainage Maintenance
- 2023.12 - Bruce and Cropley Street Reserves upgrades
- 2022.55 - Williamstown Tennis Club Lighting Upgrades
- 2023.25 - Microsoft Licence Uplift for Digital Transformation

The following contracts awarded under Council resolution:

- 2023.25 - Microsoft Licence Uplift for Digital Transformation

The following contracts have been awarded under financial delegation:

- 2023.03 - Public Bin Surrounds Stage 2 and 3 has been awarded to EP Draffin for \$253,161.00

Enhancing our Community

The Infrastructure and City Services Directorate has delivered and continues to deliver a range of projects and services across the municipality.

West Gate Tunnel Project



Works on widening the West Gate Freeway from 8 lanes to 12 is nearing completion. Works continue at the tunnel portals including ventilation structures, the freeway interchange areas, the Hyde Street ramps and the various paths and landscaping. Reinstatement work on local roads along the freeway verge is being finalised.

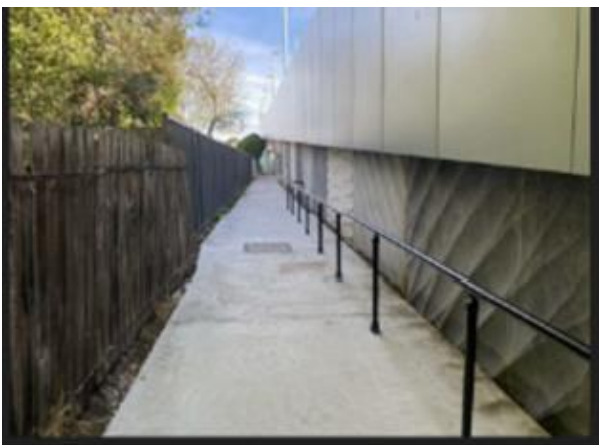


Image: New path to Muir Street pedestrian overpass



Image: Ferguson Street reinstatement

Both tunnel boring machines are being dismantled and removed with the ventilation structure starting to take form on the tunnel portal site.

Over winter a series of complex structural works are programmed which will impact traffic in the inner west. Dynon Road will be closed 24/7 in both directions between Citylink and Dryburgh Street from 16 June to 31 August 2023. In addition, until last service on 9 July 2023, buses will replace trains on the Williamstown, Werribee, and Sunbury Metro train lines.

West Gate Neighbourhood Fund (WGNF)

The West Gate Neighbourhood Fund is a \$10 million community grants program established by WGTP MTIA to support communities in Melbourne's inner west, prioritising those who are most affected by the construction of the West Gate Tunnel Project, ensuring that the benefits of the project to the local community start now.

Applications for WGNF Partnerships (Round 2) and Active Community Grants are now open, closing on 1 August 2023.

The WGNF Partnerships provide funding for larger projects seeking over \$50,000 that deliver a lasting benefit for the community. The Active Community Grants will fund up to \$100,000 for grassroots community sports groups, scout clubs and girl guides.

Pavilion and Reserves update



W.L.J Crofts Reserve Improvement Plan

Construction on the new playground is progressing well and scheduled for completion by the end of August 2023. The playground area will feature a new sandpit, swings, climbing frame and balancing beams.

Other key features of the park include seating and a new picnic area that is set among trees and landscaping.



Image: Playground at WJ Irwin Reserve

WJ Irwin Reserve Playground Upgrade

The upgrade works at WJ Irwin Reserve in Altona North are nearing completion. At the moment the play equipment is being installed and the perimeter footpath is being completed. The upgrade will be completed by mid-July 2023.



Image: Playground installation at WJ Irwin Reserve

Drainage, Footpaths & Roads works

Pier Street Altona

Road resurfacing, raised pedestrian crossings, speed humps and line marking in Pier Street from the Queen Street roundabout to the Esplanade is now complete. These works were undertaken at night to minimise the impact on the trading precinct.

Port Street Newport

Road rehabilitation works are nearing completion. The footpath, kerb and channel on both sides of the street have been replaced and drainage works are complete. The next step in the process is resurfacing the road pavement, which will further enhance the quality of the road.



Image: Connection of drains along Port Street

Newlands Street Altona Meadows

The resurfacing of Newland Street between Kiora and Merton Street is complete. These works were completed during the night due to the freeway access ramps and to minimise traffic disruption.

Kerb and Channel works

Council has recently completed the kerb and channel works on the following streets:

- Marion Street Altona North
- Fourth Avenue Altona North
- Croker Street Newport.

Local Area Traffic works



Victoria Street Bicycle Improvement Program

Works in Victoria Street are nearing completion with the new pedestrian refuges at the intersections of Victoria Street and Collins/Gellibrand Streets.



Image: Pedestrian refuges at Victoria Street

Transport Safety Improvement Program

Council is working on the Transport Safety Improvement Program (TSIP) for Borrack Square, Duke Street and McArthurs Road in Altona North.

The TSIP stems from the 'Better Place Guide' and the 'Local Area Movement Plan'.

The implementation of the program is commencing shortly and the proposed works are shown on the map below.



Image: Proposed works map

Other Projects



BayFit Leisure Centre

Significant progress has been made on the renovation of the changerooms at BayFit. The demolition of the showers and toilets started early June and the new walls have been reconstructed due to rusting. Following the flooring installation, fixtures and features will be done along with the carpet being replaced in the women's gym change room. All works are scheduled to be completed by mid-July 2023.

Greening Brooklyn Project

The Greening Brooklyn project is part of Greening the Pipeline initiative – a partnership between Melbourne Water, Hobsons Bay, Greater Western Water and Department of Transport. The project is funded by Council and the Victorian Government through funding received from the West Gate Tunnel Project's West Gate Neighbourhood Fund.

Pipeline Reserve, located in Brooklyn, is a portion of the Federation Trail, which connects Millers Road and Geelong Road. Landscaping works have commenced on site and the detailed design for the solar lights is progressing well. These works are scheduled for completion by September 2023.

(One Tree) Kindergarten Upgrade

The kindergarten upgrade works at Altona North (One Tree) at Altona North are progressing well and on track for completion in October 2023. Several key tasks have been completed or are currently underway. The installation of the exterior cladding is in progress and the landscaping of the interior courtyard is near completion.

Altona Meadows Library

The renewal works at Altona Meadows Library are reaching completion. The building, which has been fitted out with new toilets, furniture, floor and wall surfaces as well as a new children's library, is now having the finishing touches made to the external courtyard and the internal acoustic panelling. The community will be welcomed back into the facility once all the books have been shelved and the audio video installations turned on.

Altona Meadows BMX Track

Maintenance works on the BMX track in Altona Meadows have recently been completed. The works included reshaping the dirt jumps and improvements to the drainage.



Image: BMX track at Altona Meadows

Williamstown Library

Minor upgrades have been carried out on the Williamstown library deck. The deck has been sanded, re-stained and tactiles have been replaced on this highly used public space.

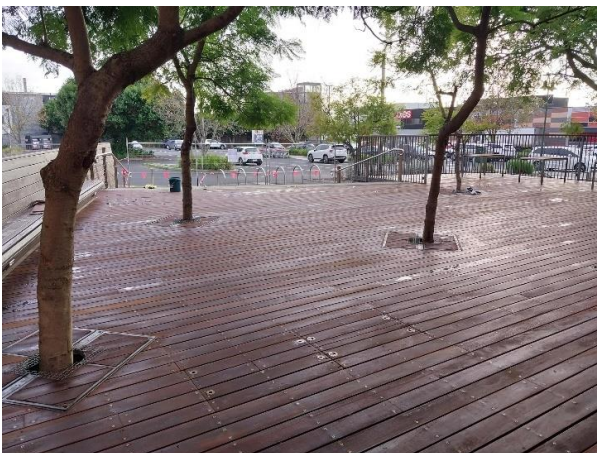


Image: Decking at the Williamstown Library

Sporting projects



Paisley Park Soccer Complex

Construction of the new spectator's platform at the Altona Magic Soccer Club in Paisley Park has commenced on site. The viewing platform will be approximately 180 sqm and will provide a level platform for pedestrians and wheelchair users. The work is scheduled to be completed by the end of July 2023.



Image: The proposed concrete platform area

Urban Forest Strategy



Tree Planting Program

The Tree Planting program is well underway with 800 of the 5,000 trees planted so far. Four hundred trees have been planted in parks and reserves and a further 400 trees planted throughout streets.

In addition, the Parks team have been conducting audits on the street trees that have been planted in 2022. Any failed trees will be replaced with new trees.



Image: Newly planted trees at Maher Road Laverton



More Trees for a Cooler Greener West

As part of this program Council aims to plant 25,000 tube stock and 150 advanced trees that will be funded through the state government's More Trees for a Cooler Greener West program.

Most of the tube stock planting will take place in the following locations:

- AB Shaw Reserve Altona Meadows
- Altona Coast Park
- The Buffer Mound Altona North
- Laverton Creek Altona Meadows
- Newport Lakes
- PA Burns Reserve Altona
- Truganina Park Reserve Altona Meadows

Green Streets Program

The final streetscape designs for Maclean Street Williamstown, Richards Court Brooklyn and Fidler Court in Altona Meadows have been completed.

In the coming months, tree removals and planting will be carried out for these streets. The works will enhance the aesthetic appeal of the streets, increase the canopy cover and overall create a more vibrant environment for the community.

Green Schools Initiative

Nine schools will receive delivery of 1,500 trees and plants this month. The Conservation rangers will be involved in the planting days at the schools and will directly assist students in the process. These initiatives contribute to increasing canopy cover, beautifying school grounds, and educating students about the importance of trees in mitigating climate change and benefiting our ecosystems.

Conservation news

Habitat Gardens Program

Participants of the current Habitat Gardens round attended the final workshop for this program.

Participants had the opportunity to attend the Newport Lakes Native Nursery for a design session with a local habitat gardener to refine their garden designs and provided valuable suggestions on garden design, layout, and plant placement. The workshop concluded with participants receiving 30 free plants to establish their new gardens.

Native Plant Giveaway

The third and final of our Native Plant Giveaway days was held on 24 June 2023 where the team handed out free boxes of indigenous plants to over 120 households. Overall, Council has given away approximately 400 boxes of plants containing 54 wildflowers, grasses, trees and shrubs.



Image: Residents receiving their free boxes of plants

Planting at Doreen's Grassland

A Conservation project is underway in Doreen's grassland, aiming to reintroduce wildflowers into the area. The project involved jute mating the area and planting over 400 grassland species, including a diverse range of wildflowers and grasses.



Community Events

The project aims to enhance the grassland's diversity by reintroducing species that were once present and to create a showcase garden bed for the Habitat Gardens program. This initiative will allow the community to see a successful wildflower garden and obtain an understanding of the significance of preserving natural habitats.



Image: Conservation team planting at Doreen's Grassland

Ghania Restoration Project

Altona Coastal Park Conservation Reserve is a large reserve adjacent to the coast where the team have recently planted over 1,500 plants.

The area is known as a wet depression area that was once covered in invasive grass weeds. Ghania Filum thrives in wet areas and is a food source for the Altona Skipper Butterfly. Increasing the population of Ghania will increase habitat for the butterfly and other snakes and reptiles while reducing weed cover through the area.

Maidstone Street Grassland Revegetation

The team has carried out some enhancement plantings following the ecological burn that was recently undertaken at Maidstone Street Grassland.

Fresh green growth can now be observed along with the obvious inter-tussock spacing providing areas for recruitment. Planting commenced along the front entrance of Maidstone Street and within the translocated Spiny rice-flower - *Pimelea spinescens* ssp. *spinescens* areas.

On 3 June 2023, the Conservation team organised a planting event with the spiritual group Dera Sacha Sauda. For a number of years now this group has assisted the team by holding a large-scale planting event. Approximately 100 members came down to the Paisley Challis Wetlands in Williamstown North and planted over 2,500 indigenous tubestock.

On 24 June 2023, a planting activity was held with the organisation Dr Shri Nanasaheb Dharmadhikari Pratishtan. Over 75 members attended and planted over 1200 plants on the northern side of Cherry Lake – known as the Cherry Lake Buffer Mound. This planting will enhance the Altona Skipper Butterfly habitat and improve the amenity and habitat buffer between Cherry Lake and the adjoining industrial estate.

Friends Groups Planting Events

June is one of the busiest months for our Friends Groups with the Friends of Skeleton Creek, Williamstown Wetlands, Greenwich Bay, Lower Kororoit Creek, and Newport Lakes all undertaking community plantings during the month. Overall, about 1,500 plants will be put in the ground with the help of the Friends Groups.

Wildflower Planting Event

A wildflower planting event was held on 4 June at Bluebells Grassland in Hobsons Bay. The event marked the final instalment of a three-part series aimed at educating Hobsons Bay residents about collecting, propagating, and caring for indigenous plants. The effort resulted in the planting of 400 plants, contributing to the conservation and restoration of local biodiversity in the highly urbanised environment.

Native Edibles

On 17 June 2023, Newport Lakes Native Nursery held an event on Native edibles. As part of the Community Pitch initiative – Growing Community through Propagating Plants, the nursery team provided a presentation on incorporating indigenous species into gardens. Residents also had the opportunity to learn about the benefits and practicalities of growing native edible and sustainable gardening practices to promote biodiversity in their local environment.

Olives to Oil Festival – Tree Giveaway

On 4 June 2023, the Conservation and Urban Forest teams attended the Olives to Oil Festival with a Native Plant and Tree Giveaway for residents. Over 200 native plants including trees, shrubs, grasses, and wildflowers were handed out along with over 100 advanced trees in a variety of backyard friendly species.



Image: Plant Giveaway display at the Olives to Oil Festival

Better Places Project

The Better Places model is focused on a design-led and place-based approach to projects. It helps provide a clear vision and understanding of the elements required to make better places and therefore provides better outcomes for the community.

It is about an approach where the whole “place” is considered and driven by a community vision for the suburb.

The Better Places Project is a unique program which provides an opportunity for the community to actively participate in helping shape the future direction of their suburb.

To date, three Place Guides have been shaped by community and endorsed by Council which are progressively being implemented:

- Laverton
- Spotswood & South Kingsville
- Brooklyn & Altona North

Laverton

Laverton was the first suburb to experience the Better Places model.

The **Laverton Place Guide** was endorsed by Council in September 2020. The Place Guide provides a summary of the visioning process undertaken, the community input/key findings and sets out the projects and improvements that will be undertaken into the future. The Place Guide is the guiding framework which future projects will evolve and be delivered from.

Recent Place Guide project highlights include:

- **Project 7 SAFER PLACES - Laverton Schools Precinct Traffic Safety Improvement Works** – The Safer Places project is an intensive fast-tracked program to improve general safety and accessibility around key movement corridors in Laverton. The Laverton School precinct along Bladin Street includes St Martin de Porres Catholic primary school, Western Autistic School, Laverton Prep to 12 College, Western English Language, and the Jennings Street school. Construction of six footpath crossing upgrades have been substantially completed. Work will commence shortly for the remaining three crossing upgrades and the installation of a safer 50 km/h speed limit on Bladin Street.

- **Project 8 – MISSING LINKS – Maher Road Shared User Path** – this project seeks to make Laverton a more walkable and bike friendly place. The Maher Road Shared User Path (between Bladin Street and the new rail overpass bridge) is now complete. Final landscaping and tree planting occurred planting season in late May with new bench seats installed early June 2023. Approximately 30 *Pyrus nivalis* ornamental trees were planted in the narrow gap (photo below), the rest are a mixture of medium and large natives.



Image: Newly completed Maher Road Laverton, Shared User Path (May 2023)

Spotswood and South Kingsville Place Projects

The [Better Places Spotswood + South Kingsville Place Guide](#) was endorsed by Council on 12 October 2021.

Recent Place Guide project highlights include:

- **Project 13 - Better Villages** – the draft Hudsons Road Streetscape Master Plan (Melbourne Rd to Booker St) is currently being reviewed to incorporate community engagement feedback. A snapshot of comments received and what Council heard can be found [here](#). Community and traders will have future opportunities to have input in the implementation stages when the recommendations in the Master Plan are separated into detailed design/capital works projects.
- **Project 14 - Better Community Places** – In consultation with the Local Leaders Focus Group, Council has provided a final summary report. The report provides a consolidated inventory of current facilities, projections for future demands and identifies opportunities for re-organising/upgrading existing facilities or opportunities for possible new community facilities to cater for future demand.



Better Places Brooklyn & Altona North

The Better Places [Brooklyn + Altona North](#) final Place Guide was endorsed by Council in December 2022.

Three key themes were uncovered from thousands of pieces of community feedback:

Key Themes

THEME ONE	THEME TWO	THEME THREE
Improving the liveability and amenity of the area. 	A place that is easier and safer to move around. 	Bringing the community closer together. 
Liveability and Amenity	Move with safety	Closer Community
For many residents in the local area, their first priority is to reduce air, noise, and rubbish pollution, and focus on making the area a healthier, cleaner and greener place to live.	Making Brooklyn and Altona North more walkable and bike-friendly, and developing new initiatives and projects that will promote a shift towards public transport and active transport into the future.	Continuing to celebrate and strengthen the diversity and different characters Brooklyn and Altona North while finding new ways to bring the community closer together

The abovementioned themes drive [Place Guide](#) projects for community... by community. A mix of both shorter-term projects that are able to be implemented quickly, as well as longer term projects that are larger and more complex and will require more extensive design and consultation.

Proposed budget for Better Places Brooklyn & Altona North includes over \$3.8 million for the programme spanning from 2023 to 2028.

Better Places Seabrook and Altona Meadows

This draft Place Guide provides 6 overarching projects that Council has framed in response to community feedback received through the previous three stages of community engagement. What are your ideas on the projects? We'd love to hear from all people who live, work or play in Seabrook and/or Altona Meadows. To view the draft Place Guide and share your feedback with us, please visit the Participate project page: [Better Places Seabrook + Altona Meadows](#).

The Draft Seabrook and Altona Meadows Place Guide is on public exhibition from 21 June to 23 July 2023.

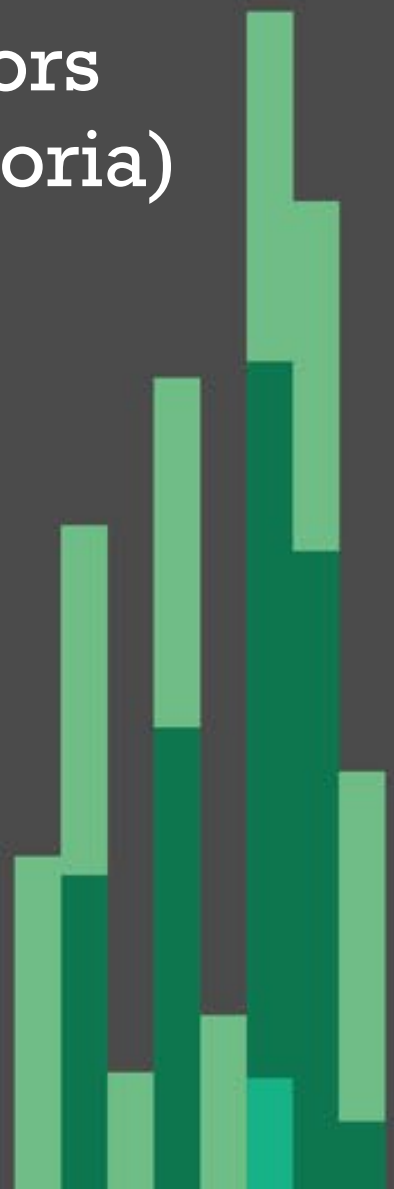
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PROJECTS

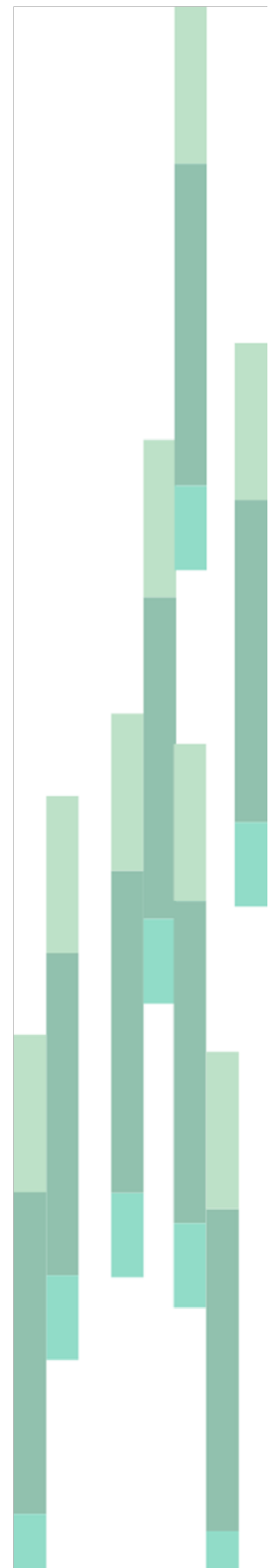
TO HELP MAKE
SEABROOK AND ALTONA MEADOWS
BETTER PLACES TO LIVE.....

BETTER PLACES
Seabrook & Altona Meadows

- 1 Thinking Cleaner + Safer
- 2 Neighbourhood Character + Greening
- 3 Better Villages
- 4 Better Places + Spaces
- 5 Improving Our Walking + Cycling Network
- 6 Improving Our Transport Network

Allowance payable to Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors (Victoria) Annual Adjustment Determination 2023





Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal and Improving Parliamentary Standards Act 2019 (Vic)

Part 3—Determinations for annual adjustments in relation to Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors.

Allowance payable to Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors (Victoria) Annual Adjustment Determination 2023



A. Pursuant to section 23B(1) of the *Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal and Improving Parliament Standards Act 2019 (Vic)* (VIRTIPS Act), the Tribunal determines to make the following adjustments to the *Allowance payable to Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors (Victoria) Determination No. 01/2022*.

A.1 Delete clauses 7 to 9 and Tables 1 to 13 and replace them with the following:

7. Value of the base allowance for Mayors

7.1 The values of the base allowances for Mayors are:

- (a) from 1 July 2023 until 17 December 2023, the values set out in Table 1
- (b) from 18 December 2023 until 17 December 2024, the values set out in Table 2
- (c) from 18 December 2024 until 17 December 2025, the values set out in Table 3
- (d) from 18 December 2025, the values set out in Table 4.

Table 1: Value of the base allowance for Mayors, by Council allowance category, 1 July 2023 until 17 December 2023

Council allowance category	Value of allowance (\$ per annum)
Category 1	79,492
Category 2	102,650
Category 3	126,958
Category 4 – Melbourne City Council	253,920

Table 2: Value of the base allowance for Mayors, by Council allowance category, 18 December 2023 until 17 December 2024

Council allowance category	Value of allowance (\$ per annum)
Category 1	81,641
Category 2	105,424
Category 3	130,390
Category 4 – Melbourne City Council	260,782

Table 3: Value of the base allowance for Mayors, by Council allowance category, 18 December 2024 until 17 December 2025

Council allowance category	Value of allowance (\$ per annum)
Category 1	83,789
Category 2	108,200
Category 3	133,822
Category 4 – Melbourne City Council	267,646

Table 4: Value of the base allowance for Mayors, by Council allowance category, from 18 December 2025

Council allowance category	Value of allowance (\$ per annum)
Category 1	85,937
Category 2	110,973
Category 3	137,253
Category 4 – Melbourne City Council	274,508

8. Value of the base allowance for Deputy Mayors

8.1 The values of the base allowances for Deputy Mayors are:

- (a) from 1 July 2023 until 17 December 2023, the values set out in Table 5
- (b) from 18 December 2023 until 17 December 2024, the values set out in Table 6
- (c) from 18 December 2024 until 17 December 2025, the values set out in Table 7
- (d) from 18 December 2025, the values set out in Table 8.

Table 5: Value of the base allowance for Deputy Mayors, by Council allowance category, 1 July 2023 until 17 December 2023

Council allowance category	Value of allowance (\$ per annum)
Category 1	39,746
Category 2	51,325
Category 3	63,480
Category 4 – Melbourne City Council	126,959

Table 6: Value of the base allowance for Deputy Mayors, by Council allowance category, 18 December 2023 until 17 December 2024

Council allowance category	Value of allowance (\$ per annum)
Category 1	40,819
Category 2	52,713
Category 3	65,195
Category 4 – Melbourne City Council	130,391

Table 7: Value of the base allowance for Deputy Mayors, by Council allowance category, 18 December 2024 until 17 December 2025

Council allowance category	Value of allowance (\$ per annum)
Category 1	41,894
Category 2	54,100
Category 3	66,910
Category 4 – Melbourne City Council	133,823

Table 8: Value of the base allowance for Deputy Mayors, by Council allowance category, from 18 December 2025

Council allowance category	Value of allowance (\$ per annum)
Category 1	42,969
Category 2	55,487
Category 3	68,626
Category 4 – Melbourne City Council	137,254

9. Value of the base allowance for Councillors

9.1 The values of the base allowances for Councillors are:

(a) from 1 July 2023 until 17 December 2023, the values set out in Table 9

(b) from 18 December 2023, the values set out in Table 10.

Table 9: Value of the base allowance for Councillors, by Council allowance category, 1 July 2023 until 17 December 2023

Council allowance category	Value of allowance (\$ per annum)
Category 1	25,650
Category 2	31,980
Category 3	38,316
Category 4 – Melbourne City Council	57,473

Table 10: Value of the base allowance for Councillors, by Council allowance category, from 18 December 2023

Council allowance category	Value of allowance (\$ per annum)
Category 1	26,368
Category 2	32,877
Category 3	39,390
Category 4 – Melbourne City Council	59,085

A.2 In clause 10.1, delete ‘\$45’ and ‘\$5,625’ and replace with ‘\$45.90’ and ‘\$5,738’, respectively.

