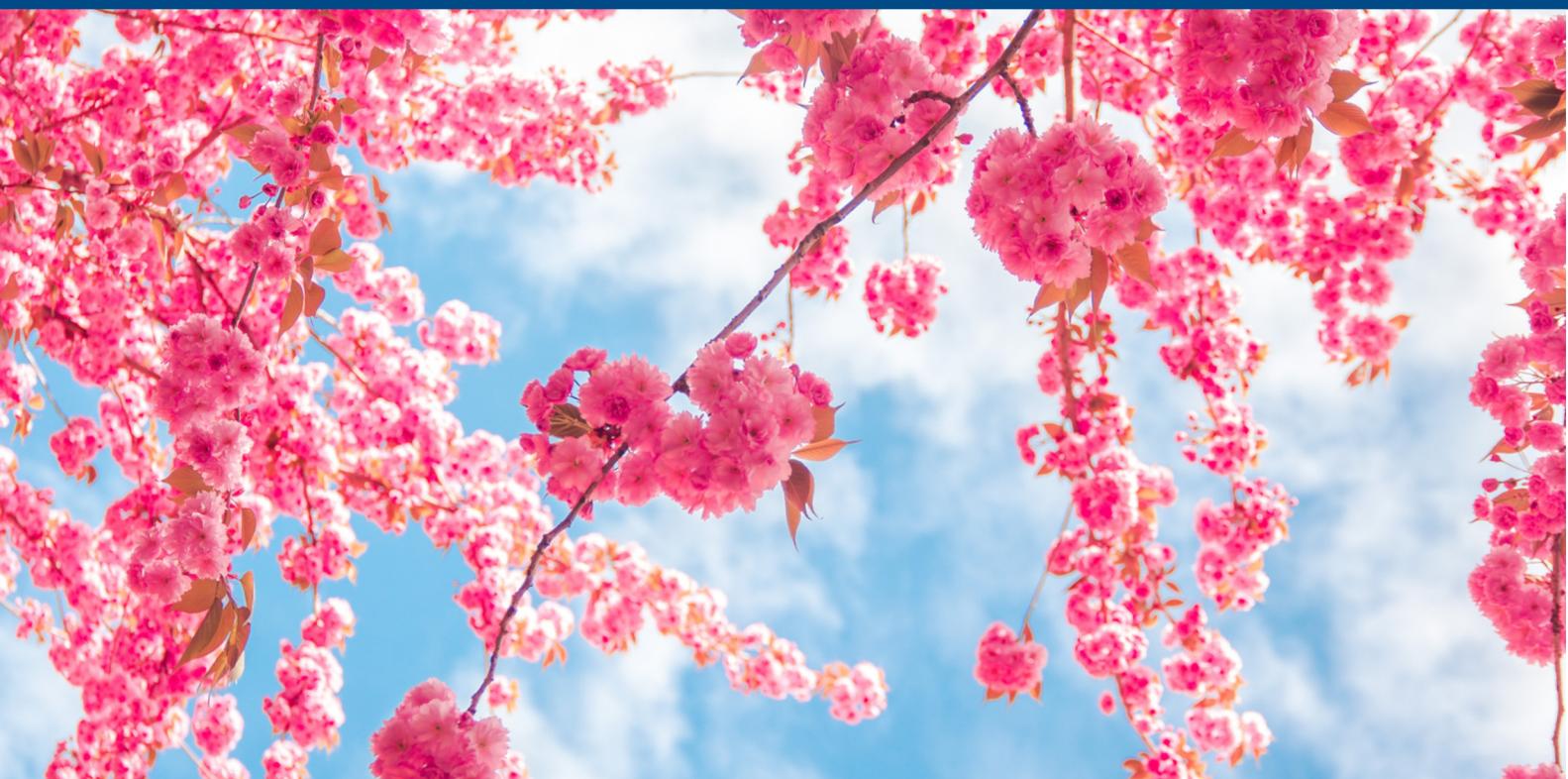


2025 EDITION #3



HOUSING FUTURES



SPRING EDITION



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Monday 10th November 7-9pm
Dandenong Club, Heatherton Road Dandenong

