

**Improved Support – Stronger Communities  
Community Consultation Feedback**

Consultation Input: Feedback and Issues	Housing ACT response and comments
<b>Theme 1: Working in Partnership to Provide Support</b>	
<b>Question 1: What is the role of the ISSC team in supporting tenants?</b>	
Engagement is key: ISSC team should know who does what in the community	Experience and knowledge of the community sector will be an element of the requirement of the selection criteria for the ISSC workers  ISSC team will be using an assertive engagement model
Identify what is happening with tenants to know when to intervene	Intervention points will be identified
Maintain clear communication with other Housing ACT staff and community organisations to make appropriate referrals	Duty statement to ensure skills set  Ensure ISSC team has feedback mechanisms  Appropriate team structure
Perform case management and referral matching	Weekly Case Meetings  Templates will be developed for Case Conferences / Case Coordination
Work effectively with police	A Police contact will be established  The current MOU with police will apply to the ISSC team  ISSC team will establish links with regional police and community policy unit

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Perform separate functions: be able to balance the interest of the tenant with the expectations of those affected – to provide support and sanction	Duties of the ISSC team will be clearly articulated to ensure clarity on the roles of Housing Managers, Client Service Coordinators and the ISSC team (for example, Housing Manager is to continue performing tenancy management for ISSC involved tenant)
ISSC to have separate duties and responsibilities to Housing Managers and Client Support Coordinators	Agreed
Establish appropriate engagement with clients– tailored to each situation	Resources will be developed for the ISSC team including a ‘tool kit’
Identify behaviours and intervene with early support - get in early to establish strategies to stabilise the situation and to identify when things are escalating	Early intervention to be ISSC Team focus
Maintain regular visits	This practice will be as per client / situation determines
Establish a formal contract with tenant	To be achieved through the Tenancy Management Plan
<b>Question 2: What is the role of community organisations in supporting tenants?</b>	
Undertake individual work with clients	To be achieved through Tenancy Management Plans with Community Organisations to play a part where appropriate
Report back to ISSC team, for example with progress against agreed timelines	Community Organisations to report back to facilitate Housing ACT role in monitoring

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Perform case coordination and referral	Agreed – Community Organisations also to perform Case Management
Communicate regularly with ISSC team / Housing ACT	Supportive Tenancy Service or other Community Organisations
Undertake or refer to counselling / mediation	Supportive Tenancy Service or other Community Organisations
Provide leadership and innovation	Supportive Tenancy Service or other Community Organisations
Maintain available register of available services	This is already funded by Government; maintained by Citizens Advice Bureau
<b>Question 3: What is the role in supporting those affected by antisocial behaviour?</b>	
Provide counselling and mediation	Agreed
Provide information about Housing ACT processes of referral, support and sanction	Community Resources will be developed
Communicate what is going on while maintaining a balance in providing information and respecting privacy	Exchange of information and privacy CAP
Provide legal education / clarify processes	Agreed

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<b>Theme 2: Assertive Engagement</b>	
<b>Question 1: What are the expectations of tenant engagement?</b>	
Expectations to be based on a shared understanding of what engagement means – could include tenant turning up to meetings / training etc	To be established through the Tenancy Management Plan
ISSC team needs to recognise barriers to engagement	Checks and Balances on Sanctions to avoid inappropriate tenancy sanction, for example where tenant has acute mental health issues
Community education about the role of the ISSC Team to overcome the negative view of engagement with specialist Housing ACT workers	Community Organisations to have a lead role in promoting a positive understanding of the ISSC team  Shared understanding of roles and responsibilities of ISSC team, community organisations and tenants
ISSC team need to communicate with tenants to encourage them to acknowledge their behaviour and raise awareness of responsibilities and consequences	ISSC team to have access to information clearly articulating tenant responsibilities
ISSC could engage neighbours however need to be aware of privacy issues	Agreed - Community Organisations could also engage with complainants / ISSC Team and Community Organisations to work according to privacy obligations

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<p>Tenant engagement includes acknowledgement of behaviours – actions including turning up to appointments / measurable participation</p>	<p>Agreed – ISSC Team to clearly articulate tenant obligations and to be aware of barriers to engagement</p>
<p>Tenant required to attend induction into new community</p>	<p>Agreed – Housing ACT will establish a new tenant forum which will commence in 2012</p>
<p>Newsletter to contain regular section for new tenant information and notification for upcoming information sessions</p>	<p>Agreed</p>
<p><b>Question 2: What frameworks could be used to engage clients at risk of losing tenancy? Case management, case-coordination or other framework?</b></p>	
<p>Possible frameworks include: Case management; assertive outreach; early intervention</p>	<p>Agreed</p>
<p>Induction into public housing to including information on what to expect and how to meet the challenges of public housing</p>	<p>Agreed</p>