B. This Determination commences on 1 July 2023.

C. The *Allowance payable to Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors (Victoria) Determination No. 01/2022* as varied is available on the Tribunal’s website.



Warren McCann

Chair

Victorian Independent
Remuneration Tribunal



The Honourable
Jennifer Acton

Member

Victorian Independent
Remuneration Tribunal



Laurinda Gardner

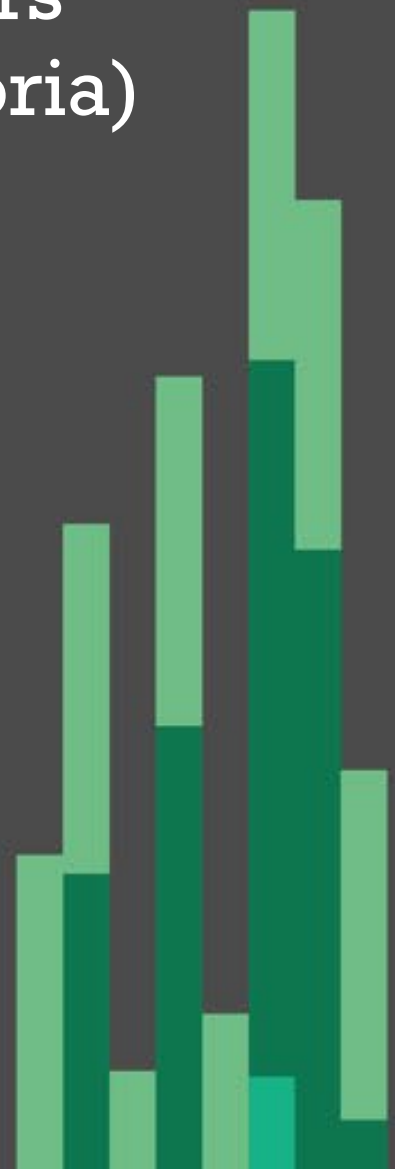
Member

Victorian Independent
Remuneration Tribunal

Date: 30/06/2023

Allowance payable to Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors (Victoria) Annual Adjustment Determination 2023

Statement of Reasons



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Abbreviations and glossary



Term or abbreviation	Definition
2022 Local Government Annual Adjustment Determination	<i>Allowance payable to Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors (Victoria) Annual Adjustment Determination 2022</i>
2023 Local Government Annual Adjustment Determination	<i>Allowance payable to Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors (Victoria) Annual Adjustment Determination 2023</i>
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
Comprehensive Determination	<i>Allowance payable to Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors (Victoria) Determination No. 01/2022</i>
Council member	A Mayor, Deputy Mayor or Councillor
CPI	Consumer Price Index
Cth	Commonwealth Government of Australia
DTF	Department of Treasury and Finance
FWC	Fair Work Commission
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GSP	Gross State Product
MP	Member of the Parliament of Victoria
NMW	National Minimum Wage
NSW	New South Wales
Qld	Queensland
RBA	Reserve Bank of Australia
SA	South Australia
Tas	Tasmania
Tribunal	Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal
Victorian Budget	<i>Victorian Budget 2023/24</i>
VIRTIPS Act	<i>Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal and Improving Parliamentary Standards Act 2019 (Vic)</i>

Term or abbreviation	Definition
WA	Western Australia
Wages Policy	Victorian Public Sector Wages Policy
WPI	Wage Price Index

Summary



The Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal (Tribunal) has made a Determination providing for an annual adjustment to the values of the allowances payable to Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors (Council members).

Before making the Determination, the Tribunal published notice of its intention to make a Determination and called for submissions in March 2023. The Tribunal considered all of the submissions received and expresses its appreciation to all those who made submissions or otherwise participated in the process and assisted the Tribunal to perform its functions.

The Tribunal has adjusted the values of allowances from 1 July 2023

The Tribunal has decided to increase the base allowance payable to each Council member by 2 per cent from 1 July 2023. This is in addition to the 1.5 per cent adjustment made on 18 December 2023, resulting in an approximate 3.5 per cent increase to allowances compared to 1 July 2022.

The base allowances payable from 1 July 2023 are set out below:

Allowance Category	Value of base allowance from 1 July 2023 (\$ p.a.) ^(a)		
	Mayor	Deputy Mayor	Councillor
Category 1	79,492	39,746	25,650
Category 2	102,650	51,325	31,980
Category 3	126,958	63,480	38,316
Category 4	253,920	126,959	57,473

The Tribunal's 2023 Local Government Annual Adjustment Determination also applies to the future values of base allowances set in the Tribunal's Comprehensive Determination.

As such, a 2 per cent increase has also been applied to the values of the base allowances which will apply from:

- 18 December 2023

- 18 December 2024 (Mayors and Deputy Mayors only)
- 18 December 2025 (Mayors and Deputy Mayors only).

The Tribunal has also decided to increase the value of the Remote Area Travel Allowance by 2 per cent. From 1 July 2023, the Remote Area Travel Allowance will be \$45.90 per day for eligible Council members, up to a maximum of \$5,738 per annum.

The Tribunal considered legislative and other factors

The Tribunal is required by legislation to consider several factors in making a Determination:

- the Victorian Government's wages policy
- the financial position and fiscal strategy of the State of Victoria
- current and projected economic conditions and trends
- submissions received in relation to the proposed Determination.

The Tribunal was also mindful of:

- the limited amount of time that has passed since the last annual adjustment to allowances of 1.5 per cent, which took effect on 18 December 2022
- recent remuneration adjustments for comparable local government roles in other Australian jurisdictions
- the Victorian Government's rate cap of 3.5 per cent for all Councils for 2023-24
- its 2023 Determination of salaries and allowances for Members of the Parliament of Victoria (MPs), which resulted in a 3.5 per cent increase in the MP basic salary.

1 Context



The Tribunal is required to make an annual adjustment to the values of the allowances payable to Council members set in a Determination under the *Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal and Improving Parliamentary Standards Act 2019 (Vic)* (VIRTIPS Act).¹

The Determination in effect is the *Allowance payable to Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors (Victoria) Determination No. 01/2022* (Comprehensive Determination), which was made in March 2022.²

In December 2022, the Tribunal made its first annual adjustment to the values set in the Comprehensive Determination (2022 Local Government Annual Adjustment Determination). The Tribunal determined to increase the values of all base allowances by 1.5 per cent with effect from 18 December 2022. A 1.5 per cent increase was also applied to the daily rate for the Remote Area Travel Allowance.³

The Tribunal is required to include a statement of reasons in a Determination.⁴ This Statement of Reasons relates to the *Allowance payable to Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors (Victoria) Annual Adjustment Determination 2023* (2023 Local Government Annual Adjustment Determination).

The 2023 Local Government Annual Adjustment Determination takes effect on 1 July 2023. For ease of reference, the Tribunal has also published on its website a consolidated version of the Comprehensive Determination, incorporating changes made by the 2022 and 2023 annual adjustments.

1.1 Legislative requirements

Before making a Determination, the VIRTIPS Act requires the Tribunal to:⁵

¹ VIRTIPS Act, s. 23B.

² Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal (2022a).

³ Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal (2022b), p. 8.

⁴ VIRTIPS Act, s. 24(3).

⁵ VIRTIPS Act, s. 24(1).

- publish notice of its intention to make a Determination
- include details about the proposed Determination in the public notice
- give any affected person or class of persons a reasonable opportunity to make a submission in relation to the proposed Determination.

In making a Determination, the VIRTIPS Act requires that the Tribunal take into account:⁶

- any statement or policy issued by the Government of Victoria which is in force with respect to its wages policy (or equivalent) and the remuneration and allowances of any specified occupational group
- the financial position and fiscal strategy of the State of Victoria
- current and projected economic conditions and trends
- submissions received in relation to the proposed Determination.

The Tribunal's analysis of the first three factors has been included as an appendix to this Statement of Reasons. Submissions received in relation to the Determination are discussed below.

In performing its functions and exercising its powers, the Tribunal must act independently and impartially and is not subject to the control or direction of any person, including the Minister.⁷

1.2 Consultation

The Tribunal published notice of its intention to make a Determination on its website in March 2023. The notice contained a summary of the matters the Tribunal was required to consider and called for submissions by 28 April 2023.

In particular, stakeholders were invited to comment on the following questions:

- What, if any, adjustment to the values of allowances should the Tribunal consider?
- Which economic and financial indices should the Tribunal consider when adjusting the values of allowances?
- Are there other matters, in addition to those listed in the VIRTIPS Act, that the Tribunal should consider when making the Determination?

⁶ VIRTIPS Act, s. 24(2).

⁷ VIRTIPS Act, s. 5.

- Should the 2023 Local Government Annual Adjustment Determination take effect on 1 July 2023, or on some other date?

Local Government Victoria, part of the Department of Government Services, also issued a bulletin to the local government sector about the notice and opportunity to make a submission.

The Tribunal received three submissions, which have been published on the Tribunal's website in de-identified form.

One submission stated that allowances for Mayors and Deputy Mayors were appropriate, while calling for substantial increases to Councillor allowances 'to attract quality candidates with the requisite skill and experience' to perform the role. This submission also supported an effective date of 1 July 2023 for the 2023 Local Government Annual Adjustment Determination, and suggested that the Tribunal consider the impact of inflation on the value of Councillor allowances.

Another submission stated that allowances for Councillors and Deputy Mayors should be equal to the median wage 'at a minimum', and that allowances for all Council members (including Mayors) should 'be pegged against movements of the median wage going forward'.

A third submission stated that the Tribunal should not increase allowances for a particular Council, citing matters including financial difficulties faced by members of the community. It also called for increases in allowances to be based on performance and community feedback.

The Tribunal reset the values of allowances in March 2022 when it made the Comprehensive Determination, with increases to base allowances being phased in over five years for Mayors and Deputy Mayors and over three years for Councillors. In regard to Councillor allowances, the Tribunal considered that the values it set were:

... consistent with both encouraging a diverse range of candidates to serve on Council and more appropriately recognising the necessary work and time contribution of those elected to the role.⁸

Further, the Tribunal is responsible for adjusting the values of allowances for all Council members, and in doing so it does not assess the performance of individual

⁸ Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal (2022a), p. 121.

Council members or Councils. In its Comprehensive Determination, the Tribunal noted that:

The cycle of four-yearly elections provides a mechanism for voters to hold Council members to account for their performance. In performing their roles, Council members are also subject to a range of legal accountability and integrity frameworks and requirements.⁹

⁹ Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal (2022a), p. 56.

2 Tribunal's considerations



The Tribunal now turns to determining an annual adjustment to the values of the allowances payable to Council members.

2.1 Effective date

Under the VIRTIPS Act, the 2023 Local Government Annual Adjustment Determination takes effect on the date specified by the Tribunal.¹⁰

Annual adjustments for MPs and executives employed in public service bodies and prescribed public entities must take effect from 1 July of the year that they are made.¹¹ The Tribunal typically makes annual adjustments for those occupational groups in June.

The Tribunal has determined that the 2023 Local Government Annual Adjustment Determination will take effect on 1 July 2023, consistent with the arrangements for MPs and executives.

2.2 Adjustment to the value of the base allowance

In determining an adjustment to the values of base allowances, the Tribunal has, as required by legislation, considered a range of information on current and projected economic conditions, the fiscal strategy and financial position of the State of Victoria, the Victorian Public Sector Wages Policy (Wages Policy) and submissions received by the Tribunal.

¹⁰ VIRTIPS Act, s. 25(1).

¹¹ VIRTIPS Act, s. 25(5).

The Tribunal has also considered other relevant information, including:

- the limited amount of time that has passed since the last annual adjustment
- recent adjustments to allowances for Council members in other Australian jurisdictions
- the Victorian Government’s rate cap for all councils for 2023-24
- its 2023 Determination of salaries and allowances for MPs.

Movements in wages and prices

Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data on movements in prices since the making of the 2022 Local Government Annual Adjustment Determination show that, between the September quarter 2022 and March quarter 2023, the Melbourne Consumer Price Index (CPI) and national trimmed mean inflation both increased by 2.9 per cent.¹² With regard to wages, the Tribunal noted that the Victorian Wage Price Index (WPI) increased by 1.5 per cent.¹³

The *Victorian Budget 2023/24* (Victorian Budget), released in May 2023, forecast growth in the Melbourne CPI and Victorian WPI to average 4.25 per cent and 3.5 per cent, respectively, in 2023-24.¹⁴ The Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) expects national underlying inflation to be around 4 per cent over 2023.¹⁵

Economic growth

Australia’s real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) rose 0.2 per cent in the March quarter 2023, the lowest growth since the September quarter 2021, where the economy contracted due to the impact of COVID-19 lockdowns. Household consumption rose by 0.2 per cent in the quarter, with discretionary spending down 1 per cent due to the impact of cost-of-living pressures.¹⁶ In year-ended terms, the RBA forecast real GDP growth to slow to around 1.5 per cent over 2023-24, as rising interest rates and cost-of-living pressure weigh on economic activity.¹⁷ In year-average terms, the Victorian economy is also forecast to grow by around 1.50 per cent over 2023-24.¹⁸

¹² ABS (2023c).

¹³ ABS (2023f).

¹⁴ DTF (2023), *Budget Paper No. 2: Strategy and Outlook*, p. 22.

¹⁵ RBA (2023a).

¹⁶ ABS (2023a).

¹⁷ RBA (2023a); Commonwealth of Australia (2023), *Budget Paper No. 1: Budget Strategy and Outlook*, p. 58.

¹⁸ DTF (2023), *Budget Paper No. 2: Strategy and Outlook*, p. 22.

Financial position and fiscal strategy of the State of Victoria

The Victorian general government sector recorded an operating deficit of \$2.9 billion for the nine months to 31 March 2023.¹⁹ Net debt is forecast to increase to around \$171 billion by June 2027. The Victorian Budget reiterated the Government's four-step fiscal strategy: creating jobs, reducing unemployment and restoring economic growth; returning to an operating cash surplus; returning to operating surpluses; and stabilising debt levels.²⁰

Wages Policy

The Victorian Government's Wages Policy provides for increases to wages and conditions under public sector enterprise agreements to be funded at a rate of growth of 3 per cent per annum. In addition to these annual wage increases, a separate lump sum cash payment equal to 0.5 per cent of overall agreement costs is available.²¹

Annual Wage Review Decision 2022-23

The Fair Work Commission's (FWC) *Annual Wage Review 2022-23* decision increased the National Minimum Wage (NMW) by 8.6 per cent and modern award minimum wages by 5.75 per cent with effect from 1 July 2023.²²

Adjustments to allowances in other jurisdictions

Table 2.1 summarises the adjustments that have been made to allowances for Council members in other Australian jurisdictions in 2023, where available. The data show only small adjustments.

¹⁹ DTF (2023), *Budget Paper No. 5: Statement of Finances*, p. 221.

²⁰ DTF (2023), *Budget Paper No. 2: Strategy and Outlook*, p. 3.

²¹ Industrial Relations Victoria (2023), p. 3.

²² Fair Work Commission (2023), pp. 69-72.

Table 2.1: Adjustments to allowances for Council members in other Australian jurisdictions

Jurisdiction	Adjustment from 1 July 2023 (unless otherwise stated) (%)
New South Wales	3
Queensland	3 – 4 ^(a)
South Australia	TBA ^(b)
Western Australia	1.5
Tasmania	TBA ^(c)
Northern Territory	N/A ^(d)

Notes: (a) An increase of 4 per cent was applied to allowances for Categories 1-3, which consists largely of regional and rural Councils, while an increase of 3 per cent was applied to allowances for Categories 4-8, which encompass metropolitan Councils. (b) Allowances are automatically indexed on the first, second and third anniversaries of the relevant periodic local government elections to reflect changes in the CPI for Adelaide. The next adjustment will be in November 2023. (c) Allowances are automatically indexed on 1 November each year in line with the annual change in the WPI for Tasmania. (d) The Northern Territory Remuneration Tribunal made its first Determination of allowances on 24 January 2023, which reset the allowances framework. Regional Councils received an increase of approximately 8 to 9 per cent, with smaller increases for other Councils.

Sources: *Local Government Act 1999* (SA), s. 76(9); *Local Government (General) Regulations 2015* (Tas), regulation 42(2); Local Government Remuneration Tribunal (QLD) (2023), p. 6; Local Government Remuneration Tribunal (NSW) (2023), p. 4; Northern Territory Remuneration Tribunal (2023), pp. 9-13; Salaries and Allowances Tribunal (WA) (2023), p. 3.

Tribunal’s 2023 Determination of MP salaries and allowances

On 20 June 2023, the Tribunal made the *Members of Parliament (Victoria) Determination No. 01/2023*. That Determination increased the value of the basic salary for MPs by 3.5 per cent, with effect from 1 July 2023.²³

Rate cap

In December 2022, the Victorian Government announced a rate cap of 3.5 per cent for 2023-24.²⁴ This is the maximum amount by which a Council can increase general rates and municipal charges in 2023-24.

Conclusion on base allowances

Having regard to all such considerations, the Tribunal has determined to increase the values of all base allowances by 2 per cent from 1 July 2023.

When combined with the 1.5 per cent increase determined by the Tribunal in December 2022, base allowances will have increased by approximately 3.5 per cent since 1 July 2022 (not taking into account the impact of the phased increase on 18 December 2022). This is consistent with the increase to the MP basic salary from 1 July 2023, as well as the rate cap for 2023-24.

²³ Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal (2023).

²⁴ State Government of Victoria (2022).

The Tribunal’s 2023 Local Government Annual Adjustment Determination also applies to the future values of base allowances set in the Tribunal’s Comprehensive Determination.

As such, a 2 per cent increase has been applied to the base allowance values which will apply from:

- 18 December 2023
- 18 December 2024 (Mayors and Deputy Mayors only)
- 18 December 2025 (Mayors and Deputy Mayors only).

Tables 2.2 – 2.4 set out the new base allowance values, incorporating the phased increases and 2 per cent annual adjustment rate.

Table 2.2: Value of the base allowance for Mayors

Council allowance category	Value of base allowance (\$ per annum)			
	1 July 2023	18 Dec 2023	18 Dec 2024	18 Dec 2025
Category 1	79,492	81,641	83,789	85,937
Category 2	102,650	105,424	108,200	110,973
Category 3	126,958	130,390	133,822	137,253
Category 4	253,920	260,782	267,646	274,508

Table 2.3: Value of the base allowance for Deputy Mayors

Council allowance category	Value of base allowance (\$ per annum)			
	1 July 2023	18 Dec 2023	18 Dec 2024	18 Dec 2025
Category 1	39,746	40,819	41,894	42,969
Category 2	51,325	52,713	54,100	55,487
Category 3	63,480	65,195	66,910	68,626
Category 4	126,959	130,391	133,823	137,254

Table 2.4: Value of the base allowance for Councillors

Council allowance category	Value of base allowance (\$ per annum)	
	1 July 2023	18 Dec 2023
Category 1	25,650	26,368
Category 2	31,980	32,877
Category 3	38,316	39,390
Category 4	57,473	59,085

2.2 Adjustment to the value of the Remote Area Travel Allowance

Taking into account the legislative factors it is required to consider and the other factors to which the Tribunal has referred in determining the increase to the base

allowance, the Tribunal has also determined to apply a 2 per cent increase to the value of the Remote Area Travel Allowance.

From 1 July 2023, the Remote Area Travel Allowance will be \$45.90 per day for eligible Council members, up to a maximum of \$5,738 per annum.

2.3 Conclusion

This Statement of Reasons explains the Tribunal's considerations in making the 2023 Local Government Annual Adjustment Determination.

Before making the Determination, the Tribunal published notice of its intention to make a Determination and called for submissions in March 2023. The Tribunal considered all of the submissions received and expresses its appreciation to all those who made submissions or otherwise participated in the process and assisted the Tribunal to perform its functions.

In accordance with the VIRTIPS Act, the Tribunal has determined to make an annual adjustment to the values of the allowances payable to Council members, taking into account a range of legislative and other considerations.

This Determination adjusts the value of the base allowance payable to each Council member by 2 per cent. This Determination also adjusts the value of the Remote Area Travel Allowance by the same percentage.

This Determination will take effect on 1 July 2023.

Appendix A - Economic factors



This appendix sets out the Tribunal’s analysis of the following factors, which it is required to consider in making a Determination:

- current and projected economic conditions and trends
- the financial position and fiscal strategy of the State of Victoria
- any statement or policy issued by the Government of Victoria which is in force with respect to its wages policy (or equivalent) and the remuneration and allowances of any specified occupational group.

A.1 Current and projected economic conditions and trends

The Tribunal’s analysis of current and projected economic conditions and trends has been informed by the latest data and forecasts from the ABS and the RBA, the Victorian and Commonwealth budgets, the FWC’s *Annual Wage Review 2022-23* and other relevant information.

International economic conditions

According to the RBA’s latest *Statement on Monetary Policy* (May 2023), inflation has passed its peak in many advanced economies but remains high globally. Central banks are forecasting inflation to fall further over 2023, although the RBA noted that it is expected to take a couple of years for inflation to return to target in most advanced economies. The RBA also observed that unemployment rates remain near historical lows in many economies, while global growth has slowed and is forecast to remain below average over the next couple of years.²⁵

²⁵ RBA (2023c), pp. 5-7.

Australian economic conditions

ABS data show that Australia's real GDP rose 0.2 per cent in the March quarter 2023 and 2.3 per cent through the year. This was the weakest quarterly growth since the September quarter 2021, when the economy contracted due to the impact of COVID-19 lockdowns. Household consumption also recorded its weakest quarterly rise (0.2 per cent) since the September quarter 2021, with discretionary spending falling by 1 per cent due to cost-of-living pressures.²⁶

The RBA noted that inflation appears to have passed its peak but remains very high.²⁷ Year-ended headline inflation and trimmed mean inflation (the RBA's preferred measure of underlying inflation) declined to 7 per cent and 6.6 per cent respectively in the March quarter 2023. The decline was driven by slowing goods inflation, but was partly offset by an increase in services inflation, which reached its highest level (6.1 per cent) since 2001.²⁸

In response to inflationary pressures, the RBA Board has increased its cash rate target 12 times since May 2022, from 0.10 per cent to 4.10 per cent as at June 2023. RBA Governor Philip Lowe stated that the Board's decision to increase the cash rate target by a further 25 basis points at its meeting in June 2023 was to 'provide greater confidence that inflation will return to target within a reasonable timeframe'. In this regard, Governor Lowe noted that upside risks to the inflation outlook have increased, and flagged that 'some further tightening of monetary policy may be required'.²⁹

The RBA noted that conditions in the national labour market remain tight, with the national unemployment rate remaining around its 50-year low of 3.5 per cent.³⁰ The tightness in the labour market has contributed to a pick-up in wages growth. Annual growth in the seasonally adjusted WPI increased to 3.7 per cent in March 2023, the highest growth rate in over a decade.³¹

²⁶ ABS (2023a).

²⁷ RBA (2023c), p. 1.

²⁸ ABS (2023c).

²⁹ RBA (2023b).

³⁰ RBA (2023c), p. 21.

³¹ ABS (2023f).

According to ABS analysis, for those jobs that recorded an hourly wage rise in the March quarter 2023:³²

- the average increase was 4.3 per cent in the private sector and 3 per cent in the public sector, compared to 3.4 per cent and 2.1 per cent a year earlier
- around half received an increase greater than 3 per cent, compared to around one-in-five a year earlier
- around 35 per cent received an increase greater than 4 per cent, compared to around 13 per cent a year earlier.

The FWC issued its *Annual Wage Review 2022-23* decision on 2 June 2023. The decision, which comes into effect on 1 July 2023, increased modern award minimum wages by 5.75 per cent and the NMW by a total of 8.6 per cent.³³ The increase to the NMW comprised two components:³⁴

- a 2.7 per cent increase resulting from aligning the NMW with the lowest classification rate applicable to ongoing employees in most modern awards
- a further 5.75 per cent increase.

In determining the amount of the increase to modern award minimum wages, the FWC stated that it:

*... placed significant weight on the impact of the current rate of inflation on the ability of modern award-reliant employees to meet their basic financial needs. Inflation is reducing the real value of these employees' incomes and causing households financial stress.*³⁵

The FWC expects that the increase to modern award minimum wages 'will not cause or contribute to any wage-price spiral', and that the increase to the NMW (which applies to fewer than one per cent of employees) 'will not have any discernible macro-economic effects'.³⁶

The RBA's forecasts for the Australian economy are reproduced in Table A.1. In summary:

- real GDP growth is expected to slow to around 1.25 per cent over 2023, as rising interest rates and cost-of-living pressures weigh on growth³⁷

³² ABS (2023f).

³³ FWC (2023), pp. 69-72.

³⁴ FWC (2023), pp. 69-70.

³⁵ FWC (2023), p. 7.

³⁶ FWC (2023), pp. 70, 72.

³⁷ RBA (2023c), p. 72.

- inflation is forecast to decline gradually, with trimmed mean inflation expected to be around the top of the 2-3 per cent target range by mid-2025³⁸
- the national unemployment rate is forecast to steadily increase over the coming years as economic growth slows, but is expected to remain below pre-pandemic levels³⁹
- WPI growth is expected to peak at around 4 per cent in the second half of 2023, before gradually declining to 3.75 per cent in mid-2025.⁴⁰

Table A.1: RBA forecasts for the Australian economy, May 2023^(a)

Indicator	June 2023	Dec 2023	June 2024	Dec 2024	June 2025
Real GDP ^(b)	1.7	1.2	1.4	1.7	2.1
Unemployment rate ^(c)	3.6	4.0	4.2	4.4	4.5
CPI ^(b)	6.3	4.5	3.6	3.2	3.0
Australian trimmed mean ^(b)	6.0	4.0	3.3	3.1	2.9
WPI growth ^(b)	3.8	4.0	3.9	3.8	3.7

Notes: (a) Forecasts are rounded to the first decimal point. (b) Year-ended growth. (c) Average rate in the quarter. Source: RBA (2023a).