FROM THE CEO



Spring is in the air! Happy hay fever season everyone 😊

Footy Tipping

Spring heralds the commencement of warmer weather (hopefully) and the conclusion of the AFL season (as a Carlton supporter I've been praying for this for some months now). SouthEast's footy tipping competition was taken out this year by long-term SouthEast stalwart Motty from second placegetter Garry W., with Craig S. finishing third. Congratulations to the winners, and thank you to all participants in our free comp. We hope to see you back again in 2026!

Member Household Composition

Whilst the vast majority of our members do the right thing and make sure that our Tenancy Officer Melissa is advised of any changes to household composition in a timely manner, occasionally we come across members who deliberately go about cheating the system. I make no apology for the use of this language, because living in a co-op house and lying about who is there with you to avoid paying the correct rate of rent is exactly that; cheating and lying. One such instance is detailed in this newsletter, where a member did not declare a male partner who had lived with her for decades. The end result was a loss for the co-op, the partner, and those Victorians desperately trying to find secure homes.

It is worth highlighting that cheating the system by lying about household composition is not a victimless crime. Every dollar that the co-op misses out on reduces its capacity to house more Victorians. In this case, the rent we missed out on could have gone a long way to purchasing an additional property last year. That means that there is a family currently somewhere in Victoria experiencing housing stress that could now be benefitting from the housing security that membership of SEHC brings. Serious stuff.

I would like to thank the vast majority of our members who do the right thing and accurately declare their household composition. You are truly co-operative members. To everyone else, I suggest that you contact Melissa and put things right ASAP. If you come forward voluntarily, I promise you will receive a sympathetic and understanding response. Conversely, if we discover a member deliberately understating their household I cannot make such a promise – as is evidenced by the example in this newsletter.

Christmas Functions

On a happier note, Christmas is only eleven weeks away (OMG!), and this year we are again holding two member celebrations. The Board decided upon this approach in an endeavour to make sure that we provide something for everybody. The details of these functions are provided later in this newsletter. It would be great to see as many members attend as possible.

Steven Morrissey
CEO

SOME WORDS FROM A NEW MEMBER

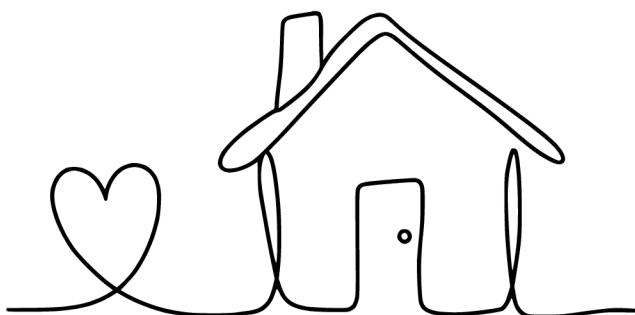
WHAT MY CO-OP HOME MEANS TO ME

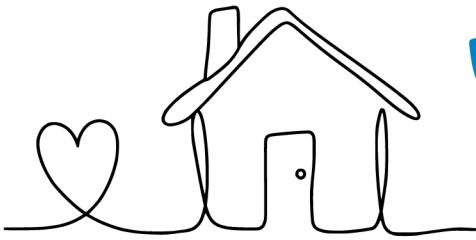
Having a home a physical, secure place to call one's own is fundamental to human flourishing. It provides safety from the elements, a space to rest, and the stability needed to grow emotionally, mentally, and spiritually. A home offers the foundation for routines, relationships, and a sense of purpose. Without it, the stress of survival can eclipse the opportunity to dream, create, or thrive. The family home is the stage to which our most precious memories belong. It is the most vital aspect of our humanity. Everyone deserves the dignity of a roof over their head and a door to close behind them for your home is not a luxury it is a human necessity.