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Feedback mechanisms to advise complainant	To be achieved through the Tenancy Management Plan
<b>Question 3: What could be included in a tool kit for the ISSC Team?</b>	
Resources to develop, promote and maintain a high level of capacity to respond to the client group	To be developed in consultation with Tenancy staff working group and input from community sector experts
Materials that promote understanding and skills related to mental health, disability and other complex areas of need	To be developed in consultation with Tenancy staff working group and input from community sector experts
Toolkit designed to build the capacity of ISSC team to train support workers	To be developed in consultation with Tenancy staff working group and input from community sector experts
<b>Theme 3: Sanction – Consequences and Pathways</b>	
<b>Question 1: What are the obligations of the tenant?</b>	
Tenants have an obligation not to impinge on neighbours rights	Tenant responsibilities to be clearly communicated
Tenants have contractual obligations	Tenant responsibilities to be written into contract and clearly communicated to tenant Contract may have tenant specific requirements

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Tenants lodging a complaint should gain an understanding of the complaints process but may need to be supported to engage in the complaints process e.g. taxi vouchers to tribunal hearings	Agreed – ISSC Team to have capacity to provide advice and education on HACS processes and legal processes
<b>Question 2: What sanctions should be applied?</b>	
Loss of tenancy – to be viewed as a last resort	ISSC Team focused on assisting tenants address underlying causes of behaviour  Checks and balances in place so that sanctions are not inappropriately applied – e.g. where clients is experiencing acute mental health issues
Build in appropriate clauses to tenancy contract	Agreed
Increased frequency of inspections	Agreed
ISSC team to emphasise mutual responsibility	Agreed
Consequences to be applied consistently	Agreed
Use tenants newsletter to promote awareness of tenant responsibilities	Agreed

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Support agencies – six months live in programs	To be considered as a possible action
<b>Question 3: What checks and balances should be considered to ensure highly vulnerable tenants, such as those with acute mental illness, do not face eviction?</b>	
ISSC workers to have a knowledge of issues, such as mental health, that impact tenant ability to engage	Agreed – to be achieved through ISSC team toolkit
<b>Theme 4: Support – the Specialist Team</b>	
<b>Question 1: What will be the duties of the ISSC team?</b>	
Work closely with Housing Manager and other housing teams with regular internal reporting	Agreed
Role – work to clear TOR and duty statement	Agreed – to be drafted prior to recruitment
Balance clearly articulated TOR and duty statement with an understanding the role needs to remain flexible	Agreed – three month post recruitment review
Provide feedback to tenant and other stakeholders	Agreed

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Set goals and outcomes and report	For client
Recognise and rate behaviour types according to categories	Agreed
Coordinate case management	Agreed
<b>Question 2: What skills and experience should the ISSC workers have?</b>	
Ability to provide education to community members and other stakeholders	Agreed – toolkit to contain educational materials e.g. fact sheets
Working knowledge of drug and alcohol, sexual assault, childhood trauma, mandatory reporting, disability...etc	Agreed – selection criteria to address this body of knowledge
Ability to respond to aggressive behaviour	Agreed – selection criteria to address Support through toolkit
Understanding of legal environments and roles	Or the ability to develop these
Able to take broad view of models – not just limited to working with drug and alcohol models	Agreed
Able to identify problems and match an appropriate response	Agreed

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Link effectively with outreach and specialist services	Agreed
ISSC team needs effective supervision	Agreed – ISSC team will be working in collaboration with CSCs, Housing Managers and Community Service Providers
Knowledge of when to call mental health, CAT Team or Police	Agreed
One of the challenges is to find the Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) workers who are experienced enough to deal with the housing clients and their needs.	Experience and knowledge of AOD issues will be addressed in selection criteria Further support to workers will be through resources developed for the tool kit
<b>Question 3: what models could ISSC workers draw on to address drug and alcohol issues?</b>	
Harm minimisation	To be considered in establishing the model
Detox / rehabilitation	
Strengths based	
Broad approach and array of models to best suit individual tenant	
Case management model is an easy way to engage with the clients	