The *Commonwealth Budget 2023-24*, released in May 2023, included Treasury forecasts for the Australian economy (Table A.2). These were broadly consistent with the RBA's forecasts, although the Tribunal noted the following differences:⁴¹

- Treasury forecast inflation to decline faster, with year-ended CPI growth expected to be around 2.75 per cent in June 2025 (compared to the RBA's forecast of 3 per cent)
- Treasury forecast a sharper decline in wages growth, with WPI growth expected to be 3.25 per cent in June 2025 (compared to the RBA's forecast of 3.75 per cent).

Table A.2: Commonwealth Budget 2023-24 — forecasts for the Australian economy

Indicator	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Real GDP ^(a)	3.25	1.50	2.25
Unemployment rate ^(b)	3.50	4.25	4.50
CPI ^(c)	6.00	3.25	2.75
WPI growth ^(c)	3.75	4.00	3.25

Notes: (a) Percentage change in year-average terms compared with the previous year. (b) Seasonally adjusted rate for the June quarter. (c) Year-ended growth to the June quarter.

Source: Commonwealth of Australia (2023), *Budget Paper No. 1: Budget Strategy and Outlook*, p. 58.

³⁸ RBA (2023c), p. 71.

³⁹ RBA (2023c), pp. 74-75.

⁴⁰ RBA (2023c), p. 75.

⁴¹ Commonwealth of Australia (2023), *Budget Paper No. 1: Budget Strategy and Outlook*, p. 58.

Victorian economic conditions

ABS data show that Victoria's real Gross State Product (GSP) rose 5.6 per cent in 2021-22 — the highest growth rate of any state or territory.⁴² Victoria also recorded the highest growth in seasonally adjusted State Final Demand⁴³ in 2022 (6.1 per cent), and the second highest growth in the March quarter 2023 (0.7 per cent).⁴⁴

The latest ABS labour statistics show that conditions in the Victorian labour market have started to ease, but remain tight by historical standards. Victoria's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 3.7 per cent in May 2023, while the seasonally adjusted participation rate was 67.6 per cent.⁴⁵

Regarding movements in prices, the Melbourne CPI rose 1.2 per cent in the March quarter 2023. This was the smallest increase since the December quarter 2021, with growth slowing in each of the last two quarters. In year-ended terms, Melbourne CPI growth moderated from 8 per cent in the December quarter 2022 to 6.8 per cent in the March quarter 2023. Despite the decline, 6.8 per cent is the third-highest annual growth recorded in any quarter since 1991. A measure of underlying inflation, the Melbourne CPI excluding 'volatile items'⁴⁶, increased by 7.1 per cent over the same period.⁴⁷

Wage growth has picked up in recent quarters, with annual growth in the Victorian WPI increasing to 3.5 per cent in the March quarter 2023. This was the fastest growth since 2012, and was driven primarily by a 3.7 per cent increase in private sector wages. Meanwhile, public sector wages grew by a more subdued 3 per cent, consistent with the recent trend of slower growth relative to the private sector. The private sector has now recorded higher year-ended wage growth than the public sector in each of the last eight quarters.⁴⁸

The Tribunal also noted the following with regard to wage movements:

- full-time Victorian adult average weekly ordinary time earnings increased by 2.0 per cent (in seasonally adjusted terms) through the year to November 2022⁴⁹

⁴² ABS (2022).

⁴³ State Final Demand is a broad measure of the demand for goods and services in the Victorian economy. It is distinct from GSP as it does not measure output or production.

⁴⁴ ABS (2023a).

⁴⁵ ABS (2023e).

⁴⁶ 'Volatile items' are fruit, vegetables and automotive fuel. (ABS 2023d).

⁴⁷ ABS (2023c).

⁴⁸ ABS (2023f).

⁴⁹ ABS (2023b).

- the average annualised wage increase for Victorian enterprise agreements current at 31 December 2022 was 2.5 per cent, and 2.4 per cent for agreements approved in the December quarter 2022⁵⁰
- the SEEK Advertised Salary Index rose 4.2 per cent through the year to April 2023.⁵¹

The Victorian Budget, released in May 2023, stated that ‘the economic outlook [for Victoria] remains positive’, while forecasting subdued growth in 2023-24 as high interest rates and inflation weigh on economic activity.⁵²

The Victorian Budget forecasts for the Victorian economy are reproduced in Table A.3. In summary:⁵³

- real GSP growth is expected to be 2.75 per cent in 2022-23, before moderating to 1.50 per cent in 2023-24 as rising interest rates and high inflation affect household spending
- the unemployment rate is projected to rise gradually to average 4.75 per cent in 2025-26 and 2026-27
- growth in the Melbourne CPI is expected to average 7 per cent in 2022-23, before declining to the middle of the RBA’s target range in 2025-26
- growth in the Victorian WPI is expected to average 3.5 per cent from 2022-23 through to 2024-25, before moderating to 3.25 per cent in years thereafter.

Table A.3: Victorian Budget 2023/24 – forecasts for the Victorian economy

Indicator	2022-23 (forecast)	2023-24 (forecast)	2024-25 (forecast)	2025-26 (projection)	2026-27 (projection)
Real GSP ^(a)	2.75	1.50	2.50	2.75	2.75
Unemployment rate ^(b)	3.75	4.25	4.50	4.75	4.75
Melbourne CPI ^(a)	7.00	4.25	2.75	2.50	2.50
Victorian WPI ^(a)	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.25	3.25

Notes: (a) Percentage change in year-average terms compared with the previous year. (b) Year average.

Source: DTF (2023), *Budget Paper No. 2: Strategy and Outlook*, p. 22.

The Victorian Budget noted that risks to Victoria’s economic outlook remain higher than normal. In terms of upside risks, the tight labour market could lead to higher than expected growth in household consumption. On the other hand, a downside risk is that persistent high inflation could become self-sustaining if inflation expectations become de-anchored and firms and employees ‘build these

⁵⁰ Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (Cth) (2023), pp. 29, 31.

⁵¹ SEEK (2023). The SEEK Advertised Salary Index measures the change in advertised salaries over time for jobs posted on SEEK, while removing much of the effect of compositional change.

⁵² DTF (2023), *Budget Paper No. 2: Strategy and Outlook*, p. 21.

⁵³ DTF (2023), *Budget Paper No. 2: Strategy and Outlook*, p. 22.

higher expectations into their wage bargaining and price-setting behaviour'. This could in turn lead the RBA to raise interest rates further or leave them higher for longer, which would weigh on economic activity. Globally, there is a risk that further escalation in the conflict between Russia and Ukraine could 'further destabilise energy prices and elevate geopolitical tensions'.⁵⁴

A.2 Financial position and fiscal strategy of the State of Victoria

The Tribunal's analysis of the financial position and fiscal strategy of the State of Victoria has been informed by the Victorian Budget, including the latest quarterly financial statement.

According to the Victorian Budget, the general government sector recorded an operating deficit of \$2.9 billion for the nine months to 31 March 2023. Total revenue increased by \$2.1 billion compared to the corresponding period in the previous financial year. This was driven by a 9 per cent increase in taxation revenue, and partially offset by a decrease in grants revenue. Total expenses decreased by \$4.4 billion compared to the corresponding period in the previous financial year due to the winding down of business support measures introduced in response to COVID-19.⁵⁵

The Victorian Budget reiterated the Victorian Government's four-step fiscal strategy, first outlined in the *Victorian Budget 2020/21* in response to the COVID-19 pandemic:⁵⁶

- Step 1 — creating jobs, reducing unemployment and restoring economic growth
- Step 2 — returning to an operating cash surplus
- Step 3 — returning to operating surpluses
- Step 4 — stabilising debt levels.

To support its fiscal strategy, the Victorian Government announced a COVID-19 Debt Repayment Plan to help pay down debt incurred as a result of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, estimated at \$31.5 billion. The plan includes a range of revenue and savings measures over 10 years.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ DTF (2023), *Budget Paper No. 2: Strategy and Outlook*, p. 39.

⁵⁵ DTF (2023), *Budget Paper No. 5: Statement of Finances*, pp. 221-222.

⁵⁶ DTF (2023), *Budget Paper No. 2: Strategy and Outlook*, p. 3.

⁵⁷ DTF (2023), *Budget Paper No. 2: Strategy and Outlook*, p. 7.

One of these is the introduction of a temporary COVID-19 Debt Levy, which will levy additional payroll tax on businesses with national payrolls above \$10 million per year, decrease the tax-free threshold for general land taxes and adjust fixed charges and land tax rates. These measures are expected to raise \$8.6 billion over four years, with the levy expected to end on 30 June 2033.⁵⁸

The Victorian Government also announced a range of savings and efficiency initiatives to be implemented across the public sector, including reductions in the number of Victorian Public Service staff across corporate and back office functions. Further savings will be achieved via reductions in labour hire and consultancy expenditure and efficiencies across public non-financial corporations and public financial corporations. In total, these measures are expected to save \$2.1 billion over four years.⁵⁹

An operating deficit for the general government sector of \$10.3 billion is forecast for 2022-23, with smaller deficits forecast for the following years before an expected return to an operating surplus in 2025-26. Meanwhile, an operating cash flow surplus of \$2.9 billion is forecast for 2022-23.⁶⁰ Net debt for the general government sector was approximately \$108 billion at 31 March 2023,⁶¹ and is forecast to increase to around \$171 billion (24.5 per cent of GSP) by June 2027.⁶²

A.3 Wages Policy

In April 2023, the Treasurer of Victoria announced the introduction of a new *Victorian Public Sector Wages Policy* (Wages Policy), with immediate effect.⁶³

Box A.1 summarises the key features of the new Wages Policy, which applies to enterprise agreements negotiated by public sector employers.

In particular, the new Wages Policy provides that:⁶⁴

- increases in wages and conditions will be funded at a rate of growth of 3 per cent per annum over the life of the agreement

⁵⁸ DTF (2023), *Budget Paper No. 3: Service Delivery*, p. 6.

⁵⁹ DTF (2023), *Budget Paper No. 3: Service Delivery*, p. 6.

⁶⁰ DTF (2023), *Budget Paper No. 2: Strategy and Outlook*, p. 53.

⁶¹ DTF (2023), *Budget Paper No. 5: Statement of Finances*, p. 223.

⁶² DTF (2023), *Budget Paper No. 2: Strategy and Outlook*, p. 53.

⁶³ State Government of Victoria (2023).

⁶⁴ Industrial Relations Victoria (2023), p.3.

- in addition to annual wage increases, a separate lump sum cash payment will be available, equivalent to an additional 0.5 per cent of overall agreement costs.

Box A.1: Victorian Public Sector Wages Policy — summary

The Victorian Public Sector Wages Policy has three pillars:

Pillar 1: Wages

- Increases in wages and conditions will be funded at a rate of growth of 3.0 per cent per annum over the life of the agreement. In practice, this means that employee wages and conditions will be allowed to grow at this rate.
- In addition to annual wage increases, a separate lump sum, cash payment will be available equivalent to an additional 0.5 per cent of overall agreement costs which for the purposes of this policy means a per annum amount calculated on wages and wage-related conditions.

Pillar 2: Best Practice Employment Commitment

- Public sector agencies may make a Best Practice Employment Commitment which outlines measures to operationalise elements of the Government’s Public Sector Priorities^(a) that reflect good practice within Government and can be implemented operationally or without significant costs.

Pillar 3: Additional strategic changes

- Additional changes to allowances and other conditions (not general wages) will only be allowed if Government agrees that the changes will address key operational or strategic priorities for the agency, and/or one or more of the Public Sector Priorities and provided the associated costs are funded through appropriate cash offsets or a government approved funding strategy.

A ‘Secondary Pathway’ is also available for public sector agencies whose current enterprise agreement reaches its nominal expiry date before 1 January 2024, which permits agreements to be made on the following terms:

- wage and allowance increase funded at a rate of growth of 3.50 per cent per year, pro-rated
- a nominal expiry date of between 12 to 18 months from the nominal expiry date of the current agreement
- all other terms and conditions as contained in the current agreement, except for where a change is required under the Public Sector Industrial Relations Policies, to further mutually agreed whole-of-Government initiatives, to resolve legal issues, or minor changes to improve the clarity of the agreement.

Note: (a) The Public Sector Priorities are: the delivery of exceptional services and value for Victorians; a professional and responsive public sector; government as a fair and best practice employer.

Source: Industrial Relations Victoria (2023).

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Affordable Housing Policy Statement

July 2023 (Draft)

Acknowledgment of Country

Council acknowledges the Bunurong People of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Owners of these municipal lands and waterways, and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

DRAFT

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1. Introduction

There is an urgent need for more Affordable Housing in Hobsons Bay to support households on very low, low and moderate incomes.¹ Research estimates a current shortfall of more than 1,400 Affordable Housing dwellings in Hobsons Bay, with particular need amongst very low income and single adult households.²

Housing is recognised as a human right in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.³ Research indicates that adequate housing is protective for physical and mental health, while inadequate or precarious housing can be harmful for individuals, families and communities.⁴ Inadequate housing (measured by a range of factors such as affordability, location, and security of tenure) can affect people's identify, stability, safety, social support, and general sense of control over their lives.⁵

Commonwealth and Victorian Governments set the legislative, policy and funding contexts for housing markets and Affordable Housing. By comparison, local government plays a relatively limited role, focussed primarily on advocating on behalf of local communities and negotiating Affordable Housing contributions through the planning system.

To address a shortfall of Affordable Housing, Council will continue to prioritise advocacy and securing Affordable Housing contributions via the planning system. It will also support the growth of the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust and work to identify opportunities for more Affordable Housing on government-owned land.

2. Purpose and scope

The purpose of this Policy Statement is to guide Council's efforts to increase the supply of Affordable Housing in Hobsons Bay. It recognises the role of safe, secure and affordable housing in supporting the health and wellbeing of local communities, particularly for vulnerable and lower income households.

More specifically, the Policy Statement:

- articulates Council's position on Affordable Housing to residents, local businesses and other key stakeholders such as developers and registered housing agencies
- presents a series of action areas and commitments that will inform Council's future planning, actions and decision-making
- strengthens the foundations to further grow and develop Council's approach, including how it supports residents and households in need of Affordable Housing.

This Policy Statement works within the definition of 'Affordable Housing' outlined in the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, which includes housing to meet the needs of very low, low and moderate income households (see Section 4.1). As such, it supports different types of Affordable

¹ 'Affordable Housing' is defined in the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* as follows: *housing, including social housing, that is appropriate for the housing needs of very low, low and moderate income households*. Wherever the term 'Affordable Housing' (intentionally capitalised) is used in this Policy Statement, it has the same meaning as the definition at Section 3AA of Act.

² .id Consulting (c. 2023) Housing monitor: Hobsons Bay City (<https://housing.id.com.au/hobsons-bay>).

³ United Nations (c. 2023) Universal Declaration of Human Rights (<https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>).

⁴ VicHealth (n.d.) Housing and health – Research summary (https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/Housing_and_Health_Research-Summary_web.pdf).

⁵ Ibid.

Housing, ranging from social housing to affordable rental and affordable purchase housing, depending on local need and external policy contexts and funding opportunities.

This Policy Statement identifies four key roles for Council in seeking to increase the supply of Affordable Housing: Advocate, Planner, Partner, and Connector (see Section 4.2). These roles existing with the broader context of Council’s core responsibilities, legislative obligations, and the need to maintain financial sustainability for current and future generations.

This Policy Statement replaces Council’s Affordable Housing Policy Statement 2016.

3. Statement of Intent

Hobsons Bay City Council acknowledges that safe, secure and affordable housing is a fundamental human right, and a key determinant of individual and community health and wellbeing. Council will continue to support and encourage increased supply of Affordable Housing in Hobsons Bay to meet the current and future needs of our community.

4. Context

4.1. Defining Affordable Housing

This Policy Statement adopts the current definition of Affordable Housing in the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*. As per Section 3AA of the Act, Affordable Housing is defined as:

housing, including social housing, that is appropriate for the housing needs of any of the following:

- (a) very low income households**
- (b) low income households**
- (c) moderate income households**

The income ranges that define the above household groups are based on data published by the Victorian Government each year (see Table 1).⁶ The Victorian Government has also established criteria that need to be considered when determining whether housing is appropriate for the needs of lower income households, including tenure, location, and the types of housing provided.⁷

Table 1: Household Income ranges for Affordable Housing in Greater Melbourne (June 2023)

	Very low income range (annual)	Low income range (annual)	Moderate income range (annual)
Single adult	Up to \$29,770	\$29,771 to \$47,630	\$47,631 to \$71,450
Couple, no dependent	Up to \$44,650	\$44,651 to \$71,450	\$71,451 to \$107,170
Family (with one or two parents) and dependent children	Up to \$62,510	\$62,511 to \$100,030	\$100,031 to \$150,030

⁶ Governor in Council Order (2023) *Planning and Environment Act 1987, Section 3AB – Specification of Income Ranges for Affordable Housing*, June 2023.

⁷ Victorian Government (2018) *Ministerial Notice – Specified Matters under Section 3AA(2) of the Planning and Environment Act 1987*, May 2018.

The definition of Affordable Housing in the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* includes different types of Affordable Housing that fit within a broader housing ‘continuum’ (see Figure 1).

This Policy Statement will focus primarily on the following types of Affordable Housing: social housing, affordable rental housing, and affordable purchase housing. Crisis accommodation and transitional housing will not be a primary focus for this Policy Statement, as they typically provide short-term housing options for people experiencing homelessness or an immediate crisis such as family violence. These types of housing have specific planning controls in the Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme, e.g. Clause 52.22 (Community Care Accommodation) and Clause 52.23 (Rooming House). Private rental and private ownership are also out of scope, as Council has limited capacity to influence housing affordability in the private market.



Figure 1: Housing continuum

(Source: adapted from <https://www.northumberland.ca/en/housing-help/housing-continuum.aspx>)

The following definitions of the key types of Affordable Housing have been adapted from the Victorian Government⁸ and will be used in this Policy Statement:

- **Social housing** - rental housing suitable for the needs of very low- and low-income households provided either by government (public housing) or by registered housing agencies (community housing) and supported with a subsidy of some kind. Tenants access social housing via the Victorian Housing Register and rents are typically set as a percentage of income, e.g. 25 to 30 per cent.
- **Affordable rental housing** – housing suitable for the needs of (primarily) moderate income households, typically provided either by government or by registered housing agencies. Housing is priced so these households can meet their other essential living costs. Tenants are subject to eligibility criteria and rents are usually set as a percentage of market rate, e.g. 70-80 per cent. Affordable rental housing may be delivered through programs such as the Commonwealth Government’s National Rental Affordability Scheme (ending in 2026) and the Victorian Government’s Homes Victoria Affordable Home program.
- **Affordable purchase housing** - housing suitable for the needs of (primarily) moderate income households, typically provided or supported by government, registered housing agencies or private developers. Housing may be priced as a percentage of market rate (e.g. 70-80 per cent) and/or delivered through programs such as ‘shared equity’ or ‘rent to buy’ (see Key Terms).

⁸ Homes Victoria (2023) 10-Year Strategy for Social and Affordable Housing (<https://www.homes.vic.gov.au/10-year-strategy-social-and-affordable-housing>).

Through this Policy Statement, Council will seek to increase the supply of social housing (typically for very low- and low-income households) and affordable rental and affordable purchase housing (typically for moderate-income households) in Hobsons Bay.

4.2. Roles and responsibilities

The Commonwealth and Victorian Governments are primarily responsible for setting the policy, legislative and funding contexts for Affordable Housing. Like most Victorian local governments, Hobsons Bay City Council plays a key role through land use planning and advocacy. However, Council has extended its role through its establishment and ongoing support of the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust and consideration of the use of Council-owned land. The roles and responsibilities of Council and other levels of government are outlined below, alongside other key stakeholders such as the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust, registered housing agencies, landowners and developers, support services, and local communities and businesses.

Further information on the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders is presented in the Affordable Housing Policy Statement Background Paper.

Commonwealth Government

The Commonwealth Government oversees tax policy frameworks that directly affect housing demand and affordability in the private market, including through negative gearing and capital gains tax. It also delivers programs that aim to provide increased access such as First Home Buyer Grants. In a more targeted way, the Australian Government also funds homelessness services, offers low-cost financing for social housing projects, and provides payments to individuals through Commonwealth Rent Assistance.

The Commonwealth Government has also signalled its intention to take a more active role through the proposed Housing Australia Future Fund (HAFF). The HAFF is expected to provide funding for Affordable Housing, with a focus on affordable rental housing that is expected to be aimed at moderate income households and offered at 70-80 per cent of market rate.

Victorian Government

The Victorian Government plays a central role in the supply of Affordable Housing in Victoria through its legislative, policy and funding frameworks. It funds and manages the public housing system, including around 1,000 properties in Hobsons Bay. It also administers the community housing regulatory framework through the *Housing Act 1983*, and establishes the rights and responsibilities of renters and rental providers through the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997*.

The Victorian Government also oversees Victoria's planning system through the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*. In 2018, a definition of 'Affordable Housing' was added to the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, alongside a new objective to 'facilitate the provision of affordable housing in Victoria'. In 2020, the Big Housing Build commenced, a \$5.3 billion investment which aims to deliver over 12,000 new social and affordable dwellings over four years. To streamline implementation of the Big Housing Build, the Victorian Government also introduced changes to the planning system that apply to various Affordable Housing projects.

The current approach to voluntary Affordable Housing contributions through the planning system provides a key negotiation role for Council (as the Responsible Authority) on relevant local planning permit applications. Similarly, the ongoing implementation of the Big Housing Build provides funding opportunities to increase local supply. Other Victorian Government policies and initiatives (such as the Windfall Gains Tax, Social and Affordable Housing Compact, and proposed planning reforms) are also likely to present challenges and opportunities to increase the supply of Affordable Housing in Hobsons Bay.

Hobsons Bay City Council

Hobsons Bay has taken a proactive approach to addressing a lack of Affordable Housing, most notably through the establishment of the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust and consideration of the use of Council-owned land for projects such as the Epsom Street Affordable Housing Project. This work has been guided by the Affordable Housing Policy Statement 2016, and complemented by other Council plans, strategies and policies, including the Council Plan 2021-25, Hobsons Bay Housing Strategy 2019, Hobsons Bay Property Strategy 2021 and A Fair Hobsons Bay for All 2019-23.



Figure 2: The role of Council in the provision of Affordable Housing

Through this Policy Statement, Council will continue to work across four key roles (see Figure 2).

Role 1: Advocate

Council has a role in advocating for the local community and its interests in response to policy and funding proposals set by the state and federal governments that impact access to Affordable Housing. Through this role, Council engages with decision-makers within other levels of government, as well as peak bodies, industry representatives, neighbouring Councils and other key stakeholders. It also prepares submissions to represent the views of Council and local communities to inform government inquiries, policy development and other related projects.

Role 2: Planner

Council plays a key role in land use planning and development in Hobsons Bay. As the Responsible Authority for the assessment of planning permit applications against the Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme, Council makes decisions about the types of residential developments delivered in Hobsons Bay.

Through the preparation of planning scheme amendments, Council can also introduce new local policy or residential zones that encourage different types of dwelling stock that may be more affordable (e.g., apartments) in appropriate locations. Council also negotiates voluntary Affordable Housing contributions where the development or re-zoning of land results in a significant uplift in accordance with the objectives of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and this Policy Statement.

Role 3: Partner

Council plays a more direct partner role through its support for the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust and by considering the use of Council-owned land for Affordable Housing projects. This demonstrates Council's strong commitment to increasing supply and has been consolidated through the previous policy statement. This role is guided by detailed and robust governance

arrangements and is also informed by Council's current and forecast financial position, core responsibilities, and legislative requirements under the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Role 4: Connector

Increasing the supply of Affordable Housing often relies on the support multiple organisations and local communities, and Council plays an important 'connector' role in this process. Council engages and connects with key stakeholders and helps to build community awareness and understanding of the need for Affordable Housing. This role extends to support for residents and households experiencing or are at risk of homelessness and insecure housing. While Council does not deliver these services, it may provide referrals to support agencies and support more coordinated local responses.

Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust

The Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust has been established as a perpetual Charitable Trust for the purpose of providing a range of affordable, secure and appropriate housing in the City of Hobsons Bay. The Trust may acquire land or existing buildings in Hobsons Bay with the purpose of refurbishing them for Affordable Housing or to construct new dwellings. Housing is made available to 'eligible residents', i.e. an individual or household in need of Affordable Housing with significant links to the City of Hobsons Bay. The Trust is also Council's preferred mechanism for the delivery of Affordable Housing contributions through the planning system.

In 2020, Housing Choices Australia (HCA) was appointed by Council as the Trustee of the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust. HCA is a registered housing agency and has experience managing other housing trusts, as well as developing and managing Affordable Housing in Hobsons Bay and across metropolitan Melbourne. The Trustee will deliver Affordable Housing projects on behalf of the Trust such as the Epsom Street Affordable Housing project (subject to funding) and will manage future Affordable Housing contributions for the benefit of Hobsons Bay residents. More broadly, the further development of the Trust is a key priority for Council, and an important part of our approach to increasing supply of Affordable Housing in Hobsons Bay.

Further detail on the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust is presented in the Affordable Housing Policy Statement Background Paper.

