

Viv's Place

What is Viv's Place?

Launch Housing, with its facilitating partner, Uniting, have developed an innovative housing-and-services model for highly vulnerable families. Viv's Place is a new 8 storey, 60 apartment building in Dandenong providing **long term, safe and affordable housing** for women and children experiencing homelessness.

Viv's Place provides on-site support as well as programs that support the health and wellbeing of mothers and their children. Support will be delivered using the existing services and programs in the Dandenong local area service network.

What is available at Viv's Place?

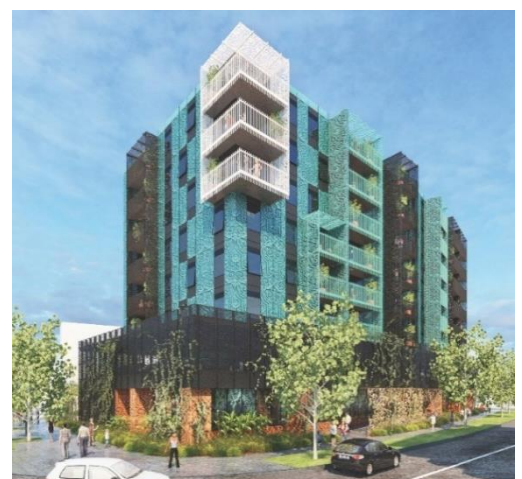
Viv's Place is high-density living with 60 apartments – a range of studio, 2, 3 and 4-bedroom apartments. Four of the apartments are Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA). All apartments are designed for **long term, permanent housing**. As Viv's Place is community housing, residents will be removed from the VHR if they accept an apartment.

The ground floor of the building includes a trauma informed design with communal kitchen, dining and living spaces, children's play areas, medical suites, consulting rooms and office space.

The apartments will be allocated where possible to allow **two children per bedroom (depending on gender)**. We anticipate that around 60 women and over 120 children will live in the building.

Viv's Place is **affordable** with rents set at 30% of household income, plus 15 % of family tax benefit and Commonwealth Rent Assistance.

Viv's Place will be staffed 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. Launch will also provide a full-time tenancy manager on site.



Who is Viv's Place for?

Criteria

Viv's Place is for some of the most vulnerable women and children in our communities who have been affected by family violence, mental illness, substance issues and interaction with the criminal justice system. The building is predominantly for families with children aged 0-12, but older children are also welcome.

The criteria for applying to live at Viv's Place is:

- **Sole headed female families;**
- **Experiencing homelessness** or are living in temporary/unsuitable accommodation;
- Have an **approved priority application** on the **Victorian Housing Register**;
- Are **highly vulnerable** and have complex needs requiring a range of service interventions including drug and alcohol support, &/or mental illness, &/or experiences of physical, emotional and sexual abuse, &/or experiences of family violence, &/or history or current Child Protection involvement.

All referrals will come from specific **family support programs**, and therefore referrals from an **IAP program will not be appropriate**. The referring agency will need to provide at least 6 months case management as agreed in the referral agreement.

Viv's Place is an inclusive service and welcomes applications from agencies supporting:

- trans and gender diverse individuals who identify as female;
- women and children from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities.

Women who wish to reside with male partners will not be considered appropriate. If these women choose to re-partner when living at Viv's, they will need to find alternative accommodation.

Criteria/tips for support workers:

- Families will need to be suited to supported, high-density living. There are 60 units in total and large balcony areas that will be up to 8 stories high. Viv's Place will have 24 hours staffing and there will be no male visitors at night.
- It is preferable that the family have links to the Dandenong area and/or is wanting to live there. Please ensure Dandenong is one of their approved areas on their OoH application.
- If the family has supports in their current area, please advise on the application form, how you plan to support the family with referrals when they move e.g education. This is particularly important when the family has tertiary services involves e.g Child Protection and court orders.

Balance of Tenants

Some of the studio apartments at Viv's Place will be for single women over 50. Applications for these women will be considered after half of the apartments have been allocated to families. These applications will also be via the Application Form and be selected by the Allocations Panel.