So why does it have to be so hard just to find and keep a home?

Before joining the co-op, my life felt like an endless cycle of instability and survival. As a sole parent of three sons one with a chronic illness and another with severe ADHD we had moved more than 15 times in just the last decade. Each move drained my savings, uprooted my children, and eroded my sense of security. I found it hard to engage within my community as I felt like I didn't belong anywhere. The psychological toll was bad, but the financial impact was devastating. Prior to moving into my SEHC property, I was paying 68% of my income in rent. I couldn't afford to feed myself, and I had to rely on community outreach programs just to keep the lights on and the kids fed.

I was working full-time, raising three children, but constantly living on the edge. The stress destroyed my health I was so thin, sick and sad. I avoided phone calls, ashamed and anxious about mounting debts. I felt trapped: unable to move, unable to stay. No matter how hard I tried, permanent stable housing felt completely out of reach. I felt homeless even when housed as I had no long-term assurances or securities. I was exhausted, scared, and utterly alone just trying to keep a roof over our heads. I also became angry with the system that had me working so hard, for so little just to provide what I believe is a human right: a home.





WHAT MY CO-OP HOME MEANS TO ME (CONT)

Since joining the housing co-op, our lives have transformed into a calm, consistent and manageable routine for self and my family. For the first time, we have stability. My youngest son was able to stay in his school with his friends something that's been vital for his emotional wellbeing and development. He has gone from being restless and discontent in class to receiving five students of the week awards (a school record!). I've been able to form new friendships too, after years of social isolation caused by constant moving. With affordable, secure housing, I can budget with confidence, plan for the future and no longer live in fear of unexpected rent hikes or eviction. I've planted a garden, growing our own food and flowers, which brings a sense of pride and peace. The security of tenure means I will be able to watch this garden grow for many years to come.

We now have stable and regular access to doctors, dentists, and support services something I could never maintain while constantly relocating. Overall health and wellbeing has improved. I feel grounded, hopeful, and finally able to build a life, not just survive it. The co-op gave us more than a home to house a person is not just to provide shelter but to recognise their humanity.

Being a SEHC member has given me a deep sense of purpose and belonging. It's more than just having a roof over my head it's being part of something meaningful. I've had the opportunity to learn, grow, and represent what secure, stable housing can look like when people are truly invested. I take pride in contributing to our community, sharing the transformative impact of a 'Home for Life'; being an example of how cooperative living can empower individuals, support the family and strengthen communities.

"We shape our homes, and then our homes shape us." – Winston Churchill

**REMINDER
NEW RENTS
COMMENCE
FROM
SUNDAY 26TH
OCTOBER 2025**

**ANY
QUESTIONS?**
CONTACT
MELISSA
0400 313 948
melissa@sehc.org.au

POSTAL BALLOT OF MEMBERS TO CHANGE SEHC'S RULES

Thank you to those members who voted in the recent postal ballot to consider passing the special resolution to update the rules of the Co-operative.

A Quick Recap

At the AGM held in November 2024, the Board advised members of the intention to review the Co-operative's rules, (constitution), to address the deficiencies regarding the clauses around the eligibility of members to nominate as directors which caused 3 nominees to be deemed ineligible to nominate. The Board also advised that it was timely to review the rules in their entirety to ensure they complied with current legislation.

The proposed changes to the rules were sent to all members in May 2025 along with a comparison to our existing rules and these were explained in detail to members at the General Meeting held on 26 May 2025.

Pre-approvals of the proposed changes were sought and provided by the Housing Registrar on 24/7/25 and the Registrar of Co-operatives on 28/7/25 after which the postal ballot for members to vote was able to proceed.

Result of Postal Ballot of Members

The Postal Ballot was conducted in August and the results were as follows:
197 ballots were posted to members and 115 were returned.