Registered housing agencies

Registered housing agencies (RHAs) are not-for-profit organisations established to develop and manage Affordable Housing. RHAs are a regulated sector under the *Housing Act 1983*. The Victorian Housing Registrar is responsible for the regulatory oversight of the sector, ensuring it delivers safe, secure and affordable housing and protects investment into the sector.

RHAs may contribute to increasing supply by developing their own land or land that is owned or made available by government agencies, and/or private developments. They may also apply for government funding for housing development, and can accept developer contributions through the planning system by agreeing to purchase dwellings at a reduced agreed price or accepting cash, land or other contributions.

The following registered housing agencies currently manage Affordable Housing in Hobsons Bay: Unison Housing; Aboriginal Housing Victoria; Common Equity Housing; Haven Home Safe; Housing Choices Australia; Launch Housing; United Housing Co-operative; Williamstown Rental Housing Co-Op; Wintringham Housing; Women's Housing; and Women's Property Initiatives.⁹

⁹ Internal Council data.

Other key stakeholders

There are a range of other stakeholders that influence the supply of Affordable Housing in Hobsons Bay. These include:

- **Developers and Landowners** – under the current planning framework, developers and landowners can make voluntary Affordable Housing contributions in the form of cash, land or dwellings. In some cases, they may also deliver housing in the private market that is affordable for moderate income households.
- **Government agencies** – there are a range of government agencies that can enable increased local supply, including Homes Victoria and the proposed National Housing Supply and Affordability Council.
- **Neighbouring Councils** – the need for Affordable Housing extends beyond municipal boundaries, and neighbouring Councils can support collective advocacy or initiatives to increase local supply.
- **Support services** – local support services support local communities affected by housing stress, homelessness and limited access to Affordable Housing, including through financial, legal, health, educational and material aid support.
- **Local communities and businesses** – local residents and businesses are Council's primary stakeholders and can play various roles, including leading development (as developers or landowners), providing feedback on Council planning and decisions, and/or living in Affordable Housing within Hobsons Bay.

4.3. Affordable Housing Needs Assessment

There is a diverse and growing need for Affordable Housing in Hobsons Bay. It is estimated that more than 1,400 moderate, low and very low-income households are currently in need of Affordable Housing, which equates to 4.1 per cent of all households.

In June 2022, Hobsons Bay was home to just under 92,000 people, with the population forecast to grow steadily to around 120,000 by 2041. Over the past decade, housing costs have grown, with median prices for houses (up 83%), units (up 58%) and vacant house blocks (up 144%) all increasing substantially.¹⁰ In addition, currently just seven per cent of private rental properties are affordable for very low-income households in Hobsons Bay, and none of these affordable for those relying on income support such as JobSeeker or Youth Allowance.¹¹ We also have a growing number of people (particularly women) seeking support through Specialist Homelessness Services.¹²

Homelessness and housing stress continue to drive need for Affordable Housing in Hobsons Bay. Almost 300 people were experiencing homelessness on Census night 2021 and a further 262 people were living in marginal housing.¹³ The number of households on the Victorian Housing Register for the Altona and Werribee Districts which incorporate Hobsons Bay has also

¹⁰ Department of Transport and Planning (c. 2023) About Valuer-General Victoria (<https://www.land.vic.gov.au/>).

¹¹ Anglicare Australia (2023) 2023: Rental Affordability Snapshot (<https://www.anglicare.asn.au/publications/2023-rental-affordability-snapshot/>).

¹² Australian institute of Health and Welfare (2022) Specialist homelessness services annual report 2021-22, <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/homelessness-services/specialist-homelessness-services-annual-report/contents/about>

¹³ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2023) Estimating Homelessness: Census (<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/housing/estimating-homelessness-census/latest-release>).

grown in recent years, with single person households including parents and older people making up the vast majority.

Figure 3 shows that unmet need for Affordable Housing is highest amongst lone-person households, affecting almost one in five households (18.7%) in this group across all household income groups (very low, low and moderate). A smaller (but still substantial) proportion of family households (11.6%) are also in need, primarily in very low- and low-income households income groups. As such, future social housing stock delivered in Hobsons Bay (typically for very low- and low-income households) should prioritise one-, two- and three-bedroom dwellings, while affordable rental and affordable purchase housing stock (typically for moderate income households) should prioritise one- and two-bedroom dwellings with a focus on lone person households.

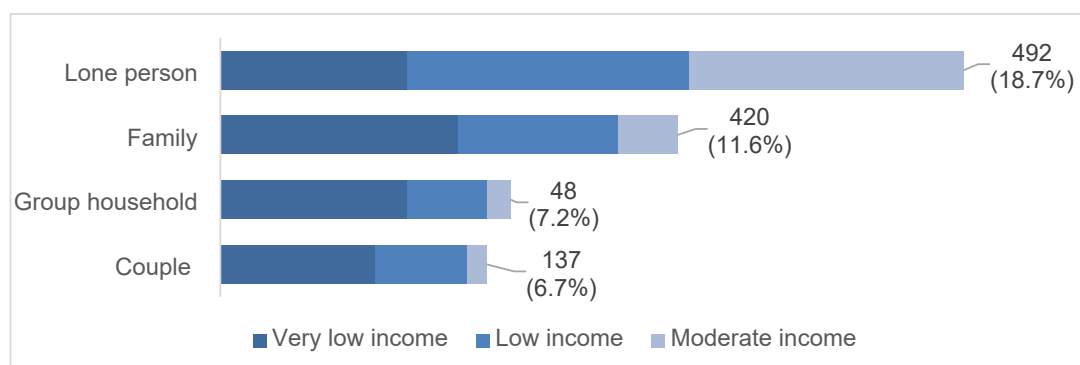


Figure 3: Households in need of Affordable Housing (% of household type)
 (Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2021. Compiled and presented by .id)

Based on current need and forecast population growth, it is estimated that the need for Affordable Housing will increase to 1,987 households by 2041 without adding any further supply.¹⁴ To fully meet this need, approximately 17 percent of all new dwellings built until 2041 would need to be Affordable Housing (representing around 100 new Affordable Housing dwellings per year).¹⁵

Based on this forecast demand, even if Council were able to negotiate with developers to deliver 10 percent of all dwellings as Affordable Housing dwellings in accordance with the aspirations of this draft policy statement, there would still be a significant shortfall of supply in 2041.¹⁶

Addressing this issue of Affordable Housing in Hobsons Bay will therefore require a multifaceted approach by Council. As reflected in the six key action areas set out in this policy, this approach would include:

- advocacy to the State and Federal Government
- development of the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust
- securing voluntary affordable housing contributions through the planning system
- identification and use of surplus government owned land for Affordable Housing
- building community awareness and support for those at risk

¹⁴ .id Consulting (c. 2023) Housing monitor Hobsons Bay City (<https://housing.id.com.au/hobsons-bay>).

¹⁵ This is calculated as a proportion of the total forecast additional 11,813 households in Hobsons Bay by 2041 (id Consulting (c. 2023) Housing monitor Hobsons Bay City (<https://housing.id.com.au/hobsons-bay>)).

¹⁶ Refer to the Land Use Planning commitments at 5.2.1 and 5.2.2 of this draft Policy Statement

Further detail on the Affordable Housing Needs Assessment is presented in the Affordable Housing Policy Statement Background Paper.

4.4. Land use planning considerations

Like all local governments, Hobsons Bay works within the current voluntary negotiation framework for Affordable Housing contributions, established through the Victorian Planning System, the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and supporting policies and processes.

To date, Council has successfully negotiated Affordable Housing contributions as part of the process of rezoning larger 'brownfield' sites (also referred to as Strategic Redevelopment Areas or SRAs). This has been possible due to the significant uplift associated with the rezoning of land from an industrial to residential use and supported by the 2016 Policy Statement that seeks a 10 percent contribution towards Affordable Housing as part of the rezoning of a SRA. To a lesser extent, Council has secured some Affordable Housing contributions on residential development sites through the planning permit process. However, negotiating contributions for smaller development sites that do not propose a rezoning is more challenging due to the relatively smaller uplift.

While the Victorian Government encourages voluntary negotiations through the planning system, the planning and development industry have highlighted that this process creates uncertainty for landowners, developers, and the community.¹⁷ A mandatory provision towards Affordable Housing in the planning system could be of benefit to Council as it would remove the requirement for lengthy negotiations. Council's Housing Strategy 2019 recommended that Council continue to advocate to the Victorian government to mandate that a proportion of a residential development include affordable housing dwellings to increase Affordable Housing supply rather than relying on voluntary agreements (also referred to as Inclusionary Zoning).¹⁸

A mandatory provision in the planning scheme would also ensure contributions are secured for smaller development sites as well as rezonings. In future, Council will need to focus more on negotiating Affordable Housing contributions via development and infill applications given the limited vacant or brownfield sites that remain within Hobsons Bay. However, any mandatory provision would need to be created in such a way that the contribution is fair and reasonable and is borne solely by the developer or recipient of any uplift from a development or rezoning. Any costs should not be passed on unfairly to the Hobsons Bay community.

Affordable Housing contributions through the planning system will also be important for the ongoing viability of the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust. Council will need to explore what incentives it can provide for landowners and developers to work with the Trust when delivering their contributions towards Affordable Housing.

Further detail on land use planning considerations is presented in the Affordable Housing Policy Statement Background Paper.

5. Action Areas

Council's Affordable Housing Policy Statement is built on six action areas.

¹⁷ Katrina Raynor, Georgia Warren-Myers and Matthew Palm (2020) 'Confusing and not delivering enough': developers and councils want new affordable housing rules' (<https://findanexpert.unimelb.edu.au/news/12508-%27confusing-and-not-delivering-enough%27---developers-and-councils-want-new-affordable-housing-rules>).

¹⁸ Hobsons Bay City Council (2019) *Housing Strategy 2019*, https://www.hobsonsabay.vic.gov.au/files/assets/public/documents/volume-3-housing-strategy-_adopted_-_20190813.pdf, accessed June 2023.

5.1. Advocacy and Leadership

Council will advocate for ongoing policy and funding support from the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments to deliver new dwellings and maintain existing stock in Hobsons Bay. It will also advocate for changes to the Victorian planning system that deliver more certainty for Council, developers, registered housing agencies and local communities. Council will also seek a 'seat at the table' to meaningfully engage with decision makers with at all levels of government, including through formal mechanisms such as the proposed Social and Affordable Housing Compact.

Council will:

- 5.1.1. Advocate to State and Federal Governments for a strategic approach to building supply of Affordable Housing in Hobsons Bay, underpinned by robust policy frameworks and sustained and consistent funding.**
- 5.1.2. Advocate to the State Government for a new state planning provision that makes Affordable Housing contributions mandatory for residential rezonings or residential developments of 20 or more dwellings, where this would be fair and reasonable and of benefit to the community.**
- 5.1.3. Advocate to State and Federal Governments (and relevant government agencies) to make suitable government-owned land available to the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust to increase the supply of Affordable Housing in Hobsons Bay.**
- 5.1.4. Engage with State and Federal Governments, registered housing agencies, neighbouring Councils and other key stakeholders to share information, identify priorities and clarify local need, while ensuring the interests of Hobsons Bay are represented and considered in planning and decision making.**

5.2. Land use planning

Council will aim to increase Affordable Housing contributions through the planning system, including through timely negotiations and building skills and capability within Council. Council will also seek to promote the Trust as the preferred mechanism for implementing Affordable Housing contributions.

Council will:

- 5.2.1. Seek voluntary Affordable Housing contributions when assessing relevant planning scheme amendments that seek a rezoning of land to residential and that would yield 20 or more dwellings. Through these negotiations, Council will seek a 10 per cent Affordable Housing contribution.**
- 5.2.2. Seek voluntary Affordable Housing contributions when assessing relevant planning permit applications for the development of residential housing. Through these negotiations, Council will seek a 5 to 10 per cent Affordable Housing contribution for residential development sites that yield 20 or more dwellings.**
- 5.2.3. Implement a centralised internal process for recording and reporting on all Affordable Housing contributions secured through the planning system.**
- 5.2.4. Continue to prioritise the assessment of planning permit applications with the potential to deliver Affordable Housing, including through the allocation of an**

experienced planning officer and the provision of relevant information and advice early in the application and pre-application process.

- 5.2.5. *Continue to build skills, knowledge and capability within Council to engage, support and negotiate with developers, landowners, registered housing agencies and other key stakeholders in regard to Affordable Housing contributions.***
- 5.2.6. *Identify and where appropriate prepare planning scheme amendment(s) to facilitate increased supply of Affordable Housing, including to add the updated Policy Statement as a Background Document in the Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme.***
- 5.2.7. *Investigate incentives within Council's control that can encourage more Affordable Housing to be delivered through the planning system. For example, consideration of a priority planning process that retains Council Officer delegation for relevant planning permit applications that provide an Affordable Housing contribution of at least 5 per cent, consistent with Commitment 5.2.2 of this Policy Statement.***

5.3. Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust

Council will work in partnership with the Trustee to support the further establishment and growth of the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust. The Trust is Council's preferred mechanism for the delivery of Affordable Housing contributions and will lead Affordable Housing projects such as the Epsom Street Affordable Housing Project (subject to funding and relevant approvals).

Council will:

- 5.3.1. *Monitor and support the Trustee to develop and implement Annual Business Plans (or other planning mechanisms, as required) and report progress to Council annually.***
- 5.3.2. *Review and update governance and legal frameworks (as required) to ensure they are 'fit for purpose' and enable the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust to maximise its potential and work towards its purpose as effectively as possible.***
- 5.3.3. *Establish internal process(es) to enable timely identification of residential development projects with the potential to deliver an Affordable Housing contribution to the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust.***
- 5.3.4. *Identify and (where appropriate) implement incentives within Council's control that encourage developers, landowners, and other key stakeholders to use the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust to deliver their Affordable Housing contributions.***
- 5.3.5. *Promote the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust across Council and with residents, developers, government agencies and other key stakeholders to embed it as Council's preferred mechanism for managing Affordable Housing contributions.***
- 5.3.6. *Support the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust to seek government and private funding, including (but not limited to) federal and state government funding, debt, rent assistance, philanthropic grants, bequests, and transfers of appropriate land or other assets.***
- 5.3.7. *Explore appropriate and innovative partnership opportunities and housing models to grow its portfolio and increase the supply of Affordable Housing in***

Hobsons Bay, including (but not limited to) joint ventures with private developers and partnerships with government agencies.

5.4. Use of government-owned assets

Council will explore opportunities to use its own assets (typically land or other assets such as 'air rights') to increase supply, while also working with other levels of government to identify suitable sites to establish a long-term pipeline to support future projects. All work undertaken within this action area will support and be consistent with the Hobsons Bay Property Strategy 2021 and other relevant plans, policies and strategies.

Council will:

- 5.4.1. When delivering actions to meet commitments in Council's Property Strategy 2021, consider Affordable Housing as one of the outcomes of the assessment of Council-owned assets, including assets deemed surplus to requirements.**
- 5.4.2. As part of Council's standard processes, assess the suitability and feasibility of appropriate Council-owned asset(s) for contribution to future Affordable Housing project(s). Assessment may include planning controls, size, location, proposed use, and access to services, retail and transport. Following detailed assessment, consider endorsing any suitable and feasible asset(s) or parts thereof for transfer to the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust for the purpose of delivering Affordable Housing in Hobsons Bay.**
- 5.4.3. Progress the transfer of Council-owned land to the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust for the purpose of delivering the Epsom Street Affordable Housing Project subject to external funding and compliance with all legislative obligations.**
- 5.4.4. Engage with State and Federal Governments and relevant government agencies to identify suitable surplus government-owned assets or existing social housing sites for consideration in future Affordable Housing projects in Hobsons Bay.**

5.5. Community awareness and understanding

There are varying levels of understanding and acceptance of Affordable Housing in Hobsons Bay. Our community broadly recognise the need for increased supply to support different groups, ranging from households struggling with growing housing costs to people sleeping rough in local communities. However, there are also pockets of opposition to some developments, which may be driven by local concerns or broader stigma attached to Affordable Housing and tenants. Through this policy statement, Council will build community awareness and improve understanding for how Affordable Housing contributes to more diverse, healthy and safe communities.

Council will:

- 5.5.1. Deliver and support research to improve the evidence base on Affordable Housing in Hobsons Bay, including (but not limited to) local needs assessments, understanding community perceptions and attitudes, and testing the feasibility of different housing models.**
- 5.5.2. Monitor, share and promote relevant research, data and other information relating to the need for and supply of Affordable Housing in Hobsons Bay.**
- 5.5.3. Engage with local communities and businesses to raise awareness and build support for Council's efforts to increase supply, while also improving**

understanding of the need for and the benefits of Affordable Housing in Hobsons Bay.

5.6. Supporting at risk residents

Council will continue to monitor public health and building safety compliance of local rooming houses as required under legislation. It will also support at risk residents by building internal capability and processes, and facilitate connections between service providers, housing agencies and other key stakeholders. Council will also explore emerging and innovative Affordable Housing models to determine their feasibility and applicability to Hobsons Bay.

Council will:

- 5.6.1. Monitor compliance of registered rooming houses in Hobsons Bay to ensure adherence to building safety and public health and wellbeing standards, as required under relevant legislation.**
- 5.6.2. Develop consistent processes within Council to support residents experiencing or at risk of homelessness to access available services and supports.**
- 5.6.3. Support and facilitate connections between organisations that assist at risk residents in Hobsons Bay, including services providers, registered housing agencies, and government agencies.**
- 5.6.4. Assist lower income property owners to remain in the private housing system by applying rates discounts for eligible pensioners, rates rebates to eligible war veterans and widows, and considering rates reductions in cases of hardship.**
- 5.6.5. Investigate rates concessions for properties that are owned or managed by the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust.**

6. Implementation and Monitoring

The Affordable Housing Policy Statement will guide Council's efforts to increase the supply of Affordable Housing in Hobsons Bay. It complements Council's other plans, policies and strategies, including:

- Council Plan 2021-25 (incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan)
- Hobsons Bay 2030 Community Vision
- Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme
- Hobsons Bay Housing Strategy 2019
- Hobsons Bay Property Strategy 2021
- Hobsons Bay Advocacy Strategy 2021-25
- Building Asset Management Plan 2020
- Asset Plan 2022-32
- Community Services and Infrastructure Plan 2020-30
- A Fair Hobsons Bay for All 2019-23

The Policy Statement is also expected to be added as a Background Document to the Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme through a future planning scheme amendment (see Commitment 5.2.6)

Council will work within existing resources to implement the Policy Statement. Where additional resources are required, these will subject to Council's annual budget processes and/or external funding opportunities. Progress will be monitored and reported via Council's existing processes,

which may include the Annual Report and/or other public reporting methods. Implementation may also be reviewed and updated as actions are completed and new priorities arise.

The Policy Statement will be reviewed within five years from the date of Council adoption to ensure it takes account of contemporary policy and funding contexts and relevant Council plans, policies and strategies. Implementation will continue until any future updated Policy Statement is endorsed by Council.

7. Further information

For further information on the Draft Affordable Housing Policy Statement, please contact Council's Social and Strategic Planning team on **1300 179 944** or email socialplanning@hobsonsabay.vic.gov.au

8. Key Terms

The following key terms are used in this Policy Statement.

Affordable Housing

Affordable housing is a broad term which refers to housing that is affordable for lower income households. It is defined in the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* as 'housing, including social housing that is appropriate for the housing needs of very low, low and moderate income households'.

Affordable Housing contribution

An Affordable Housing contribution may be negotiated between Council and another party, typically a landowner or property developer. The contribution may be made in the form of dwellings, land, payments or a combination. Contributions are voluntary and agreed by negotiation, although some planning controls in the Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme set out requirements for the provision of Affordable Housing, e.g. Schedule 2 to Clause 37.02 Comprehensive Development Zone (Altona North Comprehensive Development Plan). The Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust is Council's preferred mechanism to manage Affordable Housing contributions.

'Brownfield land'

'Brownfield land' refers to land that was (or is) being used for industrial purposes and has been (or is intended) to be re-zoned to accommodate residential development. Council's Industrial Land Management Strategy 2008 identified a series of Strategic Redevelopment Areas on 'brownfield land' that have been subsequently re-zoned for residential use.

Commonwealth Rent Assistance

Rent Assistance is a non-taxable income supplement payable to eligible people who rent in the private rental market or community housing.¹⁹ Pensioners, allowees and those receiving more than the base rate of Family Tax Benefit Part A may be eligible for Rent Assistance.

Community Housing

Community housing is a form of social housing managed by Registered Housing Agency (see 'Social Housing, below).

Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust

The Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust is a key commitment of Council's Affordable Housing Policy Statement 2016. The Policy Statement proposed that the Trust be established for the charitable purpose of providing housing to low-income individuals or households that have a

¹⁹ Australian Government – Department of Social Services (2023) Commonwealth Rent Assistance (<https://www.dss.gov.au/housing-support/programmes-services/commonwealth-rent-assistance>).

connection to Hobsons Bay. The Trust is Council's preferred mechanism for the delivery of Affordable Housing contributions in the municipality. In 2020, Housing Choices Australia was appointed by Council as the Trustee of the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust.

Homelessness

There is no single agreed definition of homelessness. The Australian Bureau of Statistics uses six operational groups for presenting estimates of people experiencing homelessness on Census night.²⁰ These groups are:

- people living in improvised dwellings, tents or sleeping out
- people living in supported accommodation for the homeless
- people staying temporarily with other households
- people living in boarding houses
- people in other temporary lodgings
- people living in 'severely' overcrowded dwellings

An alternative 'cultural definition' of homelessness (developed by academics David MacKenzie and Chris Chamberlain²¹) includes three categories:

- Primary homelessness is experienced by people without conventional accommodation, e.g. sleeping rough or in improvised dwellings
- Secondary homelessness is experienced by people who frequently move from one temporary shelter to another, e.g. emergency accommodation, youth refuges, 'couch surfing'
- Tertiary homelessness is experienced by people staying in accommodation that falls below minimum community standards, e.g. boarding housing and caravan parks.

Housing Affordability

Housing affordability is not the same as Affordable Housing. It refers to the relationship between expenditure on housing (prices, mortgage payments or rents) and household income, regardless of whether the housing is Affordable Housing or market housing. Housing affordability is a significant issue across Australia as the increasing cost of housing has outpaced household income for many years.²²

Housing Stress

Housing stress is a specific term which refers to households having trouble meeting their financial housing obligations, either rent or mortgage payments. Moderate, low, and very low income households are considered to be in housing stress if they are spending more than 30 per cent of their gross household income on housing costs. Income brackets for this definition are classified as very low (< 50% of median), low (50% to 80% of median) and moderate (80% to 120% of median). Households on high incomes are not counted as being in housing stress, even if payments are above 30 per cent of income, as this is more likely to contain an element of choice, e.g. paying extra on a mortgage to complete the loan sooner.²³

Inclusionary Zoning

The Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI) defines inclusionary zoning as follows: *A land use planning intervention by government designed to deliver affordable housing. It either mandates or creates incentives for a residential development to provide a specified proportion or number of affordable housing dwellings.*²⁴ Within the Australian context,

²⁰ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2023) Estimating Homelessness: Census (<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/housing/estimating-homelessness-census/latest-release>).

²¹ James Farrell (2012) 'Definition of homelessness changes but problems remain' (<https://theconversation.com/definition-of-homelessness-changes-but-problems-remain-9525>).

²² South Gippsland Shire Council (c. 2022) Social and Affordable Housing Strategy (<https://yoursay.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/social-affordable-housing-strategy>).

²³ .id Consulting (c. 2023) Housing monitor Hobsons Bay City (<https://housing.id.com.au/hobsons-bay>).

²⁴ Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI) (2017) Understanding Inclusionary Zoning (<https://www.ahuri.edu.au/analysis/brief/understanding-inclusionary-zoning>).

inclusionary zoning has been implemented to varying degrees in South Australia, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory.

Key worker

The following definition is adapted from research prepared for the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI): *There is no single definition of what constitutes a 'key worker'. The term usually refers to employees in services that are essential to a city's functioning but who earn low to moderate incomes. In cities and regions with high housing costs, this makes access to appropriate and affordable housing in reasonable proximity to work difficult for key workers.*²⁵

Marginal housing

In addition to homelessness operational groups, the ABS also compiles estimates from Census data for the following three groups of people living in marginal housing, but who are not classified as homeless:

- people living in other crowded dwellings
- people in other improvised dwellings
- people marginally housed in caravan parks.²⁶

Planning authority

'Using Victoria's Planning System', the Victorian Government's technical guide to the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, provides the following definition of 'Planning Authority': *any person or body given the power to prepare a planning scheme or an amendment to a planning scheme. The Minister is a planning authority and may authorise any other Minister or public authority to prepare an amendment to a planning scheme. A council is planning authority for its municipality and for any area adjoining its municipality that the Minister authorises.*²⁷

Public Housing

Public housing is a form of social housing managed by the Victorian Government (see 'Social Housing, below).

Registered Housing Agency

Registered Housing Agencies provide Affordable Housing for very low, low and moderate-income households and allocate tenants from the Victorian Housing Register (see below). To become a Registered Housing Agency, a not-for-profit organisation must be a company limited by shares or guarantee, an incorporated association, or a co-operative. Housing managed by a Registered Housing Agency is usually long term or transitional, although some agencies also provide crisis housing and other forms of housing such as specialist disability accommodation and rooming houses. It is a regulated sector and all registered agencies must comply with Performance Standards and other legislative requirements under the Housing Act. There are currently 10 Registered Housing Associations and 36 Registered Housing Providers in Victoria.²⁸

'Rent to buy' program

'Rent to buy' is a form of affordable purchase housing. Assemble Communities' 'Build to Rent to Own' is an example. Under the program, residents have the option to purchase after a five-year lease period at a pre-agreed price. The program is typically aimed at moderate income households.²⁹

²⁵ Catherine Gilbert, Zahra Nasreen and Nicole Gurrin for AHURI (2021) 'Housing key workers: scoping challenges, aspirations, and policy responses for Australian cities' (<https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/355>).

