

19 December 2019

Bendigo women to get footing on the housing ladder

Bendigo women and their children who have experienced family violence or are at risk of homelessness will have access to safe and affordable housing with a new \$2.2 million project being developed by YWCA National Housing.

YWCA National Housing and Property Development Director Jan Berriman said the build-to-rent project was a first-off for YWCA, which had been working with women in the region for more than a century.

“As a specialist women’s housing provider, YWCA National Housing has worked with GJ Gardner Homes to design these townhouses to meet the needs of some of Bendigo’s most vulnerable women,” she said.

Once completed, these townhouses will be held by YWCA and made available for 75% of the market rental rate. Women and children on lower incomes who have experienced family violence will be prioritised as tenants.

“Many women in the Greater Bendigo area face serious barriers to affordable housing, particularly those who have experienced family violence,” Ms Berriman said.

“One-third of working women in Bendigo earn less than \$400 a week and more than half of women of working age in the region are not in the labour force.

“This crisis is set to worsen with the region’s population forecast to rise to 156,000 by 2036, requiring an additional 900 homes per year in the region.”

Ms. Berriman said long-term residents of the five two-storey townhouses would be given the option to buy their homes in the future.

“Women comprise the fastest group of people at risk of homelessness in Australia because they are often unable to afford the private rental market and demand for affordable rental properties outstrips supply.

“Bendigo is a stark example of this tragic reality.”

The family-friendly three-bedroom townhouses will be designed with sustainability and security in mind, and include solar panels, double glazing, and water saving techniques. To help residents connect with services, education, employment and community, each townhouse will have NBN connectivity. They are expected to be completed in mid-2020.

GJ Gardner Homes Director Danny Breen said he was proud to partner with YWCA on the project.

“Our organisation is committed to giving back to the community, and we look forward to delivering wonderful homes for five women-headed households,” Mr Breen said.

Ms Berriman said the build-to-rent initiative reflected YWCA National Housing’s commitment to improving women’s social, economic and educational participation through the provision of safe, secure and affordable housing.

Applications and eligibility criteria for these townhouses will be released in March 2020 on ywcahousing.org.au. YWCA National Housing will be working with local providers to refer clients to this opportunity.

For more information about YWCA National Housing: ywcahousing.org.au

HIGH RES IMAGES AND PLANS HERE:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/lt1qzyykgc7f51/AAAU1opQ2jRfu0KKN9CuEvB-a?dl=0>

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About YWCA National Housing

YWCA National Housing is the only national women's housing provider in Australia. We currently provide over 150,000 nights of affordable accommodation to women through our owned and operated properties in Victoria, Queensland and Northern Territory.

YWCA National Housing believe the provision of safe, secure and affordable accommodation is a foundation for empowering women to lead a fulfilled life. We provide and advocate for improved access to safe, secure and affordable housing for low income Australians, particularly women and their children. Safe, secure and affordable housing is fundamental to women's social, economic and educational participation, and the realisation of gender equality and women's human rights.

YWCA National Housing is a subsidiary of YWCA Australia: ywca.org.au