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<b>Question 4: how can Housing ACT and community organisations ensure ongoing support after tenants exit ISSC team support?</b>	
Ensure tenant is linked with other services	With support plan in place which HACT can monitor
Develop exit plans – with sign up / engagement of tenant	Agreed
Follow up 3-6 months	Agreed
<b>Other Feedback</b>	
The language anti-social behaviour needs to be looked at.	Agreed – the initiative has been rebranded ‘Improved Support Stronger Communities’ and the term ‘complex behaviour’ replaces ‘antisocial behaviour’
A biosociopscho assessment gives you the chance to obtain the information you need to find the underlying issues (or at least part of them), and whether they have had previous treatment for their AOD issues.	This is not the Drug and Alcohol support intervention which Housing ACT will be undertaking

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### **INANNA Feedback: Agreed – to be considered in the working model**

Model proposed focuses on existing problems within tenancies, it is suggested that new tenancies be set up with a greater expectation and condition that people understand their rights and responsibilities of tenancies. The ideas of reciprocity and shared responsibility for solutions need to be introduced. The “intervention” will be seen as that and people could work against something they see as imposed in this way. More thinking is needed around how to bring people to a level of understanding that there is no “right” without “responsibility”.

This could be done with a pre-tenancy course or seminar with some expectation that people be invited into responsibility for their tenancy and understand what is involved. This may be applied to people with problematic past histories of tenancies. There needs to be part of the process that seeks to understand from the person who is deemed “antisocial” what their position on this is. Without them taking up some sort of position of wanting change, understanding the real effects of their behaviour then someone won’t be able to make them change.

For existing problems there could be a tiered warning system with different consequences including attending a course. This could be coupled with support for problem areas. A very clear message is needed around what’s acceptable in our society and what’s acceptable and reasonable in a neighbourhood.

Evidence around drug use and domestic violence indicates that intervention won’t really remedy complex behaviour until people are ready or are confronted by the real consequences of their actions. This step needs to be built into the action. So along side providing support for problem areas again the very structured tenancy management side is applied so people get warnings, consequences for actions etc.

With domestic violence there needs to be supports but also instances need to be seen in the criminal justice system and the child protection system with further education to parents around the very real affects of the violence on their children growing up.

The model also is very “problem” focused and there is some benefit in offering something that is not about unpacking the problem but about making other spaces and options available in someone’s life. This can be in the form of fun, family orientated activity, helping a group in a neighbourhood develop up a tenancy managed grant etc; something that allows people to succeed and show the better side of their nature.

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### Conflict Resolution Service Input

Some sort of policy is needed whereby auto referral to CRS is against a criteria, as opposed to being left up to the discretion of the Housing Manager which can be a bit hit and miss, particularly if there is staff turnover at Housing and they don't know about CRS.

A move towards compulsory engagement with CRS is desirable, this would start off with conflict coaching and then move towards mediation. As this is such a vexed issue about compulsory mediation, I would anticipate this would be done through a pilot/trial.

In regards to conflict coaching, this is an essential component for CRS. This is about assisting with capacity building for clients to either go on to resolve the issues themselves and/or participate in mediation effectively. Additionally, CRS struggles with the image that people think as soon as they are referred to CRS they will be thrown into a mediation, this isn't the case. So for CRS it is critically important to educate Housing staff and tenants about the options CRS can offer.

An agreement between Housing, the tenant and CRS that Housing will require notification of the outcome of the tenant's engagement with CRS. At times Housing has requested specific information as to whether a tenant has engaged with CRS, to what extent, reasons for non-engagement etc, and CRS has not been able to disclose.

CRS to provide ongoing follow-up for both the person exhibiting anti-social behaviour and the other neighbours. Follow-up might include 6 weekly calls for the first 3 months then tapering off until the 12 month mark. This at least lets the people involved express themselves and receive ongoing conflict coaching, as opposed to tenants having no outlet and it building up into a crisis situation again.

It would be beneficial for information sessions about CRS to be provided to Housing ACT staff members.

Induction sessions for new tenants could be focused on:

- the services CRS can offer
- workshops on anything to do with conflict prevention, management & resolution; perhaps learning concepts around respectful neighbourly relationships, rights and responsibilities etc

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In regards to the newly identified positions, it may be beneficial to have them trained in mediation. This would enable them to do the crisis interventions as soon as the matter is referred, and would also give them a better understanding of mediation processes and enable them to refer accordingly.

Consideration should be given to case conferencing for the higher end disputes involving several services coming together in a case management model and sharing information.