²⁶ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2023) Estimating Homelessness: Census (<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/housing/estimating-homelessness-census/latest-release>).

²⁷ Department of Transport and Planning (2023) Using Victoria's planning system (<https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/guide-home/using-victorias-planning-system>).

²⁸ State Government of Victoria (2022) Registered housing agencies in Victoria (<https://www.vic.gov.au/registered-housing-agencies-victoria>).

²⁹ Assemble (c. 2021) FAQs (<https://assemblecommunities.com/faq-cat/assemble-futures/>).

Responsible Authority

'Using Victoria's Planning System', the Victorian Government's technical guide to the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, provides the following definition of 'Responsible Authority': *the body responsible for the administration or enforcement of a planning scheme or a provision of a scheme. A responsible authority is responsible for considering and determining planning permit applications and for ensuring compliance with the planning scheme, permit conditions and agreements. The responsible authority is usually the municipal council.*³⁰

Shared equity program

Shared equity is a form of affordable purchase housing. It involves financing arrangements where the equity required for home ownership is shared between the purchaser, government and/or a Community Housing Provider. The Victorian Government's Victorian Homebuyer Fund is an example of a shared equity model. Under the program, the Victorian Government makes a financial contribution towards the purchase of a property (up to 25%) in exchange for a proportional interest (share) in the property. Purchases are required to repay the Government's financial contribution within the initial duration of the home loan plus 60 days.³¹

Social Housing

Social housing is made up of two types of housing. **Public housing** is long-term rental housing that is owned and managed by the Victorian Government for eligible households, including people who are unemployed, on low incomes, live with a disability or mental illness, or who are at risk of homelessness. **Community housing** is secure, affordable, long-term rental housing that is owned or managed by a Registered Housing Agency, who may specialise in housing for a diverse range of tenants including women and children escaping family violence, people with a disability, or households with lower incomes.

Strategic Redevelopment Areas

Council's Industrial Land Management Strategy 2008 identified a number of Strategic Redevelopment Areas, which have some or all of the following characteristics:

- Areas that may evolve from a previous industrial use to provide a wider mix of employment opportunities, including a mix of industry, commercial and office accommodation.
- Areas that are constrained by surrounding land use patterns or access arrangements and where the opportunity exists for uses to change over time to a residential use.
- areas that are not currently industrial, but because of the existing land use conditions are best suited to an industrial zone.

The Affordable Housing Policy Statement 2016 established a policy position to seek 10 per cent 'non-market affordable housing' on all SRAs.

Victorian Housing Register

The Victorian Housing Register is a centralised waiting list for all social housing providers in Victoria, administered by the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing). The register has two categories:

- Priority Access: for people who are homeless and receiving support; escaping or have escaped family violence; with a disability or significant support needs; or with special housing needs.
- Register of Interest: for all eligible applicants to register their interest in social housing.

³⁰ Department of Transport and Planning (2023) Using Victoria's planning system (<https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/guide-home/using-victorias-planning-system>).

³¹ State Revenue Office Victoria (2023) Homebuyer Fund (<https://www.sro.vic.gov.au/homebuyer/frequently-asked-questions-about-homebuyer-fund>).

As at December 2022, there were a total of 67,120 total applications on the Victorian Housing Register.³²

9. References

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16. Katrina Raynor, Georgia Warren-Myers and Matthew Palm (2020) "Confusing and not delivering enough": developers and councils want new affordable housing rules', <https://findanexpert.unimelb.edu.au/news/12508-%27confusing-and-not-delivering-enough%27---developers-and-councils-want-new-affordable-housing-rules>.
17. *Planning and Environment Act 1987*

³² Homes Victoria (2023) Applications on the Victorian Housing Register (VHR) (<https://www.homes.vic.gov.au/applications-victorian-housing-register-vhr>).

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23. Victorian Government (2018) Ministerial Notice – Specified Matters under Section 3AA(2) of the Planning and Environment Act 1987, May 2018.

10. Document control

Policy Name	Draft Affordable Housing Policy Statement
Object ID	
Agility Document Number	
Responsible Directorate	Sustainable Communities
Policy Owner	Strategy, Economy and Sustainability
Policy Type	Policy Statement
Date Adopted by Council	
Review Date	

11. Version history

Version Number	Date	Authorised by
1.0	July 2023	

Updating Council's Affordable Housing Policy Statement

Background Paper (July 2023)

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1. Introduction

There is an urgent need for more Affordable Housing in Hobsons Bay. Research undertaken by Council indicates that currently there are just over 1,400 households in need of Affordable Housing.

Council's current Affordable Housing Policy Statement 2016 (the 2016 Policy Statement) is now due to be updated. Since it was adopted in 2016, there have been important changes to the legislative, policy and funding contexts, alongside ongoing changes to Hobsons Bay's residential development landscape.

Key changes since the Policy Statement was adopted in 2016 include:

- Inclusion of a definition of 'Affordable Housing' in the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*
- Commencement of the Victorian Government's Big Housing Build program, including significant funding and planning changes
- Establishment of the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust and progression of the Epsom Street Affordable Housing Project
- Increased commitment from the Commonwealth Government in terms of future investment in Affordable Housing
- Implementation of Council's Industrial Land Management Strategy 2008, including the re-zoning of key 'brownfield' sites for residential use (with Affordable Housing planning controls included on several sites).

The purpose of this background paper is to inform the update of Council's Affordable Housing Policy Statement. It presents the key information, research and data that supports the policy settings proposed in the updated Policy Statement.

The background paper included the following sections:

- Section 3 (Defining Affordable Housing) – this section describes the definition of 'Affordable Housing' provided in the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, while also recognising various types of Affordable Housing that sit within this definition.
- Section 4 (Roles and Responsibilities) – this section outlines the roles and responsibilities of all levels of government, as well as key stakeholders such as Registered Housing Agencies, landowners and developers, and local communities and businesses.
- Section 5 (Policy and funding context) – this section describes the current policy and funding contexts for Affordable Housing that are administered by the Commonwealth and Victorian Governments.
- Section 6 (Council's Approach to Affordable Housing) - this section summaries the key aspects of Council's approach to increasing the supply of Affordable Housing in Hobsons Bay, including the existing policy context and key projects and activities.
- Section 7 (Land-use planning) – this section presents an overview of the relationship between land-use planning and the provision of Affordable Housing in Hobsons Bay.
- Section 8 (Affordable housing needs assessment) – this section presents an overview of data on the provision of Affordable Housing in Hobsons Bay
- Section 9 (Evaluation of 2016 Policy Statement) – this section evaluates the implementation of the 2016 Policy Statement

2. Defining Affordable Housing

The Affordable Housing Policy Statement 2016 defines affordable housing as ‘market and non-market affordable housing that is occupied by households in the lower 40 per cent of the income distribution scale including key workers’. The statement primarily focusses on non-market (or social housing), recognising Council’s limited capacity to influence private housing markets.

Since the Policy Statement was adopted in 2016, the Victorian Government has added a definition of ‘affordable housing’ to the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* which includes housing for very low, low- and moderate-income households. There are various types of Affordable Housing that sit within this definition, including social housing, affordable rental housing and affordable purchase housing.

Council’s updated Policy Statement should take account of these changes and describe the types of Affordable Housing that will be the main focus of the Policy Statement.

Definition

Affordable housing is defined in the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* as ‘housing, including social housing, that is appropriate for the housing needs of very low, low, and moderate income households’. The Act also includes an objective ‘to facilitate the provision of affordable housing in Victoria’. Income ranges for household groups are published annually by the Victorian Government and form part of the definition under the legislation. The most recent income ranges for Greater Melbourne, which were published in June 2023, are presented in Table 1.¹

Table 1: Household Income ranges for Affordable Housing in Greater Melbourne (June 2023)

	Very low income range (annual)	Low income range (annual)	Moderate income range (annual)
Single adult	Up to \$29,770	\$29,771 to \$47,630	\$47,631 to \$71,450
Couple, no dependent	Up to \$44,650	\$44,651 to \$71,450	\$71,451 to \$107,170
Family (with one or two parents) and dependent children	Up to \$62,510	\$62,511 to \$100,030	\$100,031 to \$150,030

A Ministerial Notice issued in 2018² also establishes eight key criteria that need to be considered when determining whether housing is appropriate for the needs of very low, low and moderate-income households, including:

- Housing need – dwellings will broadly respond to housing need established through official data such as ABS Community Profiles and Victoria Housing Register, e.g. location, dwelling type, price, etc.
- Allocation – dwellings will be allocated in accordance with household income bands established under the legislation (see above).

¹ Governor in Council Order (2023) *Planning and Environment Act 1987, Section 3AB – Specification of Income Ranges for Affordable Housing*, June 2023.

² Victorian Government (2018) *Ministerial Notice – Specified Matters under Section 3AA(2) of the Planning and Environment Act 1987*, May 2018.

- Affordability – dwellings will be affordable to target income groups (e.g. very low income households), typically at no more than 30 per cent of gross household income.
- Tenure – tenure (e.g. rental, ownership) will respond to identified housing need and financial capacity of target groups.
- Type – dwellings will respond to identified housing need, e.g. number of bedrooms
- Location – dwellings will be in areas that allow residents to access transport and other services.
- Integration - dwellings will be integrated within local communities and be indistinguishable from private market housing.
- Longevity – dwellings will be provided as affordable housing for an appropriate length of time.

The Victorian Government has also encouraged the use of Section 173 agreements to assist in the facilitation of negotiations for voluntary affordable housing contributions.³

Types of Affordable Housing

Figure 1 illustrates a spectrum of housing types and tenures on a ‘housing continuum’, which range from homelessness to renting and ownership in the private housing market.



Figure 1: Housing continuum

(Source: adapted from <https://www.northumberland.ca/en/housing-help/housing-continuum.aspx>)

The following definitions of the key types of Affordable Housing have been adapted from the Victorian Government:⁴

- **Social housing** - rental housing suitable for the needs of very low- and low-income households provided either by government (public housing) or the community housing sector (community housing) and supported with a subsidy of some kind. Tenants access social housing via the Victorian Housing Register and rents are typically set as a percentage of income, e.g. 25 to 30 per cent.
- **Affordable rental housing** – housing suitable for the needs of (primarily) moderate income households, typically provided either by government or the community housing sector. Housing is priced so these households can meet their other essential living costs. Tenants are subject to eligibility criteria and rents are usually set as a percentage of market rate, e.g. 70-80 per cent. Affordable rental housing may be delivered through programs such as the

³ Department of Transport and Planning (2022) Planning for affordable housing (<https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/policy-and-strategy/affordable-housing>).

⁴ Homes Victoria (2023) 10-Year Strategy for Social and Affordable Housing (<https://www.homes.vic.gov.au/10-year-strategy-social-and-affordable-housing>).

Commonwealth Government's National Rental Affordability Scheme (ending in 2026) and the Victorian Government's Homes Victoria Affordable Home program.

- **Affordable purchase housing** - housing suitable for the needs of (primarily) moderate income households, typically provided or supported by government, community housing sector or the development sector. Housing may be priced as a percentage of market rate (e.g. 70-80 per cent) and/or delivered through various programs such as 'shared equity' or 'rent to buy' (see Key Terms).

It is recommended that the updated Policy Statement focus primarily on these types of Affordable Housing. Crisis accommodation and transitional housing should not be a primary focus for the updated Policy Statement, as they typically provide short-term housing options for people experiencing homelessness or an immediate crisis such as family violence. Private rental and private ownership should be also out of scope, as Council has limited capacity to influence housing affordability in the private market.

Focus for the updated Statement

Increasing the supply of social housing has been a key priority for Council through the 2016 Policy Statement. This has been reflected in the development of the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust and the Epsom Street Affordable Housing Project.⁵ The Victorian Government has also prioritised social housing through recent funding initiatives, including the Social Housing Growth Fund and Big Housing Build.

However, in recent years, there has been a growing focus on 'affordable rental' models at the state level. For example, around 20 per cent of the dwellings expected to be delivered through the Big Housing Build will be affordable housing. Additionally, the Australian Government's National Housing Accord seeks to increase supply of affordable rental, which it defines as rental housing that is provided at between 70 and 80 per cent of market rent.⁶

Therefore, it is recommended that the updated policy statement focus on affordable rental, affordable purchase, and social housing models. However, this should be underpinned by the broader definition of affordable housing that is presented in the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*. This is particularly relevant in the context of voluntary negotiations for affordable housing contributions through the planning system.

⁵ Both projects use the term 'affordable housing' in their titles despite being primarily focused on the delivery of social housing. This is consistent with the broader definition of affordable housing (which includes social housing) added to the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* in 2018. However, this does have the potential to create confusion and consideration should be given to using different terminology, as particularly for future stages of the Epsom Street project (subject to funding).

⁶ Australian Government (2022) National Housing Accord 2022 (<https://ministers.treasury.gov.au/sites/ministers.treasury.gov.au/files/2022-10/national-housing-accord-2022.pdf>).

Implications for the updated Policy Statement

- The updated policy statement should adopt a broad definition of Affordable Housing (which includes social housing) that aligns with the definition in the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.
- The updated policy statement should focus on three key types of Affordable Housing (social housing, affordable rental housing and affordable purchase housing), underpinned by the broader definition of Affordable Housing presented in the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

3. Roles and responsibilities

This section outlines the roles of government in relation to Affordable Housing, as well as other key stakeholders such as Registered Housing Agencies, developers and support services.

Government

All three levels of government play a role in the availability and supply of Affordable Housing in Australia.

At the Federal level, the Australian Government oversees tax policy frameworks that directly affect housing demand and affordability in the private market, including through negative gearing and capital gains tax. It also delivers programs that aim to provide increased access such as First Home Buyer Grants. In a more targeted way, the Australian Government also funds homelessness services, offers low-cost financing for social housing projects, and provides payments to individuals through Commonwealth Rent Assistance.

At the State level, the Victorian Government oversees the state's public housing system and provides funding to registered housing agencies to manage community housing. It is also responsible for setting land-use planning policy frameworks, including an objective within the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* to 'facilitate the provision of affordable housing'.

Additionally, the Victorian Government is delivering the Big Housing Build program, which is providing funding to construct more than 12,000 new social and affordable housing dwellings by 2024. To streamline the implementation of the Big Housing Build, the Victorian Government introduced changes to the Victoria Planning Provisions in December 2020. More detail on the Big Housing Build is provided in Section 5.

Local government has traditionally focused on advocacy and land-use planning, with some Councils (including Hobsons Bay) taking a more proactive approach by using Council-owned assets or other contributions to enable Affordable Housing. Local government also has broader role in terms of collecting rates and applying rates concession and exemption policies, as well as delivering and maintaining local infrastructure and managing the registration, monitoring and compliance of rooming houses.

Government roles and responsibilities in the Australian housing system are summarised in Appendix 2. Key policy and funding contexts for each level of government are presented in Sections 5 and 6.

Other Key Stakeholders

Collective action from a range of stakeholders is required to increase the supply of Affordable Housing. The following key stakeholders play important roles.

Homes Victoria

Homes Victoria was established in 2020 and sits within the Victorian Government Department of Families, Fairness and Housing. It works across all levels of government, as well as industry and the community housing and homelessness sectors to increase the supply of social housing, including through programs such as Big Housing Build.

Homes Victoria oversee the delivery and maintenance of social housing in Victoria, including approximately 1,350 social housing dwellings in Hobsons Bay. Most of these are managed directly by Homes Victoria (as public housing), but some are managed by registered housing associations on long-term leases from the state (as community housing).

Registered Housing Agencies

Registered Housing Agencies (RHAs) are not-for-profit organisations established to develop and manage Affordable Housing. In Victoria, there are two types of RHAs: *Housing Associations* are typically larger organisations and *Housing Providers* are smaller, often locally-focused, organisations. As of October 2022, there were 10 housing associations and 36 housing providers registered in Victoria. Registered Housing Agencies are a regulated sector under the *Housing Act 1983*. The Victorian Housing Registrar is responsible for the regulatory oversight of the sector, ensuring it delivers safe, secure and affordable housing and protects investment into the sector.

The following RHAs currently manage social and/or affordable housing in Hobsons Bay: Unison Housing; Aboriginal Housing Victoria; Common Equity Housing; Haven Home Safe; Housing Choices Australia; Launch Housing; United Housing Co-operative; Williamstown Rental Housing Co-Op; Wintringham Housing; Women's Housing; and Women's Property Initiatives.⁷ As the Trustee of the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust, HCA is a key stakeholder for future development of Affordable Housing in Hobsons Bay (see below for more detail on the Trust).

RHAs may contribute to increasing supply by developing their own land or land owned by government agencies. They may also apply for government funding for housing development. RHAs can also accept developer contributions, which may be required through planning controls, by agreeing to purchase dwellings at a reduced agreed price or accepting cash or land contributions. Some RHAs also incorporate real estate businesses, which may provide affordable housing to moderate income households. Some also provide, or have access to, support services that may be required for residents.

Landowners and developers

Landowners and developers are key stakeholders in the provision of Affordable Housing. Under the current planning framework, landowners and developers make voluntary contributions in the form of dwellings, land and/or cash.

Landowners and developers take various forms, including private commercial entities, government agencies or local residents. For example, government agencies (such as VicTrack or VicRoads) who own large parcels of land in Hobsons Bay which, if surplus to needs for rail or road infrastructure, may be suitable for affordable housing.

Council is responsible for assessing planning permit applications and planning scheme amendments from developers and landowners to ensure development and rezoning complies with the Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme. Council should consider how it can further strengthen its relationships and engagement with landowners and developers to facilitate Affordable Housing and as part of its updated Policy Statement.

Support service agencies

A range of not-for-profit organisations work within Hobsons Bay to support local communities impacted by housing stress, homelessness and the broad lack of Affordable Housing. This includes financial, legal, health and education services. It also extends to homeless support services and organisations providing material aid to vulnerable residents. Support services can play a key role by providing support to help maintain tenancies, and as supporters of local funding applications.

⁷ Internal Council data.

Local communities and businesses

Hobsons Bay residents and businesses are Council's primary stakeholders. Local communities may provide input into the planning of housing, while community members (as land and property owners) are also responsible for some development. Council also has a statutory requirement to engage with the community through policy development, planning scheme amendments, and planning permit assessment process.

Members of local communities also live in Affordable housing. As noted, there are more than 1,350 social housing dwellings in Hobsons Bay. The Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust also seeks to make Affordable Housing available to people with a connection to the local community, so this is likely to increase in the years ahead.

Implications for the updated Policy Statement

- All three levels of government play a role in the availability and supply of Affordable Housing in Australia.
- To increase the supply of Affordable Housing, collective action is required from a range of stakeholders, including government agencies, Registered Housing Agencies, landowners, developers, support services, and local communities and businesses.
- Through the updated Policy Statement, Council should recognise and seek to engage with a wide range of key stakeholders to achieve the best possible outcomes.
- Through the updated Policy Statement, Council should continue to be an advocate for the community on matters relating to Affordable Housing

4. Policy and funding context

This section describes the current policy and funding context for affordable housing within the Commonwealth and Victorian Governments. It also highlights how these inform a range of future opportunities and challenges for Council in seeking to increase local supply.

Commonwealth Government

There is currently no national housing strategy or policy in Australia. Over the past decade, the Commonwealth Government has sought to influence housing supply primarily through monetary policy (such as taxation and superannuation), targeted programs (such as the First Home Buyer's Grants) and income supplements (such as Commonwealth Rent Assistance). The key elements of the Commonwealth Government policy and funding context are outlined below.

National Housing Accord

The National Housing Accord (the Accord) was announced in October 2022. It is an agreement that aims to align all levels of government, institutional investors (e.g. superannuation funds) and the construction sector to address housing issues in Australia. The Commonwealth aims to fund 10,000 new affordable housing dwellings from 2024, with in-kind or financial contributions from state and territory governments to support an additional 10,000 affordable dwellings.

It is important to note that under the Accord, 'affordable housing' is generally taken to refer to rental housing that is provided at below market rent to qualifying tenants (usually between 70 and 80 per cent of market rent). This sits within the 'affordable rental housing' part of the housing spectrum (rather than 'social housing') and has important implications for Council and the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust in terms of planning future projects and funding applications.

Other aspects of the Accord that are relevant for Council include plans to expedite zoning, planning and land release for Affordable Housing, and to work with local governments to deliver planning reforms and free up landholdings. More generally, the Accord provides an opportunity for Council to engage and potentially partner with Commonwealth Government to facilitate the delivery of affordable housing in Hobsons Bay.

Housing Legislative Package

In December 2022, the Commonwealth Government released exposure draft legislation to progress key housing election commitments. The *Housing Australia Future Fund Bill* and the *National Housing Supply and Affordability Council Bill* will establish the \$10 billion Housing Australia Future Fund and the establishment of the National Housing Supply and Affordability Council. The Housing Australia Future Fund is expected to deliver an additional 30,000 new social and affordable dwellings. As at June 2023, the legislation has not been passed in the Senate.

National Housing and Homelessness Agreement

The [National Housing and Homelessness Agreement](#) (NAHA) is an agreement between the Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments. It is primarily a funding agreement, whereby the Commonwealth Government allocates funding to state and territory governments to improve access to secure and affordable housing.

In 2021-22, the Federal Government allocated \$419 million to Victoria. Under the agreement, state and territory government are required to match Commonwealth funding for homelessness services and to develop and maintain housing and homelessness strategies. In 2022, the Productivity Commission released its report on the National Housing and Homelessness Agreement, which it described as 'ineffective'. The Agreement is expected to be reviewed and updated during 2023.

National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation (Housing Australia)

The [National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation](#) (NHFIC) provides long-term, low-cost finance to eligible organisations (such as community housing providers) and projects with the aim of increasing supply of Affordable Housing. For example, Housing Choices Australia (as the Trustee for the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust) can finance developments in Hobsons Bay with the assistance of NHFIC finance. The Commonwealth Government's Housing Legislative Package includes a proposal to rename NHFIC as 'Housing Australia'.

National Housing Infrastructure Facility

The [National Housing Infrastructure Facility](#) funds critical major infrastructure projects which enables the delivery of new housing, particularly affordable housing. This may indirectly finance new infrastructure required for housing development, which could possibly be leveraged for new precinct sites in Hobsons Bay.

Commonwealth Rent Assistance

Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA) is a non-taxable income supplement paid to eligible people who rent in the private or community housing rental markets. The Commonwealth Government spends around \$5 billion annually on CRA. Housing Choices Australia (trustee of the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust) is a community housing provider, which means their residents are eligible for CRA.

Victorian Government

The Victorian Government plays a key role in the provision Affordable Housing in Victoria. The key elements of the Victorian Government policy and funding context are outlined below.

Housing Act 1983

The [Housing Act 1983](#) aims to ensure that every person in Victoria has 'adequate and appropriate housing at a price within his or her means'. The Act establishes the key elements of Victoria's social housing system, including the Victorian Housing Register and the regulatory system for the community housing sector.

Residential Tenancies Act 1997

The [Residential Tenancies Act 1997](#) outlines the rights and responsibilities of renters and rental providers in Victoria. The Act sets out rules on a range of topics, including rent increases, property condition and repairs, and when a tenancy can be ended. The Act was updated in 2021 to implement the Victorian Government's rental law reforms, which introduced rental minimum standards and a range of other changes, including a ban on rental bids, new options for renters in claiming their bond, and limitations on the information landlords may request in application forms.

The [Residential Tenancies \(Rooming House Standards\) Regulations 2012](#) are made under Sections 142C and 511 of the Act. The regulations establish a set of minimum standards for rooming houses operators relating to privacy, security, safety and amenity. As at June 2023, there are 15 registered rooming houses in the Hobsons Bay and Council is responsible for monitoring compliance against the standards.

Planning and Environment Act 1987

The [Planning and Environment Act 1987](#) establishes a framework for planning the use, development and protection of land in Victoria. In 2018, several amendments to the Act came into effect, including a definition of 'Affordable Housing' (see Section 3) and an objective to 'facilitate the provision of affordable housing in Victoria'. Agreements made under Section 173 of the Act have

been encouraged as a legal mechanism that planning authorities (such as Councils) can use to record voluntary affordable housing contributions.

Homes for Victorians

[Homes for Victorians](#), the Victorian Government's housing strategy, was released in 2017 and aims to improve housing choices for all Victorians. It includes a range of initiatives across five broad areas: 1. Supporting people to buy their own home; 2. Increasing supply of housing through faster planning; 3. Promoting stability and affordability for renters; 4. Increasing and renewing social housing stock; and 5. Improving housing service for Victorians in need. As such, the strategy aims to improve outcomes across the housing spectrum.

A number of these initiatives have been implemented in the following years, including reform of the *Rental Tenancies Act 1997*, abolishing stamp duty for eligible first home buyer purchases, and re-development of selected public housing estates. A key purpose of the updated Policy Statement will be to provide an updated policy tool that assists with delivering Affordable Housing, which broadly aligns with the Homes for Victorians strategy.

Victoria's homelessness and rough sleeping action plan

Victoria's homelessness and rough sleeping action plan was released in 2018. It aims to provide a framework to reduce the incidence and impacts of rough sleeping within the context of four key themes: 1. Intervening early to prevent homelessness; 2. Providing stable accommodation as quickly as possible; 3. Support to maintain stable accommodation; 4. An effective and responsive homelessness system.

