

Message from HANZA Chair

Dear Hanza Subscriber

This is my first newsletter since I took on the role of HANZA Chair at the end of 2023, following the retirement of Meg Montague. Thank you, Meg, for your incredible contribution to HANZA's important work.

I first learnt about homesharing nearly 20 years ago when I travelled to Melbourne to meet with HANZA founder Beris Campbell and her team. Even all those years ago, the quality of the relationships between householders and homesharers was palpable. At the end of my visit, I was convinced of the potential of homesharing to enrich the lives of all those involved.

Inspired by the learnings from my visit, we established Homeshare in Western Australia within Perth Home Care Services (later renamed Avivo: Live Life). With initial funding from the Innovative Workforce Fund, we trialled homesharing with older householders.

The trial was a success, with a significant number of relationships providing companionship and practical help for the householder and a secure home for the homesharer.

Avivo continues to offer some homesharing through Home Care Packages and the National Disability Insurance Scheme. The program has, however, experienced challenges due to the funding system and the level of regulation for services.

I retired from my role as the Chief Executive Officer at Avivo late in 2023, allowing me to dedicate more attention to HANZA. Assuming the role of HANZA Chair in December 2023, I will be leading the implementation of our strategic plan to make homesharing a real and sustainable solution.

I feel privileged to take on this role and build on the achievements of HANZA, its founders and the Board since its inception. Through all of you, we have enviable knowledge and experience and a sound foundation.

We are delighted to have five new Board members who come from across Australia and bring considerable financial, corporate, philanthropic, technological and practical experience. You can learn more about our Board members on the HANZA [website](#).

In February, the Board will meet in Sydney to workshop and build on our strategic plan. We look forward to coming together to identify opportunities to support our members in their goals to make Homeshare a reality in communities across Australia and New Zealand.

We will keep you updated on our plans and progress in future newsletters.

Yours sincerely,



Rosie Lawn

[Click here to visit our website](#)

Member Profile - Westside Housing and St Vincent de Paul

This edition, our Member Profile takes us to South Australia (SA) where we meet two new HANZA members, Westside Housing and St Vincent de Paul. Westside Housing is a not-for-profit community housing provider and while St Vincent de Paul provides a range of support for people in need, housing is the main issue it is currently experiencing.



The two organisations were brought together by Shelter SA Chief Executive Officer, Dr Alice Clark to develop a Homeshare program. The program will be initially aimed at older single women in need of affordable accommodation. Both Westside and St Vincent de Paul will draw on

feedback from focus groups with potential homeowners to inform the development of the Homeshare program.

Westside Housing held consultation with a group of social housing tenants in November 2023, while St Vincent de Paul will soon commence consultation with around 2000 of their volunteers. They hope that both their social housing tenants and volunteers will be interested in participating as homeowners.

Both Julie Blake, Chief Executive Officer at Westside Housing and Carla Leversedge, General Manager, Community Services, from St Vincent de Paul have undertaken training with HANZA. They will also draw upon support from HANZA Homeshare Development Officer, Wendy Francis during the rollout of the pilot program.

Both organisations believe Homeshare can assist in alleviating a range of problems in the community including insecure housing, loneliness and isolation which are prevalent amongst older people living alone.

HANZA is excited to be supporting Westside Housing and St Vincent de Paul and their new Homeshare program in South Australia.

Mary-Ellen Hempel, HANZA Board Director

Housing - Let's get moving!

HANZA continues to be approached by and engage with community groups seeking to learn more about Homeshare. These groups are exploring Homeshare as a shared living option for older people as well as a response to the impact of a lack of affordable housing. Hunter Ageing Alliance and the Housing for Older Persons Project (HOPP) is an example of this.

HOPP is a group of citizens looking to take urgent action to support older people facing housing stress or homelessness. It is a priority area of the Hunter Ageing Alliance which started in October 2022 in response to the growing housing crisis for older people.



The Housing for Older Persons Project Workshop

While homelessness is the most critical area of need, HOPP is also seeking to address medium and longer term issues to help create sufficient social and affordable housing to reduce homelessness.

In November 2023, HANZA was invited to present at the 'Housing – Let's Get Moving' workshop held at the Newcastle Museum in Newcastle, New South Wales (NSW). The workshop was facilitated by Kate Davies, Chief Executive Officer of Homelessness, NSW. HANZA presented on Homeshare as an immediate and cost-effective response to social isolation and the lack of affordable housing in communities.

