

GCC FILE Senate Submission - Community Affairs Commission  
YOUR REFERENCE  
ENQUIRIES Rebecca Essex  
DIRECT PHONE (03) 6216 6361  
E-MAIL [ressex@gcc.tas.gov.au](mailto:ressex@gcc.tas.gov.au)



20 July 2007

Committee Secretary  
Community Affairs Committee  
Department of the Senate  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
**Canberra ACT 2600**

Dear Committee Members,

Please find below Glenorchy City Council's submission to the Senate Community Affairs Inquiry into the cost of living pressures on older Australians. The information contained in our submission is based on an analysis of available data and consultative material collected to inform the development of a positive ageing strategy for the City of Glenorchy.

Service providers working in the Glenorchy LGA report a higher prevalence of clients having less income and lower socio-economic status than clients of other areas.<sup>1</sup> This observation is supported by ABS 2001 census data, with 30 % of Glenorchy's older residents reported as earning between \$200-\$299 income a week, 29% earning \$160-\$199, and 11% earning between \$300-\$399.<sup>2</sup> There are 5,829 Centrelink customers living in Glenorchy receiving the Age Pension.<sup>3</sup>

The majority of older residents (87%) are retired from the labour force, 3% are working, and 0.2% are unemployed and looking for work. Over half of those employed work part-time and the majority are employed in the retail, manufacturing, and health and community services industries. Occupations held by the majority are labourers, professionals and tradespersons.<sup>4</sup>

Older residents report good access to financial and legal advice to assist them with retirement planning (i.e. Centrelink, Anglicare, Private Practitioners).<sup>5</sup> Residents have reported during consultative forums that some older people are not planning for their retirement as Government policy is encouraging people to stay in the workforce longer. Suggested improvements include accessible retirement

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<sup>1</sup> Linkages, Glenorchy Ageing Strategy Consultation, 2006

<sup>2</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2001

<sup>3</sup> Centrelink, Pensions 2006 Qtr 1 (03-03-06)

<sup>4</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2001

<sup>5</sup> Seniors Bureau, Community Consultation Responses – All Ages, All Tasmanians Together, Tasmanian Plan for Positive Ageing, 2006-2011

PO Box 103  
Glenorchy Tas 7010  
Ph: (03) 6216 6700  
Fax: (03) 6216 6400  
Ausdoc DX 70721  
[gccmail@gcc.tas.gov.au](mailto:gccmail@gcc.tas.gov.au)

information in workplaces and encouraging those considering retirement to seek advice from their peers who have already retired.<sup>6</sup>

Glenorchy City has the highest number of public housing applicants within the state. Demand for public housing in Glenorchy is heavily influenced by the lack of affordable housing in adjoining LGAs (Hobart and Derwent Valley), market forces by buyers and renters creating a range of housing stressors in the City. Glenorchy has the highest number of older age public housing residents. A high proportion of Glenorchy's public housing tenants are aged 55-74 years of age (23%) and 8% are aged 75 years and over.<sup>7</sup>

Other concerns expressed by our older residents during consultative forums and surveys include:

- The desire for affordable healthy food to support good diet choices.
- The need for supportive transport options to assist older people access essential services (i.e. health, banks, shops) and to attend recreational programs.
- Affordable recreational programs to be offered to overcome the growing prevalence of social isolation.
- Affordable aged care and residential care programs – in particular residents and service providers have stated that they do not want to see a two tiered system of health evolve – i.e. programs for those that can afford and another for those reliant on the pension.
- Glenorchy seniors have very low computer ownership and internet access rates (6% and 7% respectively). Therefore it is important not to rely heavily on the internet as a way of communicating with this sector of the population.

If the committee require any clarification or expansion on matters raised I can be contacted on (03) 6216 6361 or email [ressex@gcc.tas.gov.au](mailto:ressex@gcc.tas.gov.au). Thankyou for considering our submission.

Yours sincerely

Rebecca Essex  
**Community Development Officer**

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<sup>6</sup> Seniors Bureau, Community Consultation Responses – All Ages, All Tasmanians Together, Tasmanian Plan for Positive Ageing, 2006-2011

<sup>7</sup> Housing Tasmania Data, 2006