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Victorian Government introduced additional measures to support people experiencing homelessness and rough sleeping. This included hotel accommodation, programs such as From Homelessness to a Home, and increases to the Housing Establishment Fund, which specialist homelessness services use to purchase short-term accommodation for client. However, many of these measures have since been discontinued or rolled back, with support levels largely returning to levels offered prior to the pandemic.

Big Housing Build

Victoria's [Big Housing Build program](#) is a \$5.3 billion investment in social and affordable housing, which aims to deliver over 12,000 new dwellings by 2024. It was announced in December 2020 and extends the Victorian Government efforts to increase supply of social and affordable housing, previously directed through the Homes for Victorians Strategy and Social Housing Growth Fund. To date, four projects have been funded in Hobsons Bay, which are expected to deliver 34 dwellings.

To streamline the implementation of the Big Housing Build, the Victorian Government introduced changes to the Victoria Planning Provisions in December 2020. These apply to projects funded through the Big Housing Build (Clause 52.20), and for housing by or on behalf of the Director of Housing (Clause 53.20). Where Clause 52.20 applies, projects are exempt from normal planning scheme requirements and may not require a planning permit provided certain requirements are met. Rather, they are subject to the approval of the Minister for Planning. Prior to seeking approval from the Minister, there is an expectation that the proponent will undertake and document public consultation (including with Council) on relevant plans, documents and information, although timeframes have been relatively short for this to occur through the initial implementation.

Where Clause 53.20 applies, the Minister for Planning is the responsible authority for projects with ten or more dwellings and all apartment projects. Council remains the responsible authority for projects with nine or fewer dwellings. In either case, projects are subject to a planning permit

application assessment, although they are exempt from third party notice and review rights. Projects under Clause 53.20 are also exempt from most planning scheme provisions and are instead required to consider the development standards in Clause 52.20, which include requirements in relation to energy efficiency and accessibility for apartment buildings.

Other measures and initiatives

The Victorian Government has commenced work on other initiative in recent years, including:

- **Ten Year Strategy for Social and Affordable Housing** – consultation was undertaken in early 2021 on the Strategy but it has not yet been released. A discussion paper released during the consultation phase indicated the strategy would provide a framework to guide action by those who are part of the social and affordable housing system, including local government. Council officers provided a submission for consideration in developing the Strategy.
- **Social and Affordable Housing Compact** – consultation was undertaken in mid-2022 on the Compact (Council officers also provided a submission) but further detail has not yet been announced. The Compact represents a partnership between Homes Victoria and local government, represented by the Municipal Association of Victoria. It is expected that Councils will also be able to enter into local agreements with Homes Victoria to assist the planning, delivery, and management of Affordable housing.
- **Windfall Gains Tax** – from 1 July 2023, a Windfall Gains Tax (WGT) applies to land that is subject to a government rezoning resulting in a value uplift to the land of more than \$100,000. Uplift values between \$100,000 and \$500,000 will be taxed at 62.5 per cent, while uplift values above \$500,000 will be taxed at 50 per cent of the total uplift. The Commissioner of State Revenue will administer the WGT, but it is unclear how the proceeds will be used by the Victorian Government. The WGT will impose additional costs on developers and landowners, potentially making it more difficult to negotiate Affordable Housing contributions.

Implications for the updated Policy Statement

- The Commonwealth Government’s Housing Legislative Package will introduce reform that may provide opportunities to increase local supply of Affordable Housing.
- The Commonwealth Government is expected to provide funding for Affordable Housing from 2024, with a focus on affordable rental housing (typically prices at 70-80 per cent of market rate).
- The current system of voluntary negotiations for affordable housing contributions is likely to remain in place for the foreseeable future. As such, the updated Policy Statement should support Council’s efforts to maximise outcomes through this system.
- The Big Housing Build program remains a key funding source Affordable housing in Victoria. Future funding rounds should be considered in conjunction with HCA as the Trustee for the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust.
- Other Victorian Government policies and initiatives may create barriers and opportunities to increase supply in the years ahead. These include the Windfall Gains Tax, Ten Year Strategy for Social and Affordable Housing, and Social and Affordable Housing Compact.

5. Council's approach to Affordable Housing

Guided by the Affordable Housing Policy Statement 2016, Council takes a 'proactive' approach in seeking to increase the supply of Affordable Housing in Hobsons Bay. Alongside its advocacy and land use planning roles, Council has established the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust and undertaken detailed planning and consultation to consider the use of Council-owned land in the Epsom Street Affordable Housing Project. This section summaries the key aspects of Council's approach to increasing the supply of Affordable Housing in Hobsons Bay with a more detailed evaluation of the 2016 Policy Statement provided in Section 9.

Policy Context

Hobsons Bay City Council has several strategies and policies which guide its efforts to increase the supply of Affordable Housing in the municipality.

Council Plan 2021-25

The [Council Plan 2021-25](#) sets the strategic direction and objectives for Council's work every four years. The current plan was adopted in October 2021, following an extensive community engagement campaign involving more than 1,400 people. The Plan includes a priority to deliver more affordable housing, alongside an indicator to measure the availability of affordable housing in new developments and attracting Big Housing Build investment. The Plan also incorporates Council's Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan which outlines Council's priorities to support the health and wellbeing of the community. Priority 4 (A Safe, Healthy and Equitable Society) recognises Council's role in improving access to affordable housing.

A Fair Hobsons Bay for All 2019-23

[A Fair Hobsons Bay for All 2019-23](#) is Council's first integrated social policy. It was adopted in October 2019 and aims to ensure that equity and fairness are embedded in all of Council's decisions and activities. Strategy 1.13 proposed to 'work in partnership to understand homelessness within Hobsons Bay and increase the amount of affordable housing'.

Hobsons Bay Housing Strategy 2019

The [Hobsons Bay Housing Strategy](#) provides a policy framework for managing housing in the municipality until 2036. One of the key policy objectives in the strategy is to improve housing affordability in Hobsons Bay and increase the supply of affordable housing in the municipality. Policy Area 3.2 (Affordable Housing) recommends that Council continue to review opportunities to increase local supply of social housing; review the affordable housing policy statement as required; and continue to advocate to the Victorian Government for Inclusionary Zoning.

Policy Areas 3.3 (Homelessness) and 3.4 (Empty Homes) provide further recommendations to address homelessness as part of the affordable housing agenda, monitor the number of rooming houses, advocate for changes to relevant legislation, and monitor the rates of empty houses and the effectiveness of the Vacant Residential Land Tax. The updated Policy Statement should complement and align with the Housing Strategy and consider further detail and guidance to achieve agreed objectives.

Hobsons Bay Property Strategy 2021

The Hobsons Bay Property Strategy 2021 aims to ensure that Council property delivers the highest possible public value through objective and effective planning, utilisation and management. The Strategy recognises Affordable Housing as one of the 'property types' that make up Council's

property portfolio, noting the role of the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust in protecting the liveability of the municipality and supporting the diversity of our community.

Better Places

Council's Better Places program aims to provide a more holistic and integrated approach to designing for change into the future. It takes a more place-based approach - thinking in terms of overall 'places' rather than individual 'pieces' - and providing a new model for the way Council designs and delivers projects. Better Places also aims to involve the community more actively in the process of shaping the place they live in, helping to create a vision that reflects their values, ideas and priorities.

In 2020, community consultation occurred to inform the development of the Better Places Laverton Place Guide which identified a range of potential projects and initiatives, including the delivery of affordable housing on the Council-owned site at Epsom Street. It notes that housing development's construction would create jobs and increase the population and demand for local goods and services in Laverton, creating a more vibrant community as per the objectives of the Better Places Laverton Place Guide.

Affordable Housing Policy Statement

Council's Affordable Housing Policy Statement was adopted in 2016. It articulates Council's commitment to ensuring all households in the municipality can live in affordable, secure and appropriate housing that meets their needs, particularly those with low and moderate incomes. This Background Paper will inform the update of the Policy Statement, and a detailed evaluation is presented in Section 9 and Appendix 4.

Other Strategies and Plans

The following Council strategies and plans also have some relevant to Affordable Housing:

- Hobsons Bay Advocacy Strategy 2021-25 – affordable housing is noted as one of the challenges facing the Hobsons Bay community.
- Building Asset Management Plan 2020 – the plan notes that building assets that are identified for possible disposal will be further investigated to scope available options for alternate service delivery, if any.
- Asset Plan 2022-32 – the plan notes the number, replacement value and condition of all buildings owned or managed by Council, and provides guidance on maintenance, renewal and disposal of these assets.
- Community Services and Infrastructure Plan 2020-30 – the purpose of this plan is to provide Council with a strategic framework for the provision and delivery of community services and infrastructure; it does not specifically relate to the provision of Affordable Housing but is relevant in the context of increasing demand for local services and infrastructure.

Projects and other activities

Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust

A key action arising from Council's Affordable Housing Policy Statement was the establishment of the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust. The Policy Statement proposes that the Trust be established for the charitable purpose of providing housing to low-income individuals or households that have a connection to Hobsons Bay. The Trust is Council's preferred mechanism for the delivery of affordable housing contributions in the municipality.

In June 2020, Housing Choices Australia (HCA) was appointed by Council as the Trustee of the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust. HCA is a Registered Housing Association and a key stakeholder for Council in building the Trust and seeking to increase the supply of Affordable Housing more generally through the updated Policy Statement.

A Trust Deed and Funding and Services Agreement was subsequently signed by Council and HCA to guide the development and implementation of the Trust. With support from Council, HCA finalised the Trust's first annual business plan in early 2023, which outlines a range of actions to build relationships with key stakeholders (such as landowners and developers) and ultimately grow the Trust's asset base.

The further development and success of the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust is a key priority for Council. Significant time, money and effort have been invested to date, and the updated Policy Statement should continue to prioritise and support its development. A key challenge will be to demonstrate the benefit to landowners and developers of using the Trust to deliver their Affordable Housing contributions required under the Planning Scheme, as there is no mandatory requirement to use the Trust. Please also refer to the discussion in Section 7.

Epsom Street Affordable Housing Project

For nearly a decade, the Epsom Street Affordable Housing Project has been a key part of Council's approach to increasing the supply of Affordable Housing in Hobsons Bay. In 2014, Council purchased the former Laverton Primary School site at 7-43 Epsom Street, Laverton for the purposes of providing open space and consideration of future provision of affordable housing. Council subsequently purchased a single residential lot at 45 Epsom Street to enable a more holistic design for the overall development.

In 2018, a master plan for the site was finalised which nominated the central portion for open space and allocated the northern and southern sections of the site for affordable housing. Various community consultation activities were undertaken to inform this master plan. The first stage of the project was delivered with the opening of Curlew Community Park in December 2019.

With the formation of the Hobson Bay Affordable Housing Trust and the potential for Victorian Government funding, Council continued work to realise the Affordable Housing component of the master plan. In early 2022, Council sought feedback through a community consultation process on the draft Epsom Street Affordable Housing Design Guidelines. The guidelines were subsequently revised in response to community feedback and included in a state government funding submission made by HCA (on behalf of the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust). A decision on the funding is expected in mid-2023.

Advocacy

Advocacy remains a key part of Council's approach to increasing supply of Affordable Housing, with the Australian and Victorian Governments primarily responsible for setting the policy and funding context. Council officers have also made submissions to a range of state government inquiries and committees in recent years, including:

- Parliamentary Inquiry into homelessness in Victoria (2020)
- Ten Year Strategy for Social and Affordable Housing in Victoria (2021)
- Social and Affordable Housing Compact (2022).

Hobsons Bay has previously worked with the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) and neighbouring Councils to advocate for increase funding and planning reforms. In 2019, Council

officers contributed to the MAV's submission to the Ministerial Advisory Committee on Planning Mechanisms for Affordable Housing. More recently, Council contributed to a submission on the Social and Affordable Housing Compact prepared by M9, a group of nine inner city Councils seeking to increase supply of social and affordable housing. With the Australian Government appearing to take a stronger interest in Affordable Housing (as indicated in its National Housing Accord released in late 2022), advocacy will remain a key part of Council's approach and should be maintained in the updated Policy Statement.

Land use planning

Seeking to increase supply through the land use planning system is another key element of Council's approach to Affordable housing. This is covered in detail in the next chapter.

Implications for the updated Policy Statement

- Council's current policy framework provides support to continue to be proactive in addressing unmet need for Affordable Housing in Hobsons Bay
- Council's takes a more 'proactive' approach to increasing supply compared to many other Councils, including through the establishment of the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust and consideration of use of Council-owned assets.
- Council's approach also incorporates more typical activities, including advocacy and seeking contributions through the land use planning system. Council has been relatively successful in the latter, securing contributions through several Strategic Redevelopment Areas (see Section 7).
- This approach should be maintained and consolidated through the updated Policy Statement to meet future demand for Affordable Housing.

6. Land-use planning

This section presents an overview of the relationship between land-use planning in Hobsons Bay and the provision of Affordable Housing.

Affordable Housing contributions via the Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme

Like all local governments, Hobsons Bay works within the current voluntary negotiation framework for affordable housing contributions, established through the Victorian Planning System, the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and supporting policies and processes.

Hobsons Bay implements the objective in the *Planning Environment Act 1987* to 'facilitate the provision of affordable housing in Victoria' and Clause 16.01-2S (Housing Affordability) by seeking voluntary affordable housing contributions for certain land use and developments that require a planning permit or planning scheme amendment. This has been guided to-date by the 2016 Policy Statement.

The 2016 Policy Statement outlines that Council will pursue negotiated agreements for the inclusion of affordable housing for certain applications made through the planning system, particularly:

- rezonings in Strategic Redevelopment Areas (SRA), when there is a residential rezoning proposed that will result in a significant uplift. The Policy Statement identifies that in SRAs where land is proposed to be rezoned from an industrial to a residential use Council will 'seek 10 per cent non-market affordable housing'
- in Activity Centres
- in established suburbs / larger development sites, that includes but is not limited to, surplus government land and developments of 20 or more dwellings.

The 2016 Policy Statement is currently a background document in the Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme. As a background document, it has limited weight in the planning process, although it provides a solid platform for starting voluntary negotiations through the planning system.

Social Impact Assessment Guidelines 2023

In 2023, Council adopted the Residential Social Impact Assessment (SIA) guidelines, that trigger an SIA for planning permit applications that would deliver 200 or more dwellings. As part of this SIA, the applicant needs to demonstrate how the development may contribute to affordable housing stock in the area in line with the 2016 Policy Statement.⁸

Securing Affordable Housing contributions in Strategic Redevelopment Areas

Strategic Redevelopment Areas (SRAs) were first identified in the 2008 Industrial Land Management Strategy (ILMS) and have had a significant influence on housing supply and affordable housing contributions in Hobsons Bay. To date, Council has successfully negotiated contributions towards affordable housing within several key SRAs, including Precinct 15 (Altona North), Precinct 16 East and Precinct 16 West (South Kingsville).

In these larger SRAs, Council has secured contributions equivalent to five per cent of the total number of market dwellings delivered at a 25 per cent discount to market rate. Table 2 identifies affordable housing contributions that have been secured in Hobsons Bay.

⁸ *Hobsons Bay Social Impact Assessment Guidelines - Residential 2023*, pg. 11.

Table 2: Summary of Affordable Housing Contributions Negotiated in Hobsons Bay

Precinct / Site	Address	Affordable Housing Mechanism	Summary of Negotiated Affordable Housing Contribution
Precinct 15, Altona North	Land bordered by Kyle Road, Blackshaws Road, New Street, the West Gate Freeway and Brooklyn Terminal Substation, in Altona North and South Kingsville	Schedule 2 to Clause 37.02 Comprehensive Development Zone – Altona North Comprehensive Development Plan – 3.1 Requirements S173 Agreement/s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 per cent of dwellings to be available for purchase by a Housing Agency • price must not exceed an amount that is 25 per cent less than the current 12-month median unit price for a 2-bedroom unit in Altona North
Precinct 16, South Kingsville (East)	38-48 Blackshaws Rd South Kingsville	Schedule 2 to Clause 43.04 – Design and Development Plan Overlay (DDO11) Permit condition S173 Agreement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 per cent of dwellings to be available for purchase by a Housing Agency at a price 25 per cent less than the average 12-month median price for a 1 bedroom apartment and a 2-bedroom apartment within the development • mix of 1 and 2 bedroom apartments but no more than 50 per cent 2 bedroom
Precinct 16, South Kingville (West)	5-7 Sutton Street, 9 and 9A Sutton Street and 41-59 Stephenson Street, South Kingsville	Development Plan Overlay (DPO) Schedule 2 S173 Agreement/s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 per cent of dwellings to be available for purchase by a Housing Agency at a 25 per cent discount to market rate
Precinct 17, Spotswood	571-589 Melbourne Rd Spotswood	Permit condition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 per cent of dwellings to be available for purchase by a Housing Agency or Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust at an amount that is 25 per cent less than the market value of an equivalent 1 bedroom apartment and/or a 2 bedroom apartment within the development
Precinct 18, McLister St	31-69 McLister St Spotswood	Permit condition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 per cent affordable housing (34 dwellings) certified as Specialist Disability Accommodation for 25 years

Barriers to securing Affordable Housing via the planning system

The Victorian Government has strengthened planning policy in recent years to prohibit the rezoning of state significant industrial land (which is the majority of industrial land in Hobsons Bay) towards a non-industrial zone to protect jobs and the economy.⁹

A revised Draft Industrial Land Management Strategy (ILMS) has been prepared that proposes to remove reference to Strategic Redevelopment Areas (SRAs) and restrict the rezoning of industrial or 'brownfield land' to a non-industrial zone consistent with the State Planning Provisions.

Therefore, in future, Council will need to focus on negotiating contributions for affordable housing on larger developments sites of 20 or more dwellings rather than industrial rezonings.

Council has had some success in this regard with affordable housing contributions secured through planning permit conditions and/or Section 173 agreements. However, this process is time consuming and challenging. The uplift associated with a rezoning is more significant, meaning that it can more easily justify an Affordable Housing contribution than the uplift associated with a redevelopment.

The planning system is also complex. Affordable housing is only one of many considerations when assessing planning permit applications, particularly for major projects of 20 or more dwellings.

Incentivising the delivery of Affordable Housing via the planning system

It is challenging to establish effective and sustainable incentives for developers and landowners to make affordable housing contributions. For example, it is difficult to 'fast track' major projects which are inherently complex. Similarly, it is challenging to provide dispensations such as increased height for affordable housing contributions as it is often not possible to directly compare impact.

Council could however explore a priority planning process that allows Council Officers to retain delegation for relevant planning permit applications that would provide a substantial Affordable Housing contribution. For example, these applications would not be required to be heard at the Delegated Planning Committee if they incur significant objections.

Preliminary discussions with planning officers identified that commitment 1.4 in the 2016 Policy Statement, that requires affordable housing projects to be 'dealt with by experienced planning officers', has helped with early negotiations on affordable housing contributions.

Further work is needed to promote the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust to developers and landowners as Council's preferred mechanism for making affordable housing contributions. Council cannot require that a contribution be made to the Trust over other Registered Housing Agencies. In this regard, Council's Social Planning team should work with HCA to develop promotional materials and updated processes to encourage developers to select the Trust for future contributions.

Negotiating Affordable Housing contributions via the planning system

Statutory Planners at Hobsons Bay have highlighted that it is critical to start discussions around affordable housing contributions early in the application and assessment process. Ideally, this should

⁹ Melbourne Industrial and Commercial Land Use Plan (MICALUP), 2020, Victorian Government.

occur at (or before) a pre-application meeting, as the provision of affordable housing is via voluntary agreement through the planning system.

It was also found that when entering negotiations with landowners and developers on affordable housing contributions, it is important for planners to have a good understanding of the economics of development, particularly in recent years as construction costs have increased.

The starting point for negotiations in the 2016 Policy Statement for a 10 per cent contribution towards affordable housing in SRAs is still considered appropriate, given the growing need for affordable housing in Hobsons Bay and when compared to contributions sought within other municipal planning schemes and strategies (see Table 3).

Table 3: Affordable housing requirements in other municipalities

Municipality	Summary of affordable housing contribution sought
City of Yarra	Policy seeks 10 per cent of dwellings as affordable housing for developments of 50 or more dwellings
City of Port Phillip	Policy aims for 20 per cent of new dwellings within multi-unit developments to be affordable. Existing planning scheme policies include 6 per cent affordable housing for Fisherman's Bend and 10 per cent affordable housing for the Carlisle Street Major Activity Centre and Bay Street Activity Centre
City of Maribyrnong	Policy for areas subject to Development Plan Overlays is to contribute 10 per cent of development for affordable housing
City of Melbourne	Policy seeks 6 per cent affordable housing for Fisherman's Bend, Arden Precinct, and West Melbourne Precincts (within the Schedule 6 to the Special Use Zone)

Mandating Affordable Housing contributions via the planning system

The current process of securing voluntary affordable housing contributions via the planning scheme creates uncertainty for landowners, developers, and the community.¹⁰ Research conducted by the University of Melbourne found consistent mandatory contributions across all developments to be the preferred policy approach amongst all stakeholders, including private developers and finance, local Councils, and nonprofit providers.¹¹ Council's Housing Strategy 2019 recommends that Council continue to advocate to the Victorian government for 'Inclusionary Zoning' to increase affordable housing supply rather than relying on voluntary agreements.¹²

¹⁰ MAV Submission to Ministerial Advisory Committee on Planning Mechanisms for Affordable Housing, Oct 2019.

¹¹ Katrina Raynor, Georgia Warren-Myers and Matthew Palm (2020) "Confusing and not delivering enough": developers and councils want new affordable housing rules' (<https://findanexpert.unimelb.edu.au/news/12508-%27confusing-and-not-delivering-enough%27---developers-and-councils-want-new-affordable-housing-rules>).

¹² Hobsons Bay City Council (2019) *Housing Strategy 2019*, <https://www.hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au/files/assets/public/documents/volume-3-housing-strategy-adopted-20190813.pdf>, accessed June 2023.

A mandatory provision in the planning scheme would provide certainty on the requirement to contribute to Affordable Housing, alleviate officer time in negotiating and advocating for contributions and hopefully reduce permit delays. The provision of a mandatory contribution in the planning scheme would also be beneficial in ensuring affordable housing contributions are secured for the Trust for sites proposed to deliver 20 or more dwellings. As discussed above, in future there will be less opportunity for affordable housing contributions to be secured via a rezoning process due a lack of brownfield sites in Hobsons Bay.

Implications for Council's updated Policy Statement

- The updated Policy Statement should continue to seek an Affordable Housing contribution equivalent to 10 per cent of the total number of constructed dwellings for a rezoning of land that would result in 20 or more dwellings.
- The updated Policy Statement should continue to seek an Affordable Housing contribution equivalent to 5 to 10 per cent when assessing relevant planning permit applications for residential development sites that yield 20 or more dwellings.
- The updated Policy Statement should retain commitments that seek to investigate incentives within Council's control for developers to make affordable housing contributions, such as a priority planning pathway. In particular this should focus on contributions to the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust.
- The updated Policy Statement should include a position that supports the inclusion of a new provision in the planning scheme that makes affordable housing contributions mandatory, but only where this is fair and reasonable and is borne solely by the developer or recipient of any uplift from a development or rezoning. It should not be passed on unfairly in some way to the Hobsons Bay community. This is consistent with Council's Housing Strategy 2019.
- The updated Policy Statement should include a commitment towards reviewing the

7. Affordable Housing Needs Assessment

There are range of factors that drive need for Affordable Housing in Hobsons Bay. Like many areas around Melbourne, Hobsons Bay has experienced an increase in housing prices and rents in the past decade. For example, between 2011 and 2021, the median price for houses (up 83%), units (up 58%) and vacant house blocks (up 144%) all increased substantially.¹³

An Affordable Housing Needs Analysis has been undertaken to determine the levels and types of need for Affordable Housing need in Hobsons Bay. This assessment draws on available housing data and will inform the update to Council's Policy Statement.

Key findings

Below are the key findings from the assessment:

- One in four renting households were experiencing rental stress in 2021 (24% or 2,221 households). This means they are paying more than 30 per cent of their total income towards rent.
- More than five in ten (51.4%) low-income households and more than eight in 10 very low-income households (83.0%), including all those on government payments, were experiencing rental stress.
- One in eleven households with a mortgage were experiencing mortgage stress in 2021 (9.0% or 1,071 households). The number of households experiencing mortgage stress has almost certainly increased since 2021, following 12 interest rate rises between May 2022 and May 2023.
- Rental costs in Hobsons Bay increased by 10 per cent in the year to 2022, compared to only 7 per cent in Greater Melbourne overall.
- The proportion of households living in social housing has declined in Hobsons Bay from 3.2 per cent in 2001 to 2.7 percent in 2021.
- The Victorian Housing Register waiting list for the Altona and Werribee Districts (which includes Hobsons Bay) increased by around 20 per cent between 2020 and 2022. In 2022, there were 11,473 applications on the priority access and register of interest lists for social housing in the location areas of Altona and Werribee.¹⁴ Single people (including parents and older people) account for most people on the waiting list.
- Almost 300 people were experiencing homelessness on Census night 2021 (primarily as 'severe overcrowding') and a further 262 people were living in marginal housing (primarily in 'other overcrowded dwellings').
- Based on this data, it is estimated there are 1,409 households in Hobsons Bay that have unmet need for affordable housing (4.1% of all households) (see Figures 2 and 3, below).

¹³ Department of Transport and Planning (c. 2023) About Valuer-General Victoria (<https://www.land.vic.gov.au/>).