The workshop investigated alternative avenues of action that non-government organisations, and the private and corporate sectors can take to alleviate the housing crisis. It also discussed how these options can be implemented in the Hunter region. The five initiatives presented at the workshop were:

- Meanwhile Use Housing
- For Purpose Real Estate Agencies and Ethical Landlords
- Homeshare and HANZA
- Bricks and Mortar – Manufactured Homes
- Dual occupancy and Granny Flats – How it works legally

Following the presentations, attendees were invited to join corresponding interest groups. HANZA and Homeshare gathered strong interest with Dr John Ward, Geriatrician and 2024 NSW Senior Australian of the Year, leading the group.

We look forward to sharing more information about the Hunter Homeshare program and the difference it will make in people's lives in the Newcastle and Maitland area. You can learn more about the Hunter Ageing Alliance on their website.

Wendy Francis, Homeshare Development Officer, HANZA Board Member and Homeshare International Trustee

HANZA had an eventful year in 2023, culminating in our 13th Annual General Meeting on 14 November 2023. The guest speaker at the meeting was outgoing Chair, Dr Meg Montague, who retired after four years in the role.

In her speech, Meg reflected on the changes and achievements she witnessed over her 20-year association with HANZA and mused on the challenges ahead. She noted the constant presence of committed hardworking volunteers promoting the Homeshare model as the foundation of HANZA.

During her time with HANZA, Meg witnessed a huge transformation from being an informal advisory group with meetings often held around a kitchen table, to a highly skilled and professional governing body driven by increasing complexity in the sector.

Meg shared that since its initial inception HANZA's focus on older Australians has broadened. Our focus now includes other vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities, those at risk of homelessness or struggling with housing affordability. There has also been a shift from lobbying governments to successfully engaging in community collaboration.

She acknowledged the opportunities brought by the shift to virtual meetings during the pandemic, paving the way for HANZA to become a national body with directors from across Australia. This change has also supported us to broaden our international engagement and presence.

Meg also discussed the recent shift to a more receptive social and political environment. This has been driven by a range of factors such as the loneliness and isolation epidemic and the outcomes of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Services. Other factors include the rising costs of residential aged care and the affordable housing and homelessness crisis affecting a growing percentage of the population.

Meg identified the need for more resources to capitalise on the opportunities presented by the current social and political climate as a future challenge for HANZA. Additional resources would also support us to foster unity, increase our reach and inspire existing and future members.

With the groundwork that has been laid by Meg and many others as well as HANZA's achievements to date, we're up for the challenge in 2024!



Wendy Francis, Mary-Ellen Hempel, Pia Bentick, Tanya Wolkenberg, Rosie Lawn, Kate Healy, Phillip Smith, Ashlee Pitcher & Kym Bailey.

Mary-Ellen Hempel, HANZA Board Director

Homeshare International Update

Homeshare International (HI) has announced the return of the HI World Homeshare Congress. The Congress is to be held in Trento, Italy from 6 to 8 September 2024, hosted by HI member, Associazione AMA.



Associazione AMA is a not-for-profit organisation based in Trento which promotes health and well-being through the activation of mutual self-help groups. One of its programs, Vivo.Con which translates to "I Live With", like other Homeshare programs, promotes shared living between citizens based on mutual assistance and benefit.

The Congress will open with a Welcome Dinner and Birthday Party in the evening on 6 September to mark Homeshare International's 25th anniversary and Vivo.Con's 15 years of service to the people of Trento.

The Planning Committee comprises members from both Italy and Homeshare International trustees. The committee includes Chairs, Zilma Lucia Velame and Régis de Kerautem, and members Estelle de Saint-Bon, Giuliana Costa, Paolo Boccagni, Sibel Whitehead and Stefano Sarzi Sartori, with organisational and logistical support provided by Marta Spanevello.

Homeshare International hopes to attract members from all over the world for this long-overdue congress. Mark your calendars and start packing your bags to join us in Italy in September!

For more information on the congress visit the Homeshare International website.

Wendy Francis, Homeshare Development Officer, HANZA Board Member and Homeshare International Trustee

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