Of the 115 ballots returned:

- 96 voted “yes” to pass the special resolution (83%)
- 16 voted “no” (14%)
- 3 ballots were deemed invalid (3%)

As per rule 35(1)(2), a two-thirds majority in a postal ballot of members is required to pass a special resolution. Two-thirds of the 115 ballots returned is 77 or 67%. As this was achieved by 83% of members voting “yes” to adopt the new version of the rules, the special resolution was passed on 29 August 2025:

Finally, the Registrar of Co-operatives accepted our application to change the rules on 30/9/25 and registered the new rules under section 63 of the Co-operatives National Law (Victoria).

Thank you again to all those who participated in the ballot.

Sue Fettes
Operations and Compliance Manager

A HOME THAT FITS, A COMMUNITY THAT CARES

WHY RIGHT SIZING IS IMPORTANT

Every member of SouthEast Housing Co-operative has been given something truly special; the opportunity for long-term, secure, and affordable housing. It's a privilege that most never take for granted.

Right now, Victoria has 27% of all homeless people in Australia with thousands of Victorians homeless or stuck in crisis accommodation, still waiting for their chance at the stability many of us enjoy. While we can't solve the housing crisis alone, we can each play a part and that starts with considering how we can make the best use of our homes for the good of the whole community.

When a smaller property suited for a single person or a couple becomes available, we offer members the chance to "right size" to move into a home that better matches the size of their household. This isn't a downgrade. It's a shift into something more suitable, while freeing up a larger home for a family.

This is about more than housing; it's about community, care, and fairness. But it's also about you. Right sizing can mean moving into a home that's easier to manage, more affordable, and better suited to your current needs. For many, it offers a chance to reduce costs, enjoy a more comfortable space, and settle into a place that's ideal for growing older with dignity and ease.

So, if you're ever approached about right sizing, we encourage you to think not only about what you might be leaving behind, but also what you stand to gain and the incredible opportunity your move could create for a family still waiting for a place to call home.

We know that moving can feel overwhelming, especially after many years in the same place. But many members who have right sized tell us they haven't looked back. In fact, in upcoming newsletters, we'll share their stories and experiences about how they made the move, what helped them through it, and how it's worked out for them.



Did you know

The Co-op currently has 87 properties with a total of 147 bedrooms that no one sleeps in each night.



THE IMPORTANCE OF HONESTY IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD DECLARATIONS

As a member of our co-operative, it's important to always be open and honest when completing your Annual Rent Review form and declaring your household income and composition. These documents are legal records, and the information provided can have serious implications if it is found they are inaccurate.

Recently, the co-operative dealt with a situation where a long-term member passed away, and their undeclared partner attempted to claim the right to remain in the property. Unfortunately, the partner had never been listed on any household documents for more than thirty years. This lack of declaration not only resulted in a significant loss of rental income for the co-operative but also meant that, when the matter was reviewed at VCAT, the partner was found to have no legal standing to remain in the home and was required to vacate.

This case serves as an important reminder that accurate household declarations protect both members and the co-operative. If your household changes whether someone moves in or out, please make sure to notify us promptly.

Honesty helps ensure fair rent assessments, protects your tenancy rights, and supports the co-operative's ability to provide affordable housing for all members.



Maintenance

Sandy
0429 558 826

Afterhours emergency
1800 088 106

Tenancy

Melissa
0400 313 948

FAMILY EVENT

Sunday 7th Dec

Melbourne Zoo

Lunch @ 12:30

Lunch Event

Saturday 29th November

12 - 2:30pm

Precinct Hotel
Swan Street Richmond
opposite Richmond Railway Station

This will be a relaxed lunch
for adults only.

How to RSVP

[Click here](#)

SCAN ME



Or contact Melissa
melissa@sehc.org.au
or 0400 313 948

Please RSVP
by 25/11/25