

QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE

Legislative Council 2026

ASKED BY: The Hon. Meg Webb Member for Nelson

ANSWERED BY: Hon Kerry Vincent, Minister for Housing and Planning

QUESTION 1:

My question relates to definitions of social housing under the Residential Tenancy Act 1997 and, specifically:

Is the Co-housing Cooperative Hobart declared to be social housing under section 3 of the Act?

ANSWER 1:

- Co-housing Cooperative Hobart is not declared social housing under the Act.

QUESTION 2:

If Co-housing Cooperative Hobart does not currently have social housing status under the Act, why is that, and will you undertake to investigate having it declared a social housing?

ANSWER 2:

- Under the Residential Tenancy Act 1997 “social housing” is defined in section 3 as residential premises owned or managed by a declared social housing provider, including Homes

Tasmania or another provider formally declared by the Minister under the Act.

- This definition ties social housing to a specific legal status rather than to affordability or community purpose.
- A provider must be formally declared for its dwellings to fall within the Act's meaning of social housing, and without such a declaration, housing supplied by other entities, such as cooperatives or private organisations, does not meet the statutory definition.
- Social housing providers operate within a formal framework overseen by Homes Tasmania.
- This includes asset management, compliance audits, and tenancy regulation.
- Because the Co-housing Cooperative Hobart functions as an independent incorporated association without this regulatory relationship, it falls outside the categories recognised in the Act.
- Under the Act, social housing must be allocated to people assessed as being in housing need, with rents calculated according to regulated income-based formulas.
- Homes are allocated to those who are assessed as eligible and have an active application on the Housing Register.
- The Co-housing Cooperative Hobart instead allocates housing through membership-based criteria and manages its dwellings collectively as a resident run cooperative.

- It owns these properties.
- While it offers affordable rents, currently capped at 30% of income, this affordability alone does not meet the statutory definition of social housing, which is tied to government regulated eligibility, rent setting, and provider registration.
- There are no plans for the Co-housing Cooperative Hobart to be deemed as social housing under the Act.

APPROVED

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kerry Vincent', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kerry Vincent MLC
Minister for Housing and Planning

26 March 2026