¹⁴ Applicants can choose up to five location preferences on a housing application with the average applicant selecting four preferences, so applicants may be counted multiple times. The Altona location area includes Altona, Altona Meadows, Altona North, Brooklyn, Footscray, Kingsville, Newport, Seddon, South Kingsville, Spotswood, West Footscray, Williamstown, Williamstown North, Yarraville, Seaholme. The Werribee location area includes Hoppers Crossing, Laverton, Point Cook, Seabrook, Tarneit, Truganina, Werribee, Wyndham Vale.

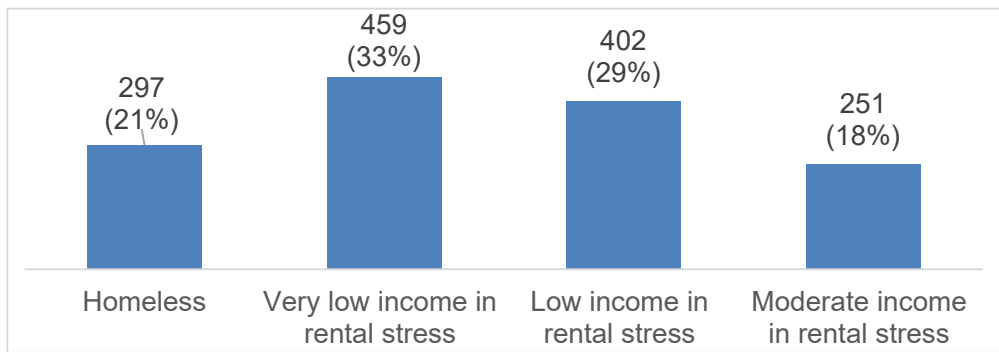


Figure 2: Households in need of affordable housing – number of homeless and by income type (Source: ABS Estimating Homelessness 2021 and ABS Census 2021.)

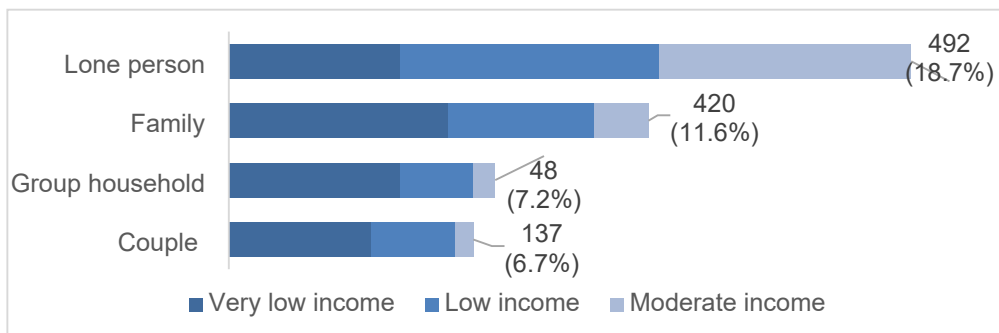


Figure 3: Households in need of affordable housing - % of household type (Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2021. Compiled and presented by .id (informed decisions))

- This means these households are unable to access private market housing or require some form of housing assistance to avoid being in long term rental stress. More specifically:
 - Lone person households are particularly vulnerable and are also the fastest growing household type in Hobsons Bay. One in five people who live by themselves with an annual income of \$58,000 or less are in need of affordable housing.
 - Additionally, one in nine families with children on annual income of \$137,000 per year or less are in need of affordable housing.
- Based on this assessment, it is recommended that future social housing stock (typically for very low and low income households) should prioritise one-, two- and three-bedroom dwellings, while affordable housing stock (typically for low- and moderate-income households) should prioritise one- and two-bedroom dwellings, with a focus on lone person households.
- Based on current need and forecast population growth, it is estimated that there will be 1,987 households in need of affordable housing by 2041, an increase of 578 households on 2021 figures.¹⁵ If this need was to be fully met by 2041, approximately 17 percent of all new dwellings built would need to be Affordable Housing.¹⁶

¹⁵ This is calculated from the current rates of unmet need (4.1% of all households) and estimated population growth to 2041 (.id Consulting 2023, Housing Monitor and Population Forecasts for Hobsons Bay).

¹⁶ This is calculated as a proportion of the total forecast additional 11,813 households in Hobsons Bay by 2041 (.id Consulting 2023, Population Forecasts for Hobsons Bay).

- In practice, increased supply of Affordable Housing is expected from various sources including:
 - anticipated Affordable Housing contributions from Strategic Redevelopment Areas
 - projects in development, e.g. projects funded through the Big Housing Build
 - future projects through the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust
 - anticipated Affordable Housing contributions on larger development sites and re-zonings (outside of the Strategic Redevelopment Areas).

Implications for the updated Policy Statement

- Based on 2021 data, it is estimated there were 1,409 households in Hobsons Bay that have unmet need for affordable housing (4.1% of all households).
- Need is highest amongst lone person households (all income groups) and family households (low and very low income groups).
- Based on this needs assessment, It is recommended that future social housing stock (for very low and low income households) should prioritise one-, two- and three-bedroom dwellings, while affordable housing stock (for low- and moderate-income households) should prioritise one and two bedroom dwellings.

8. Evaluation of the 2016 Policy Statement

This section presents an evaluation of the current Affordable Housing Policy Statement 2016, including completed actions and key achievements.

Key achievements

The following key achievements have occurred through the 2016 Policy Statement:

- **Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust** – the Trust has been established, with Housing Choices Australia (HCA) appointed the Trustee and the Trust Deed and Funding and Services Agreement executed in July 2022.
- **Epsom Street Affordable Housing Project** – significant progress has been made on the Epsom Street Affordable Housing Project, including community consultation, endorsement of Design Guidelines, and submission of application for Victorian Government funding in October 2022.
- **Planning Scheme Amendments** – requirements for affordable housing contributions have been included into the Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme, including through the Altona North Comprehensive Development Plan (Precinct 15) and the Development Plan Overlay for Precinct 16 West.
- **Advocacy** – Council has undertaken various advocacy activities in relation to Affordable Housing, including developing submission to the Planning Mechanisms for Affordable Housing Ministerial Advisory Committee (2019), Ten Year Social and Affordable Housing Strategy for Victoria (2021) and Social and Affordable Housing Compact (2022).
- **Networks** – Council has participated in various networks to share information and support collective advocacy, including through the M9 Group and Inter Council Affordable Housing Forum (convened by the Municipal Association of Victoria).
- **Housing Strategy 2019** – Council adopted the Hobsons Bay Housing Strategy in 2019, which provides additional support and guidance for Council's efforts to increase supply of Affordable Housing. Council has also implemented the housing strategy by introducing new residential zones that encourage a diversity of dwelling stock, including more apartments in appropriate locations.
- **Negotiations and agreements** – Council officers have conducted numerous negotiations with developers and landowners to secure affordable housing contributions via Section 173 agreements (see Table 2, above).
- **Planning Processes** – Council's Statutory Planning team have introduced processes whereby projects including a portion of affordable housing are managed by senior planner.
- **Land audit** – Council officers have completed a high-level audit of government-owned land in Hobsons Bay with the potential to be considered for future development including Affordable Housing.
- **Financial Hardship Policy** – Council has developed the Hobsons Bay Financial Hardship Policy 2020, which provides a framework for financial relief to eligible households who need assistance from the impacts of financial hardship, including rates payments.

- **Rooming houses** – Council's Health Department has monitored standards in registered rooming houses in Hobsons Bay, as per legislative responsibilities under the [Residential Tenancies \(Rooming House Standards\) Regulations 2012](#)
- **Research** – Council has commissioned research on a range of topics to guide its planning and actions to increase the supply of Affordable Housing, including feasibility studies for the Epsom Street Affordable Housing Project.
- **Data** – Council officers have monitored local data from the Victorian Housing Register and Specialist Homelessness Services, as well as engaging with Homes Victoria and establishing a [Hobsons Bay Housing Monitor](#).
- **Community attitudes** – Council has sought to raise awareness of the need for and benefits of Affordable Housing, including through its submissions and consultation on the Epsom Street Affordable Housing Project Design Guidelines.
- **Land** – Council has engaged with the Victorian Government to explore opportunities to purchase appropriate land in Hobsons Bay for consideration as future affordable housing.

Evaluation

A detailed evaluation of each of the Policy Statement's 56 Guiding Actions is included in Appendix 3. This evaluation indicates the status of each action (e.g. completed, progressing, ongoing), key Council teams involved, summary of work completed, and any other relevant comments.

The key points are summarised below:

- [Priority Area 1 \(Land Use Planning\)](#) - work has been undertaken against all 11 actions, with varying levels of impact.
- [Priority Area 2 \(Service Provision\)](#) - work has been undertaken against three (of four) actions.
- [Priority Area 3 \(Establishment of a Trust\)](#) - of 27 actions in this area, 11 have been completed and 12 are progressing. The remaining four have not started, are no longer relevant, or need to be re-scoped now that the Trust has been established.
- [Priority Area 4 \(Advocacy and Leadership\)](#) - work has been undertaken against all six actions.
- [Priority Area 5 \(Building the evidence base and community understanding\)](#) - work has been undertaken against all four actions, with two actions completed and two actions progressing.
- [Priority Area 6 \(Partnering to maintain existing public housing\)](#) - some work has been undertaken against all four actions, but significant progress has not yet been made.

A substantial proportion of the actions in the 2016 Policy Statement were quite specific and prescriptive, particularly with regards to the establishment of the Trust. It is recommended that the updated Policy Statement articulate broader policy commitments, which can be implemented more flexibly through specific actions. As such, it is expected that the updated Policy Statement will have fewer guiding actions/commitments than the 2016 Policy Statement.

Implications for the updated Policy Statement

The evaluation of the 2016 Policy Statement highlights the following topics for consideration in developing the updated Policy Statement:

- *Priority Area 1 – Land use planning:* Most of these actions are ongoing and should be considered for inclusion in the updated Policy Statement.
- *Priority Area 2 – Service provision:* A focus on rooming houses should be retained for the updated Policy Statement, but the focus on community care may be reduced.
- *Priority Area 3 – Establishment of a Housing Trust:* The updated Policy Statement should retain a strong focus on the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust, particularly to grow the Trust and to encourage it as a destination for affordable housing contributions.
- *Priority Area 4 – Advocacy and Leadership:* The updated Policy Statement should retain a strong focus on advocacy, given the significant role played by the Victorian Government in land use planning and funding of Affordable housing. This focus should be expanded to include the Commonwealth Government, who also play a role in funding construction and facilitation outcomes through access to low-cost finance.
- *Priority Area 5 - Building the evidence base and community understanding:* The focus on research, data and raising awareness should be retained for the updated Policy Statement.
- *Priority Area 6 – Partnering to maintain existing public housing:* The updated Policy Statement should retain a focus on working with other levels of government, including exploring asset transfers of surplus government land to the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust.

Overall, it is recommended that the updated Policy Statement include fewer specific guiding actions/commitments, instead shifting the focus to broader policy commitments that can be implemented flexibly over the life of the Policy Statement.

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10. Appendices

Appendix 1: Key terms

Affordable Housing

Affordable housing is a broad term which refers to housing that is affordable for lower income households. It is defined in the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* as 'housing, including social housing that is appropriate for the housing needs of very low, low and moderate income households'.

Affordable Housing contribution

An Affordable Housing contribution may be negotiated between Council and another party, typically a landowner or property developer. The contribution may be made in the form of dwellings, land, payments or a combination. Contributions are voluntary and agreed by negotiation, although some planning controls in the Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme set out requirements for the provision of Affordable Housing, e.g. Schedule 2 to Clause 37.02 Comprehensive Development Zone (Altona North Comprehensive Development Plan). The Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust is Council's preferred mechanism to manage Affordable Housing contributions.

'Brownfield land'

'Brownfield land' refers to land that was (or is) being used for industrial purposes and has been (or is intended) to be re-zoned to accommodate residential development. Council's Industrial Land Management Strategy 2008 identified a series of Strategic Redevelopment Areas on 'brownfield land' that have been subsequently re-zoned for residential use.

Commonwealth Rent Assistance

Rent Assistance is a non-taxable income supplement payable to eligible people who rent in the private rental market or community housing.¹⁷ Pensioners, allowees and those receiving more than the base rate of Family Tax Benefit Part A may be eligible for Rent Assistance.

Community Housing

Community housing is a form of social housing managed by Registered Housing Agency (see 'Social Housing, below).

Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust

The Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust is a key commitment of Council's Affordable Housing Policy Statement 2016. The Policy Statement proposed that the Trust be established for the charitable purpose of providing housing to low-income individuals or households that have a connection to Hobsons Bay. The Trust is Council's preferred mechanism for the delivery of Affordable Housing contributions in the municipality. In 2020, Housing Choices Australia was appointed by Council as the Trustee of the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust.

¹⁷ Australian Government – Department of Social Services (2023) Commonwealth Rent Assistance (<https://www.dss.gov.au/housing-support/programmes-services/commonwealth-rent-assistance>).

Homelessness

There is no single agreed definition of homelessness. The Australian Bureau of Statistics uses six operational groups for presenting estimates of people experiencing homelessness on Census night.¹⁸ These groups are:

- people living in improvised dwellings, tents or sleeping out
- people living in supported accommodation for the homeless
- people staying temporarily with other households
- people living in boarding houses
- people in other temporary lodgings
- people living in 'severely' overcrowded dwellings

An alternative 'cultural definition' of homelessness (developed by academics David MacKenzie and Chris Chamberlain¹⁹) includes three categories:

- Primary homelessness is experienced by people without conventional accommodation, e.g. sleeping rough or in improvised dwellings
- Secondary homelessness is experienced by people who frequently move from one temporary shelter to another, e.g. emergency accommodation, youth refuges, 'couch surfing'
- Tertiary homelessness is experienced by people staying in accommodation that falls below minimum community standards, e.g. boarding housing and caravan parks.

Housing Affordability

Housing affordability is not the same as Affordable Housing. It refers to the relationship between expenditure on housing (prices, mortgage payments or rents) and household income, regardless of whether the housing is Affordable Housing or market housing. Housing affordability is a significant issue across Australia as the increasing cost of housing has outpaced household income for many years.²⁰

Housing Stress

Housing stress is a specific term which refers to households having trouble meeting their financial housing obligations, either rent or mortgage payments. Moderate, low, and very low income **households** are considered to be in housing stress if they are spending more than 30 per cent of their gross household income on housing costs. Income brackets for this definition are classified as very low (< 50% of median), low (50% to 80% of median) and moderate (80% to 120% of median). Households on high incomes are not counted as being in housing stress, even if payments are above 30 per cent of income, as this is more likely to contain an element of choice, e.g. paying extra on a mortgage to complete the loan sooner.²¹

Inclusionary Zoning

¹⁸ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2023) Estimating Homelessness: Census

(<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/housing/estimating-homelessness-census/latest-release>).

¹⁹ James Farrell (2012) 'Definition of homelessness changes but problems remain' (<https://theconversation.com/definition-of-homelessness-changes-but-problems-remain-9525>).

²⁰ South Gippsland Shire Council (c. 2022) Social and Affordable Housing Strategy (<https://yoursay.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/social-affordable-housing-strategy>).

²¹ .id Consulting (c. 2023) Housing monitor Hobsons Bay City (<https://housing.id.com.au/hobsons-bay>).

The Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI) defines inclusionary zoning as follows: *A land use planning intervention by government designed to deliver affordable housing. It either mandates or creates incentives for a residential development to provide a specified proportion or number of affordable housing dwellings.*²² Within the Australian context, inclusionary zoning has been implemented to varying degrees in South Australia, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory.

Key worker

The following definition is adapted from research prepared for the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI): *There is no single definition of what constitutes a 'key worker'. The term usually refers to employees in services that are essential to a city's functioning but who earn low to moderate incomes. In cities and regions with high housing costs, this makes access to appropriate and affordable housing in reasonable proximity to work difficult for key workers.*²³

Marginal housing

In addition to homelessness operational groups, the ABS also compiles estimates from Census data for the following three groups of people living in marginal housing, but who are not classified as homeless:

- people living in other crowded dwellings
- people in other improvised dwellings
- people marginally housed in caravan parks.²⁴

Planning authority

'Using Victoria's Planning System', the Victorian Government's technical guide to the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, provides the following definition of 'Planning Authority': *any person or body given the power to prepare a planning scheme or an amendment to a planning scheme. The Minister is a planning authority and may authorise any other Minister or public authority to prepare an amendment to a planning scheme. A council is planning authority for its municipality and for any area adjoining its municipality that the Minister authorises.*²⁵

Public Housing

Public housing is a form of social housing managed by the Victorian Government (see 'Social Housing, below).

Registered Housing Agency

Registered Housing Agencies provide Affordable Housing for very low, low and moderate-income households and allocate tenants from the Victorian Housing Register (see below). To become a Registered Housing Agency, a not-for-profit organisation must be a company limited by shares or

²² Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI) (2017) Understanding Inclusionary Zoning (<https://www.ahuri.edu.au/analysis/brief/understanding-inclusionary-zoning>).

²³ Catherine Gilbert, Zahra Nasreen and Nicole Gurrin for AHURI (2021) 'Housing key workers: scoping challenges, aspirations, and policy responses for Australian cities' (<https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/355>).

²⁴ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2023) Estimating Homelessness: Census (<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/housing/estimating-homelessness-census/latest-release>).

²⁵ Department of Transport and Planning (2023) Using Victoria's planning system (<https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/guide-home/using-victorias-planning-system>).

guarantee, an incorporated association, or a co-operative. Housing managed by a Registered Housing Agency is usually long term or transitional, although some agencies also provide crisis housing and other forms of housing such as specialist disability accommodation and rooming houses. It is a regulated sector and all registered agencies must comply with Performance Standards and other legislative requirements under the Housing Act. There are currently 10 Registered Housing Associations and 36 Registered Housing Providers in Victoria.²⁶

'Rent to buy' program

'Rent to buy' is a form of affordable purchase housing. Assemble Communities' 'Build to Rent to Own' is an example. Under the program, residents have the option to purchase after a five-year lease period at a pre-agreed price. The program is typically aimed at moderate income households.²⁷

Responsible Authority

'Using Victoria's Planning System', the Victorian Government's technical guide to the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, provides the following definition of 'Responsible Authority': *the body responsible for the administration or enforcement of a planning scheme or a provision of a scheme. A responsible authority is responsible for considering and determining planning permit applications and for ensuring compliance with the planning scheme, permit conditions and agreements. The responsible authority is usually the municipal council.*²⁸

Shared equity program

Shared equity is a form of affordable purchase housing. It involves financing arrangements where the equity required for home ownership is shared between the purchaser, government and/or a Community Housing Provider. The Victorian Government's Victorian Homebuyer Fund is an example of a shared equity model. Under the program, the Victorian Government makes a financial contribution towards the purchase of a property (up to 25%) in exchange for a proportional interest (share) in the property. Purchases are required to repay the Government's financial contribution within the initial duration of the home loan plus 60 days.²⁹

Social Housing

Social housing is made up of two types of housing. **Public housing** is long-term rental housing that is owned and managed by the Victorian Government for eligible households, including people who are unemployed, on low incomes, live with a disability or mental illness, or who are at risk of homelessness. **Community housing** is secure, affordable, long-term rental housing that is owned or managed by a Registered Housing Agency, who may specialise in housing for a diverse range of tenants including women and children escaping family violence, people with a disability, or households with lower incomes.

Strategic Redevelopment Areas

²⁶ State Government of Victoria (2022) Registered housing agencies in Victoria (<https://www.vic.gov.au/registered-housing-agencies-victoria>).

²⁷ Assemble (c. 2021) FAQs (<https://assemblecommunities.com/faq-cat/assemble-futures/>).

²⁸ Department of Transport and Planning (2023) Using Victoria's planning system (<https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/guide-home/using-victorias-planning-system>).

²⁹ State Revenue Office Victoria (2023) Homebuyer Fund (<https://www.sro.vic.gov.au/homebuyer/frequently-asked-questions-about-homebuyer-fund>).

Council's Industrial Land Management Strategy 2008 identified a number of Strategic Redevelopment Areas, which have some or all of the following characteristics:

- Areas that may evolve from a previous industrial use to provide a wider mix of employment opportunities, including a mix of industry, commercial and office accommodation.
- Areas that are constrained by surrounding land use patterns or access arrangements and where the opportunity exists for uses to change over time to a residential use.
- areas that are not currently industrial, but because of the existing land use conditions are best suited to an industrial zone.

The Affordable Housing Policy Statement 2016 established a policy position to seek 10 per cent non-market affordable housing on all SRAs.

Victorian Housing Register

The Victorian Housing Register is a centralised waiting list for all social housing providers in Victoria, administered by the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing). The register has two categories:

- Priority Access: for people who are homeless and receiving support; escaping or have escaped family violence; with a disability or significant support needs; or with special housing needs.
- Register of Interest: for all eligible applicants to register their interest in social housing.

As at December 2022, there were a total of 67,120 total applications on the Victorian Housing Register.³⁰

³⁰ Homes Victoria (2023) Applications on the Victorian Housing Register (VHR) (<https://www.homes.vic.gov.au/applications-victorian-housing-register-vhr>).

Appendix 2: Government roles and responsibilities in the Australian housing system

Table 4: Government roles and responsibilities in the Australian housing system

(Source: adapted from AHURI (2019) Understanding of the 30:40 indicator of housing affordability stress cited in City of Melbourne's Affordable Housing Strategy)

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT	VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT
<p>Housing demand</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tax incentives, e.g. negative gearing <p>Home ownership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital gains tax, e.g. main residence exemption • Pension eligibility, e.g. value of 'principal place of residence' not considered <p>Income support and rental subsidies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rental supplements, e.g. Commonwealth Rent Assistance • Affordable Housing programs e.g. National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS) <p>Funding and investment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding agreements, e.g. National Housing and Homelessness Agreement (NHHA) • Low cost financing, e.g. National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation (NHFIC) <p>Major infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding, e.g. National Housing Infrastructure Facility (NHIF) • Partnerships, e.g. North West Melbourne City Deal 	<p>Taxes and duties</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stamp duty, e.g. First Home Buyer Duty exemptions and concessions • Land tax, e.g. tax on vacant residential properties and exemptions for principle place of residence and rooming houses land • Windfall Gains Tax, e.g. value uplift arising from rezoning of land will be taxed at minimum 50 per cent (from 1 July 2023) <p>Public and community housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding public and community housing development, e.g. Big Housing Build • Management and maintenance of public housing (approx. 64,000 properties in Victoria) <p>Home ownership programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grants e.g. First Home Owner Grant program • Shared equity schemes e.g. Victorian Homebuyer Fund or 'Buy Assist' community shared equity scheme <p>Land release</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Release of public non-residential land <p>Major infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding for planning and delivery of major infrastructure, e.g. transport, health care, and education <p>Planning laws</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversight of the Victorian Planning System and statewide zoning tools 	<p>Rates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council is responsible for collecting rates and applying rates concession and exemption policies <p>Minor infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery and maintenance of minor infrastructure e.g. roads and footpaths • Delivery of community infrastructure e.g. libraries, sporting pavilions <p>Planning laws</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application of land use zoning • Planning permits and planning scheme amendments • Negotiating voluntary affordable housing contributions <p>Rooming houses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing registration, monitoring and compliance of rooming houses <p>Advocacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocating to the Victorian and Australian Governments for increased supply of social and affordable housing <p>Partnerships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging with Registered Housing Agencies and other key stakeholders to increase local supply <p>Council contributions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considering opportunities to make land (or other contributions) available to increase local supply, having regard to the overall community need and Council's financial sustainability.

Appendix 3: Evaluation of the Affordable Housing Policy Statement 2016

1. Land use planning

Council, together with the Victorian Government, has an important land use planning role that can influence building form, location and the total supply of land for housing. These factors can affect the market price of housing.