Up to six of the studio apartments will be for young women leaving residential care, in receipt of Targeted Care Packages. Uniting will refer these young women into Viv's Place.

Some lower needs families may be selected to live at Viv's Place.

Referral

The Application Form will be received and assessed for eligibility by Launch Housing via pl_vivsplace@launchhousing.org.au. All requested information must be provided in full, including the supporting documents as outlined on the application form. Application forms which do not include all requested information will not be considered for short-listing. A short-list of appropriate eligible applications will be forwarded to an Allocations Panel.

Allocations Process

Two representatives from Launch, two representatives from Uniting and a representative from DFFH will form an Allocations Panel. The Allocations Panel will make the final selections by assessing need and best fit. They will assess the client rather than the referring agency and there is no nomination right or guarantee that each referring agency will be represented at Viv's Place.

Process following an offer

Support Workers will be notified by the Launch Housing Tenancy Worker if their client has received an offer of housing.

Once an offer is made, Support Workers must work with the client to move into Viv's Place as quickly as possible.

Property Viewings

Support Workers will liaise with their client and the Tenancy Worker to arrange a property viewing. All property viewings must take place as soon as possible and **within 3 business days** of the Support Worker receiving an offer. If this is not practical in the circumstances, some flexibility may be negotiated, noting ideally all property viewings will take place within 5 business days of the Support Worker receiving notification of an offer.

Accepting an offer

Prospective residents will have **72 hours after viewing the property** to decide if they would like to proceed with the offer. Once an offer is accepted a tenancy **sign up time/date will be arranged** as soon as possible **within the next 5 days**. Support Workers will liaise with their clients prior to the sign up and complete the Furniture Requirements form, returning it to the tenancy team 3 business days prior to the sign up to allow for any furniture to be removed from the property or installed.

All Support Workers must attend the sign up with their clients and assist their clients to access funds for **bond (equivalent of 2 weeks of rent) and 2 weeks rent in advance, both payable no later than the day of the sign up**. Clients will be provided their property keys and begin paying rent on the day of sign up and can move in immediately.

If the prospective tenant fails to decide within 72 hours, their offer will be rescinded.

General information

Induction

Launch's Residency Engagement and Tenancy worker will complete sign ups on site at Viv's Place wherever possible. Part of the sign-up process will include responding to questions required by Urbis, an external company who are completing an ongoing evaluation of the program. After the sign-up has been completed all new residents will be provided a mandatory building induction that will take approximately 30 minutes.

Leasing, Rent and Utilities

Viv's Place is gazetted as a rooming house and will be managed as such under the Residential Tenancies Act. The leases used will be a standard RTA lease, but there will be some specific clauses for the tenants of the program. The House Rules will be provided to prospective tenants prior to acceptance of the offer.

A bond (equivalent of 2 weeks rent) will be payable on the day of sign up (or can be received prior) along with 2 weeks rent in advance.

Rent will be set at 30% of gross household income, plus 15% of Family Tax Benefit, plus maximum Commonwealth Rent Assistance in line with the [Launch Housing Rent Policy](#) available on our website.

All residents are responsible for their utility connections and expenses. The tenant will be required to pay utilities over both apartments under the dual key arrangement (where the resident leases a two-bedroom apartment and adjoining studio apartment).

Residents will have to arrange their own wifi, however wifi will be available on the ground floor.

Furnishing

Some apartments will include furniture depending on previous tenants need. Please discuss with the tenancy manager once application is approved.

Carparks and storage cages

Viv's Place has 32 car spaces available to residents and a limited number of storage cages. All car parking and storage cages will be allocated on a needs basis when the building is being tenanted. Once these have been allocated there will be an ongoing wait list that will be reviewed when a car park or storage cage becomes available. The initial allocation process will be conducted by the Allocations Panel, with subsequent reviews undertaken by the tenancy team and will be needs based. The considerations for these allocations are number of children, age of children and any disabilities or medical needs.

Visitors

Residents will be allowed to have visitors to their apartments, between the hours of 10pm and 7am. However, residents will not be allowed to have adult male visitors stay overnight (children under 16 are allowed to stay regardless of gender).

Male staff will work at Viv's Place.