

The Friends of St Kilda Community Housing Newsletter

St Kilda Community Housing has spent many years campaigning for a fairer society. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the projects we are currently undertaking. These projects range from exploring a brand new form of housing tenure, going green across all of our properties to future proof our residents from ever-increasing power costs and assisting those who are voiceless, such as asylum seekers and refugees.

We'd like you - as a Friend of St Kilda Community Housing - to get to know us better by seeing what we do and what projects we have in the pipeline. Have a look at the range of activities we are involved with and join us in becoming an advocate for more homes for disadvantaged Victorians.

Community Land Trust

St Kilda Community Housing (SCH) has an ambitious vision for our residents. Once they have achieved stability through our rooming houses and, for some, paid employment as well through our social enterprise, we believe that the establishment of a Community Land Trust (CLT) will assist them to build up a modest wealth through home ownership.

The model is really very simple - most of the costs of buying inner city properties are in land values rather than the price of bricks and mortar. So if the land is held in common by a CLT, then all that has to be purchased is the actual building. For example, a two-bedroom apartment in St Kilda now commonly sells for around \$550,000.

However, if we take the land value out of the equation, then the same two-bedroom apartment can be within reach of our low income earners, assuming that the land value is approximately 60% of the total value. This would reduce the mortgage to around \$220,000.

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of St Kilda COMMUNITY HOUSING News

If we assume that they have saved 10% as a deposit, they would be faced with a mortgage of \$198,000. If that amount is borrowed for 30 years with repayments made fortnightly at an interest rate of 5.5% then the fortnightly repayment amount would be \$518.62 or \$259.26 per week.

SCH is currently seeking support for our proposal from a variety of government and philanthropic sources. But we are convinced that CLTs represent a new model of affordable housing here in Australia.

The Solar Power Project

Our income comes entirely through the rents we charge our tenants. In recent years our rents have risen annually because the State Government no longer subsidises our utility bills and rates. Our response to this problem has been to look at renewable energy solutions.

The first project that we are proceeding with is the fitting of 13kw of solar panels at the 69a Alma Road property. We are raising the money for this project ourselves via a crowd funding venture with our partners Alex and Tosh from Energy for the People. Our intention is to gradually roll out solar power across all of the properties we manage.

The crowd funding website is <http://www.thepeoplesolar.com/StKildaT2M/>. If you'd like to contribute have a look at the website or contact us directly on 9534 1809.



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The LINC Project

This project started in 2013 as a result of a local forum we held on the housing needs of refugees and asylum seekers. Since then a collaborative Facebook site has been established in order to share stories and experiences as well as operating as a brokerage mechanism whereby those people with goods and services they wish to donate can make direct contact with agencies assisting refugees and asylum seekers.

It may only be a small contribution but we believe that every little bit goes some way towards re-establishing Australia's reputation as a compassionate society.

Who We Are

SCH houses 337 people in 20 rooming houses across St Kilda. We celebrated our thirtieth anniversary recently. Our organisation came about because many local people were concerned at the rapid gentrification of St Kilda in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The traditional rooming houses were being sold off at an alarming rate and were not being replaced by public housing. We started as the Rooming House Issues Group, formed to advocate on behalf of rooming house residents. Over time, however, we have grown to become one of the largest rooming house providers in Victoria.

T2M Maintenance

T2M is a social enterprise of SCH which has been operating for almost 4 years. The primary aim is to provide employment and training opportunities for our tenants in areas such as maintenance, cleaning and gardening.

T2M does all of SCH's maintenance as well as a number of other not-for-profit agencies across Melbourne.

To find out more about T2M please visit the website at www.t2m.com.au

Saving Elenara

Before the election we were very concerned that the Coalition Government wanted to sell off community housing assets, particularly the property at 2 Fitzroy Street.

We launched a campaign to save the property and had almost 3000 visits to the video that we made.

Then the new Labor Government was elected with a policy to not only keep the property but also to proceed with a much-needed upgrade. We are now eagerly awaiting the new plans for the building.

Friends of StKCH Community Dinner

On May 1st, SCH is having its inaugural friends and supporters community dinner at the St Kilda Town Hall.

There will be entertainment and a catered dinner. Tickets are \$85 or \$800 for a table of 10, and profits will go to the solar project.

If you want to find out more or buy tickets please visit www.stkch.org.au/friends

Celebrating 30 years of building sustainable social housing in St Kilda

Friends of St Kilda Community Housing
inaugural fundraising
Community Dinner

7pm Friday 1 May 2015
St Kilda Town Hall

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More information at www.stkch.org.au/friends
RSVP by 20 April 2015: 9534 1809 or friends@stkch.org.au

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