Guiding Action	Status	Key Teams	Work undertaken / Comments
1.1 Consider amending the planning scheme by updating the Local Planning Policy Framework to provide a framework for addressing affordable housing.	Completed (ongoing)	Strategic Planning Social Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requirements for affordable housing have been added to the Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme, including for Precinct 15, Precinct 16 West and Precinct 16 East. VC169 (9/10/20) updated Clause 16.01-2S - Housing Affordability to include objective: To deliver more affordable housing closer to jobs, transport and services. The 2016 policy statement has been added as a background document to the Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme.
1.2 Pursue negotiated agreements for the inclusion of affordable housing on appropriate development sites as part of planning scheme amendment rezonings and planning permit applications. For planning scheme amendments, due to potential uplift in value, this may involve identifying the creation of “unearned increments”	Completed (ongoing)	Strategic Planning Statutory Planning Social Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negotiated affordable housing contributions have been achieved on appropriate development sites, including Precinct 15 and other sites. Updated Policy Statement should also include a statement encouraging the use of the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust for contributions.
1.3 Utilise Section 173 Agreements and planning conditions that clearly set out the responsibilities for affordable housing	Completed (ongoing)	Strategic Planning Statutory Planning Social Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section 173 Agreements are in place for several developments.
1.4 Implement a process whereby town planning applications for affordable housing projects are dealt with by experienced planning officers and provide advice to developers on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.4.1 The management of public consultation for affordable housing projects 1.4.2 Social impact assessment (SIA) for affordable housing projects 1.4.3 Requirements for SIAs and mitigation strategies for proposed redevelopments on sites that provide existing affordable housing (e.g. caravan parks, rooming houses) 	Completed (ongoing)	Statutory Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experienced planning officers have been dealing with applications for affordable housing projects.
1.5 Consider the appropriateness of development concessions for developments that provide increased amounts of affordable housing	Progressing	Strategic Planning Statutory Planning Social Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up until now Council has been able to successfully secure affordable housing negotiations without reliance on development concessions. Development concessions could be further explored as part of the next Policy Statement along with a process for prioritising applications that deliver Affordable Housing

<p>1.6 Apply a spatially differentiated approach to:</p> <p><u>1.6.1 Strategic Redevelopment Areas (SRAs) and Strategic Redevelopment Sites (SRSs)</u></p> <p>1.6.1.1 Seek 10 per cent non-market affordable housing (as per the previous iteration of this policy statement) until a revised trigger is in place</p> <p>1.6.1.2 Capture the betterment uplift of zoning changes, amended planning controls (e.g. building heights), or significant public infrastructure investments (e.g. road or rail changes)</p> <p>1.6.1.3 Be incorporated in planning overlays, Section 173 Agreements, and or planning conditions</p> <p><u>1.6.2 Activity Centres</u></p> <p>1.6.2.1 Encourage the provision of affordable housing</p> <p>1.6.2.2 Negotiate affordable housing outcomes on large residential and mixed use development sites</p> <p>1.6.2.3 Be incorporated in planning overlays, Section 173 Agreements, and or planning conditions</p> <p><u>1.6.3 Established suburbs</u></p> <p>1.6.3.1 Negotiate affordable housing outcomes on larger development sites¹⁵</p> <p>1.6.3.2 Be incorporated in planning overlays, Section 173 Agreements, and or planning conditions</p> <p>1.6.3.3 Support the development of dependent persons units (e.g. granny flats, laneway units)</p>	Ongoing	Strategic Planning Statutory Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A spatially differentiated approach has been partially implemented, with most progress made through SRAs and SRSs, e.g. Precinct 15. • However, with no new SRAs expected, the focus of the updated policy statement will need to be on Activity Centres and established suburbs • This will have implications for any targets included in the updated Policy Statement, and Council's approach to prioritising sites and achieving negotiated contributions. • Additionally, this Guiding Action overlaps with others (e.g. 1.2 and 1.3) and it is suggested that the updated Policy Statement seek to avoid overlap as much as possible. • It is recommended that the new policy statement include a commitment to continue to seek a 10 per cent affordable housing contributions for larger rezonings, as well as continue negotiate affordable housing outcomes on larger redevelopment sites of 20 or more dwellings
<p>1.7 Encourage the design of dwellings that are supportive of ageing in place, sympathetic to the needs of older people and people with a disability, through the implementation of Universal Design principles and the Disability Discrimination Act 1992</p>	Completed (ongoing)	Strategic Planning Statutory Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Design Principles have been included in the adopted Design Guidelines for the Epsom Street Affordable Housing Project. • The Social and Strategic Planning team encourage adherence to Liveable Housing Australia Silver Level Guidelines, particularly for social and affordable housing dwellings
<p>1.8 Manage the quality of affordable housing, including ensuring affordable housing developments are:</p> <p>1.8.1 indistinguishable from surrounding dwellings</p> <p>1.8.2 designed to maximise environmentally sustainable design (ESD) principles</p> <p>1.8.3 designed to minimise energy costs to the resident</p> <p>1.8.4 designed to minimise future maintenance costs to the owner</p> <p>1.8.5 established to minimise the future costs of communal services and body corporate fees</p> <p>1.8.6 convenient to public transport</p> <p>1.8.7 convenient to services, employment, schools and shops</p> <p>1.8.8 contain dwellings suitable for a range of tenants of all ages and abilities and from individuals to families</p> <p>1.8.9 designed to incorporate the principles of Universal Design</p>	Ongoing	Strategic Planning Statutory Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Victorian Government has established criteria in relation to affordable housing that meet most of these requirements. • Council's role in managing the quality of affordable housing occurs predominantly through the planning process. • The Design Guidelines for the Epsom Street Affordable Housing Project includes design requirements, including for ESD principles and Universal Design.

1.9 Manage the re-zoning and release of land suitable for residential use to maintain an ongoing supply of land in a manner that: 1.9.1 minimises the upward pressure on residential land prices 1.9.2 assists residents to remain in the municipality to access local jobs, services and social opportunities 1.9.3 encourages the development of a diverse range of housing types 1.9.4 minimises living and ownership costs for residents 1.9.5 recognises the variance in land value (and the associated difference in the development and ownership cost of dwellings) across the municipality	Progressing	Strategic Planning Statutory Planning Property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-zoning of land is managed on a case-by-case basis in consultation with DTP, etc. Amendment C131 was gazetted in February 2023 that implemented the 2019 Housing Strategy and introduced a new suite of residential zones into the Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme, to ensure an ongoing and diverse supply of residential land A key objective of the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust is to provide affordable housing that will keep residents in the municipality
1.10 Undertake an audit to identify all Council assets that have the development potential to incorporate affordable housing and implement the aims of this policy statement	Progressing	Social Planning Property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The assets department has undertaken an audit of all council assets in 2022 and published an asset plan 2022-32 Site at Epsom Street, Laverton identified for affordable housing as well as a potential site at Trafalgar Avenue, Altona Meadows. A high-level audit of government land in the municipality has been undertaken to identify potential future sites for affordable housing developments.
1.11 Council will consider affordable housing outcomes when making decisions concerning Council assets, land and land use	Ongoing	Social Planning Property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council has made several decisions over the life of the policy statement that consider affordable housing in the context of Council assets, land, and land use. For example, in August 2022, Council resolved to consider a proposal to transfer parcels of land at 7-45 Epsom Street to Housing Choices Australia subject to funding and meeting legislative requirements. Affordable housing outcomes have not been considered in councils asset plan 2022-32 'Better Places' guides identify potential sites for affordable housing - eg. Better Places Laverton.

2. Service Provision

Through its various functions, Council plays a major role in protecting, improving and promoting the health of its residents. As the closest level of government to the community, Council works to ensure all residents are provided with an environment which allows them to achieve the best possible health and wellbeing. Housing, a basic human right, plays a critical role in enabling everyone to fully engage in community life, both economically and socially.

Guiding Action	Status	Key Teams	Work undertaken / Comments
2.1. Financially assist low-income homeowners to remain in their homes by: 2.1.1. providing rates discounts to pensioners 2.1.2. providing rates rebates to war veterans and widows 2.1.3. considering a reduction of rates under the Local Government Act 1989 in cases of hardship	Complete (ongoing)	Rates Social Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently provide discounts to pensioners, and rebates to war veterans and widows (to be confirmed) / other hardship measures introduced during COVID-19 pandemic Rates exemptions on social housing was a key issue for Councils in early 2022 Council charges a 'Vacant land rate' (approx. \$200 per annum but not a big incentive).
2.2. Assist older residents to remain in their homes (either owned or rented) rather than transitioning to higher cost aged care through the provision of a range of support services	Complete (ongoing)	Community Care Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council continues to provide support services for older people, although this is currently being reviewed considering funding changes from federal government. Council may also play an information provision role (eg. Reverse mortgages) but needs to ensure it does not provide financial advice. Council may also play a role in increasing the supply of medium density smaller dwellings ('downsize') through land use planning that may provide alternatives for older people. Overall, however, this may not be a key aspect of the updated policy statement

2.3. Manage Council's existing tenant nomination rights into aged and affordable housing, consistent with the objectives of this policy	Not started	Community Life?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited or no action has been undertaken on this action Council may not have any existing tenant nomination rights into affordable housing - this is unlikely as it is managed through the VHR.
2.4. Maintain a minimum privacy, security, safety and amenity standard for low-income rooming house residents through administration of the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008, Public Health and Wellbeing (Prescribed Accommodation) Regulations 2020, Building Act 1993 and Residential Tenancies Act 1997	Complete (ongoing)	Public Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council's public health team has an ongoing role in inspecting and monitoring the compliance of registered rooming houses. Suggest retaining some focus on rooming houses - it is BAU, but worth noting Council's role.

3. Establishment of a Housing Trust

Council will establish the Hobsons Bay Housing Trust as a flexible and funded implementation tool for the development of affordable housing. A Trust provides a method to collect, hold and manage assets such as land, money and buildings to be used to increase the supply of affordable housing in Hobsons Bay.

Guiding Action - The Trust will:	Status	Key Teams	Work undertaken / Comments
3.1. Receive and hold assets, funds and other forms of economic value	Complete	HCA Social Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trust has been established with Housing Choices Australia as Trustee. Trust Deed and Funding and Services Agreement executed in July 2022. Funding application for Epsom Street project has been lodged with State Government
3.2. Address the concerns of Panels and Tribunals regarding the capacity of Council to implement this policy and develop affordable housing	Complete	HCA Social Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trust has been established with Housing Choices Australia as Trustee. Trust Deed and Funding and Services Agreement executed in July 2022.
3.3. Provide a permanent solution to ensure that any affordable housing contribution is not lost through subsequent market sales	Complete	HCA Social Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trust has been established with Housing Choices Australia as Trustee. Trust Deed and Funding and Services Agreement executed in July 2022. Trust Deed has provision (section 5.3) for Trustee to sell assets at its discretion, as this is part of asset management.
3.4. Be subject to a strategic level of control from Council through: the terms of the trust deed, the appointment and removal by Council of the Trust Manager, and a reporting framework from the Trust Manager to Council against financial and social outcomes, as agreed	Complete	HCA Social Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trust has been established with Housing Choices Australia as Trustee. Trust Deed and Funding and Services Agreement executed in July 2022. Planning and reporting process established, including Annual Business Plans and reporting to maintain accountability and measure progress.
3.5. Be managed by a Trust Manager that shall be a Registered Housing Association regulated by the Victorian Registrar of Housing under the Housing Act 1983 and appointed for a finite term following a contestable public process	Complete	HCA Social Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trust has been established with Housing Choices Australia as Trustee. HCA is a Registered Housing Association, regulated by the Housing Act 1983.
3.6. Ensure that any housing assets are maintained from tenant rent payments and do not present a future maintenance cost to Council.	Progressing	HCA Social Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trust has been established with Housing Choices Australia as Trustee. Trust Deed and Funding and Services Agreement executed in July 2022. From Trust Deed – Trustee Powers (s.8.1 (n)): <i>to manage any real property it holds from time to time with all the powers of an absolute owner including, but not limited to, power to conduct repairs on the property and power to allow an Eligible Resident to occupy the property on terms and conditions that the Trustee thinks fit;</i> The Deed may not provide sufficient detail, and it should be clarified that rent is able to cover maintenance of Trust properties. This should be clarified to ensure it does not pose a future risk to council.

3.7. Enable Hobsons Bay to access, through the Trust Manager, the capacity, expertise and development advantages of the Victorian Registered Housing Associations and Registered Housing Providers	Complete	HCA Social Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trust has been established with Housing Choices Australia as Trustee. HCA is a Registered Housing Association, regulated by the Housing Act 1983.
3.8. Ensure that any housing owned or developed by the Trust is occupied and used for the benefit of residents of Hobsons Bay	Complete	HCA Social Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trust has been established with Housing Choices Australia as Trustee. Trust Deed and Funding and Services Agreement executed in July 2022. 'Eligible Resident' defined in the Trust Deed to mean individual or household 'who has significant links to the City of Hobsons Bay'.
3.9. Become registered as a public benevolent institution and tax concession charity to attract Commonwealth and State taxation benefits	Complete	HCA Social Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust has been registered with Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission.
3.10. Provide simplification and certainty about future land use when Council officers consider requests for affordable housing planning dispensations	Progressing	HCA Stat Planning Strat Planning Social Planning Comms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brochures have been developed and will be updated as part of Trust promotional strategy (as detailed in Year One Business Plan). Further discussions required to identify any planning dispensations or other assistance that may be available to encourage use of the Trust for affordable housing contributions. Suggest retaining this in the updated Policy Statement
3.11. Assist Council officers to negotiate the quantum, form and timing of affordable housing contributions	Progressing	HCA Stat Planning Social Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negotiations have been undertaken for several sites Ongoing discussions needed between Trustee and Council Officers – suggest retaining this in some form within the updated Policy Statement.
3.12. Provide certainty to developers concerning the timing, price and design of affordable housing	Not started	HCA Stat Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council and HCA will promote the Trust as a vehicle for developers, but it unclear to what extent it may provide certainty re. timing, price and design of affordable housing.
3.13. Seek additional sources of government and private funding for housing, including, but not limited to, Commonwealth and State grants, debt, rent assistance, philanthropic grants, bequests, and transfers of assets	Progressing	Social Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application lodged for state government funding for social housing development at Epsom Street, Laverton. Additional funding sources identified as an action in the Year One Business Plan.
3.14. Accept affordable housing contributions	Progressing	HCA Social Planning Stat Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trust has been established with Housing Choices Australia as Trustee. Trust Deed and Funding and Services Agreement executed in July 2022. Further promotion of the Trust is needed, alongside consideration of incentives for developers and landowners.
3.15. Identify and select future tenants who shall be in housing need (refer to 3.8)	Progressing	HCA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trustee will be responsible for tenant selection. HCA has its own policies and will develop a Tenancy Allocation Process for Trust properties as part of Year One Business Plan. In some cases, tenant selection will be determined by the requirements of specific funding sources, e.g. Social Housing Growth Fund (Victorian Housing Register).
3.16. Develop and implement rent setting policies that meet Council's aims and the aims of this policy	Progressing	HCA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trustee will be responsible for setting rent. HCA has its own policies and will develop a Tenancy Allocation Process for Trust properties as part of Year One Business Plan. In some cases, rent setting will be determined by requirements of specific funding sources, e.g. Social Housing Growth Fund (Victorian Housing Register).

3.17. Develop housing that meets Council's design and location objectives	Progressing	HCA Social Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Victorian Government has established criteria in relation to affordable housing that address design and location objectives. HCA has its own guidelines for the design of dwellings. The Design Guidelines for the Epsom Street Affordable Housing Project includes design requirements, including for ESD principles and Universal Design.
3.18. Support and encourage tenants to move into private rental housing and home ownership through practices that include private rental brokerage and shared equity schemes	Not started	Stat Planning Social Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HCA have advised this is not within their policies - this was updated in the Trust Deed. Consider including elsewhere in updated Policy Statement, e.g. Statutory Planning have considered shared equity schemes as developer contributions separate from Trust.
3.19. The delivery of part of a development site as a land contribution rather than the delivery of completed dwellings , allowing a separate development by a Registered Housing Association (RHA)	Complete	Strategic Planning Statutory Planning Social Planning HCA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trust has been established with Housing Choices Australia as Trustee. Trust Deed and Funding and Services Agreement executed in July 2022. The Trust Deed allows the Trust to acquire land in the City of Hobsons Bay and construct housing on it. The Trust does not specify housing models, but the definition of 'Eligible Residents' is limited to individuals and households 'registered on the Victorian Housing Register'. It is recommended that the updated Policy Statement provide direction that this definition be broadened to facilitate additional affordable housing models (this may also be completed independently of the Policy Statement, if required).
3.20. The developer supplying a land parcel in an alternative location allowing a separate development by a RHA. The land parcel could be on lower value land in Hobsons Bay	Complete	Strategic Planning Statutory Planning Social Planning HCA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trust has been established with Housing Choices Australia as Trustee. Trust Deed and Funding and Services Agreement executed in July 2022. The Trust Deed allows the Trust to acquire land in the City of Hobsons Bay and construct housing on it.
3.21. The sale of 10 per cent of dwellings OR less than 10 per cent at a discounted price that a RHA can finance, subject to negotiation	Progressing	Strategic Planning Statutory Planning Social Planning HCA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Trust deed does not include a specific percentage contribution. The updated Policy Statement should include a commitment to seek 10 percent of dwellings as Affordable Housing dwellings or a contribution
3.22. A cash payment in lieu of a dwelling contribution with the funds used on an alternate project on land elsewhere in Hobsons Bay	Complete	Strategic Planning Statutory Planning Social Planning HCA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trust has been established with Housing Choices Australia as Trustee. Trust Deed and Funding and Services Agreement executed in July 2022. The Trust Deed allows the Trust to accept cash contributions.
3.23. Joint ventures between multiple RHAs	Progressing	HCA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trust has been established with Housing Choices Australia as Trustee. Trust Deed and Funding and Services Agreement executed in July 2022. Joint ventures could be explored through future business plans and/or as opportunities arise.
3.24. Joint ventures with DHHS aimed at renewing existing public housing that would otherwise be at the end of economic life and uninhabitable	Progressing	Trust Homes Vic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trust has been established with Housing Choices Australia as Trustee. Trust Deed and Funding and Services Agreement executed in July 2022. Joint ventures with the Homes Victoria (Department of Families, Fairness and Housing) could be explored through future business plans and/or as opportunities arise.
3.25. Joint ventures with DHHS aimed at retaining the current number of public housing dwellings in Hobsons Bay	Progressing	Trust Homes Vic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated policy statement could reference the Compact on Social and Affordable Housing (and potential Local Agreements) as a forum for planning and negotiations for these types of projects.

3.26. Provide the Housing Trust Manager with discretion to allocate up to 20 per cent of housing created or managed under the policy as affordable rental housing for residents of Hobsons Bay who are in the workforce (key workers), in the bottom 40 per cent of income as determined by the latest ABS Personal Income Data for the City of Hobsons Bay, and who are employees of a business or public service located in Hobsons Bay or who are in full time higher education and who have a long-term established connection with Hobsons Bay	Not completed	Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Trust Deed definition of 'Eligible Residents' is limited to individuals and households 'registered on the Victorian Housing Register'. As such, it may not extend to key workers and other relevant groups. It is recommended that the updated Policy Statement provide direction that this definition be broadened to encompass additional groups (this may also be completed independently of the Policy Statement, if required).
3.27. Such housing to be managed and tenants selected by the Housing Trust Manager with a maximum tenancy of one year , after which such tenants are to be assisted to find housing in the private rental market through private rental brokerage or other means	Not completed	Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trustee will be responsible for tenant selection. HCA has its own policies and will develop a Tenancy Allocation Process for Trust properties as part of Year One Business Plan. In some cases, tenant selection will be determined by the requirements of specific funding sources, e.g. Social Housing Growth Fund (Victorian Housing Register). As such, it is recommended that this action not be included in the updated Policy Statement.

4. Advocacy and Leadership

Council recognises that tackling housing affordability requires the involvement of all tiers of government, as well as partnering with other councils and relevant agencies. Council's recognition of its importance is reflected in Council's key strategic plans and strategies which aim to increase the supply of affordable housing.

Guiding Action	Status	Key Teams	Work undertaken / Comments
4.1. Provide adequate resourcing to support the actions of this policy statement	Complete	Social Planning Strategic Planning Statutory Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Several Council teams have undertaken actions to implement the Policy Statement, including the Social Planning, Strategic Planning and Statutory Planning teams. Council's Housing Strategy also identified responsibilities of various Council departments.
4.2. Work constructively and cooperatively with neighbouring councils to address the provision of affordable housing for low-income residents within the Western Region of Metropolitan Melbourne	Complete (ongoing)	Social Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Officers from Western region councils have met on a regular basis during the life of the policy (however, meetings stopped during the COVID-19 pandemic). Council officers also attend the statewide Inter Council Affordable Housing Forum (which is convened by the MAV and meets 5-6 times p[er years) Hobsons Bay is also a member of the M9 and meets occasionally to plan and deliver advocacy
4.3. Advocate for changes to the State Planning Policy Framework to provide more explicit support for affordable housing in planning	Complete (ongoing)	Social Planning Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council officers prepared and contributed to submissions to various inquiries and policy development processes, including the Planning Mechanisms for Affordable Housing Ministerial Advisory Committee (2019), Ten-Year Strategy for Social and Affordable Housing (2021) and Social and Affordable Housing Compact (2022).
4.4. Advocate for appropriate public, not for profit and private housing outcomes that address the housing needs of low to moderate income residents	Complete (ongoing)	Social Planning Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council officers prepared and contributed to submissions to various inquiries and policy development processes, including the Planning Mechanisms for Affordable Housing Ministerial Advisory Committee (2019), Ten-Year Strategy for Social and Affordable Housing (2021) and Social and Affordable Housing Compact (2022).
4.5. Demonstrate public sector innovation and leadership in the identification of housing opportunities in decisions concerning Council assets and advocate that other public and government organisations do the same.	Complete	Property Social Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council has made significant progress on the Epsom Street Affordable Housing Project, a community housing development to be built on Council land by Housing Choices Australia as the Trustee of the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust (subject to funding).

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key actions include community consultation on Draft Design Guidelines, presentations to colleagues in state and local government, and supporting the Trust to develop a funding proposal.
4.6. Advocate for all surplus Victorian Government land in Hobsons Bay that is to be developed for residential or mixed-use purposes to carry a requirement for the delivery of affordable housing as a part of its redevelopment	Complete (ongoing)	Social Planning Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council officers prepared and contributed to submissions to various inquiries and policy development processes, including the Planning Mechanisms for Affordable Housing Ministerial Advisory Committee (2019), Ten-Year Strategy for Social and Affordable Housing (2021) and Social and Affordable Housing Compact (2022). Council officers have also met with representatives from Homes Victoria to highlight local need for Affordable Housing, as well as the need to consider state-owned sites (it is expected this engagement will continue through the Compact and local area agreements).

5. Building the evidence base and community understanding

Research plays a critical role in developing an evidence base on which to measure and monitor housing affordability in Hobsons Bay and to keep the community informed of the important role it plays in maintaining the wellbeing and diversity of our residents.

Guiding Action	Status	Key Teams	Work undertaken / Comments
5.1. Fund targeted research such as best practice implementation methods and local data collection to continue to build on Council's understanding of affordable housing and the impact of limited housing on the community	Complete (ongoing)	Social Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Several research projects have been undertaken over the life of the Policy Statement, including feasibility studies for the Epsom Street Affordable Housing Project. Research has been funded by Council and through external grants, e.g. Social Housing Investment Planning (SHIP) Grants Program. Council has also subscribed to .id's Housing Monitor product which provide up-to-date data on housing access and affordability in Hobsons Bay (see https://housing.id.com.au/hobsons-bay).
5.2. Monitor DHHS housing affordability data and other data on housing affordability in Hobsons Bay	Complete (ongoing)	Social Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homes Victoria have shared housing and homelessness service data for Hobsons Bay for the years ending June 2021 and June 2022. Council officers advocated for increased sharing of data in submission on the Social and Affordable Housing Compact (to be implemented via a Local Area Agreement, to be confirmed). Council officers also monitor publicly available datasets from the ABS, Homes Victoria and Australian Institute of Health and Wellbeing.
5.3. Undertake an economic analysis to identify the trigger for when and the extent of the contribution to affordable housing will be requested (e.g. sites over a certain size)	Progressing	Social Planning Strategic Planning Statutory Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 2016 Policy Statement sets out 'triggers' to commence negotiations for affordable housing, including on Strategic Redevelopment Sites and for residential development of 20+ dwellings in established suburbs. This should be carried through to new statement.
5.4. Continue to raise awareness of the importance of affordable housing by building the capacity and understanding of the community and stakeholders around affordable housing and the benefits of ensuring an adequate supply is available in Hobsons Bay	Progressing	Social Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community consultation on the Draft Design Guidelines for the Epsom Street Affordable Housing Project involved raising awareness of social housing. It highlighted need amongst key workers and people with a connection to Hobsons Bay. Council's commitment to increasing the supply of Affordable Housing is also reflected in the Council Plan 2021-25 and Better Place Guides.

6. Partnering to maintain existing public housing

Council will seek a productive partnership with the Hobsons Bay Housing Trust and the Director of Housing to support an outcome that ensures there is no future net loss of the estimated 990 public housing dwellings in Hobsons Bay.

Guiding Action	Status	Key Teams	Work undertaken / Comments
6.1. Explore how the Trust and the Director of Housing may work together on the redevelopment and replacement of ageing public housing dwellings and address the issues identified in the 2012 Report of the Auditor General	Progressing	Homes Victoria Social Planning HCA / Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council's submission on the Social and Affordable Housing Compact (2022) highlighted the importance of an ongoing partnership between Homes Victoria, Council and the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust. • Homes Victoria have shared data with Council on public housing dwellings and residents that assists in future planning. The Compact and Local Area Agreements provide an opportunity to build further collaboration. • The Epsom Street Affordable Housing Project has been a priority for the Trust over the life of the Policy Statement – further work is required to explore the role of the Trust in future opportunities to redevelop public housing dwellings in Hobsons Bay.
6.2. Minimise the undesirable impacts on individuals and neighbourhoods associated with high concentrations of public housing	Progressing	Social Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council does not play a role in managing tenancies at public housing developments in Hobsons Bay. • Council has also responded to two petitions in relation to the Epsom Street Affordable Housing Project by highlighting the expected benefits of the project if it is funded and proceeds.
6.3. Explore the possibility of creating a register of public housing dwellings in Hobsons Bay and request the Director of Housing to consult with Council prior to the sale or disposal of dwellings upon the register	Progressing	Social Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council officers have obtained a list of public housing dwellings in Hobsons Bay from Council's Rates Department. • Council has also engaged directly with Homes Victoria on a range of topics and will continue to engage via the Compact and Local Area Agreements (as they are developed). These discussion could include engagement on future decisions to sell or dispose public housing dwellings.
6.4. Seek asset transfers of surplus Victorian Government land within Hobsons Bay to the Hobsons Bay Housing Trust for the purposes of increasing the overall supply of affordable housing	Progressing	Property Social Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through its engagement with Homes Victoria, Council periodically raises the prospect of surplus Victorian Government land and its potential for Affordable Housing. This process could be formalised through the development of the Compact and Local Area Agreements. • Council officers have also commenced a high-level audit of government-owned land to determine its suitability for future development of Affordable Housing. This could assist future discussions with Homes Victoria and (potentially) Commonwealth Government.